



Briefing Note

Serial number 2024/18 **Date** 20 May 2024

Event Updated Public health advice for scabies for children & young people

Notified by Catherine Falconer, Deputy Director Health Equity and Inclusion Health

Authorised by

Will Welfare - Interim Director of Regions
Susan Hopkins – Strategic Response Director
Meera Chand – Deputy Director CEI (TARZET)
Luke Guinness – UKHSA Communications

Contact Health Equity and Inclusion Health
healthequityinclusionhealth@ukhsa.gov.uk

IRP Level N/A

Incident Lead N/A

Instructions for Cascade

- **Regional Deputy Directors** to cascade to Directors of Public Health and community Infection Prevention and Control teams and request sharing with Primary Care

Summary:

Change in public health advice for scabies for children and young people.

Background and Interpretation:

The [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education](#) guidance has been updated. Wording in the [scabies section](#) has been changed to advise **there should not be routine public health exclusion from school for scabies for those able to follow effective infection prevention and control advice**. Scabies transmission requires prolonged skin to skin contact and transmission through casual contact is unlikely. This change brings advice in line with that for similar infestations and has been driven by a desire to ensure any



UK Health Security Agency

exclusion advice for missed education (with consequent social and educational impacts) is proportionate and balanced against the risk of infection, taking into account any equity issues.

The guidance has been updated as below:

Affected individuals can attend the setting with advice to avoid close physical contact with others until 24 hours after the first dose of chosen treatment.

Young children not able to adhere to this advice due to their age (e.g. those under 5 years old) or additional needs, should be excluded from the setting until 24 hours after the first dose of chosen treatment. The risks/benefits of this should be reviewed on a case by case basis and take into account the holistic needs of the individual and the impact on their wellbeing, as well as the risk of transmission of scabies to the wider school population.

Encourage the affected individual to complete all recommended doses of treatment. It is important that the full treatment course is completed. This may involve several treatments spread out over time.

In line with clinical recommendations all household contacts and any other very close contacts should also receive treatment in a manner that is coordinated with the case and should also complete their full course of recommended treatment.

If the case is treated before the contacts, the case should then be re-treated at the same time as ongoing contacts to prevent reinfection.

Contacts do not need to be excluded from the setting.

[Contact your UKHSA HPT](#) if there are 2 or more cases of scabies within your setting.

This replaces previous guidance that recommended public health exclusion from education and childcare settings until after the first treatment had been completed.

Other guidance has also be updated to reflect this change, including [UKHSA guidance on the management of scabies cases and outbreaks in long-term care facilities and other closed settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and the NHS website [Scabies - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Implications & Recommendations for UKHSA Regions

HPTs should be aware of the updated guidance, update any local scabies resources and provide advice for any scabies incidents in line with this guidance.

Regional Deputy Directors to cascade to Directors of Public Health and community Infection Prevention and Control teams with onwards sharing with Primary Care.

Implications & Recommendations for UKHSA sites and services

N/A

Implications & Recommendations for NHS



UK Health Security Agency

Primary care including community pharmacies should be aware of this guidance update and advise affected individuals they can continue to attend the setting with advice to avoid close physical contact with others until 24 hours after the first dose of chosen treatment. Young children not able to adhere to this advice due to their age (e.g. those under 5 years old) or additional needs, should be advised to stay away from the setting until 24 hours after the first dose of chosen treatment.

Implications and recommendations for Local Authorities

Local authority colleagues should be aware of this change of advice and any local setting guidance or documentation should be updated to reflect this, and setting staff informed.

References/ Sources of information

UKHSA: Health protection in children and young people settings, including education guidance: [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-children-and-young-people-settings-including-education)

UKHSA: UKHSA guidance on the management of scabies cases and outbreaks in long-term care facilities and other closed settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scabies-management-advice-for-health-professionals/ukhsa-guidance-on-the-management-of-scabies-cases-and-outbreaks-in-long-term-care-facilities-and-other-closed-settings>

NICE: Clinical Knowledge summaries: <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/scabies/>

NHS: Conditions – scabies: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scabies/>
