



10 March 2023

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Gastroenteritis Alert at Harvey Agricultural College

There is currently an outbreak of gastroenteritis illness affecting children who attend your child's college.

Gastroenteritis (or 'gastro') is an infection of the digestive system and can have many causes. Symptoms usually begin about 24 - 48 hours after exposure to the source of infection but can appear as early as 6 hours after exposure. There are both viral and bacterial pathogens that can cause the illness.

If your child is returning home this weekend, please do not send them back to the college *for at least 48 hours after their bowel motions return to normal.*

If you need to take them to a doctor for assessment or because you are worried about dehydration, please ask the doctor to test a stool sample to assist us in determining the cause of the outbreak. Please ask the GP to test for both bacteria and viruses.

If your child is remaining in residence, we have provided sample pots and the college will contact you to obtain consent to provide specimen for testing.

Please read the attached fact sheet which contains more detailed information about how you can assist the college in managing this situation.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

For further information please contact the SW Public Health Team on 9781 2359 during office hours or Health Direct over the weekend on 1800 022 222.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Marisa Gilles

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