# TABLETOP EXERCISE - FOOD POISONING

## Summary

This tabletop exercise aims to test your school’s response to a food poisoning incident. The scenario focuses on responding to media requests and the business continuity implications of a school closure.

Accompanying news bulletins and discussion points can be used for delivery of these injects.

This exercise is designed to last approximately one hour.

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| Approximate timings | Activity |
| 5 minutes | Introduction to exercise |
| 5 minutes | Inject 1 – News bulletin and discussion points |
| 15 minutes | Group discussion |
| 5 minutes | Inject 2 News bulletin and discussion points |
| 15 minutes | Group discussion |
| 15 minutes | Debrief |

## Inject 1

Scenario time

Wednesday, 2pm.

News bulletin

“A local school has today been forced to close with all pupils and staff being sent home, due to a severe outbreak of a sickness and diarrhoea type bug. Two pupils have been admitted to hospital as a result of complications though it has been emphasised that these children had underlying health problems. A spokesperson from the local education authority said that approximately 60% of staff and pupils had been affected. There will be an investigation into the outbreak. Relatives of pupils and staff are being advised to look out for early symptoms of the illness which include nausea and fever.”

Information

One employee and two pupils have been taken to hospital and the school has been forced to close until the cause of the outbreak has been ascertained.

A significant proportion of staff are unwell although they do not require hospital treatment. They have been told to rest and will be unable to return to work until next week.

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| * What information should to be provided to parents/carers and pupils? * Can the school provide support to the member of staff and two children taken to hospital? * What arrangements need to be established to respond to media requests? * Are any other actions required? |

## Inject 2

Scenario time

Thursday, 9am.

News bulletin

“The school at the centre of a local food poisoning incident is to remain closed pending an investigation into the cause of the outbreak. In total five pupils and one member of staff have been admitted to hospital. The local education authority is working with the environmental health department in order to reopen the school as soon as possible.”

Information

The member of staff and two pupils in hospital are recovering well. As the cause of the outbreak is still unknown the school will not be able to reopen for at least a week.

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| * How should the school co-operate with an investigation into the outbreak? * Can remote learning arrangements can be provided to those pupils who are not ill? * Will this incident negatively affect the reputation of the school? What can be done to limit this damage? * Are any other actions required? |