

Dear parent/guardian,

Following the recent outbreak of *Cryptosporidium* at a petting farm in South Wales, we have been sent information from Collier's Farm regarding our upcoming school trip with the following information and reassurance to help keep visitors, staff and animals safe.

Here at Colliers Adventure Farm all of our animals are tested for zoonotic diseases by the business owner who is also a vet before they enter our premises. Any new animals are isolated away from the premises until a faecal sample has been taken and tested for various zoonotic diseases including cryptosporidium, E-Coli, Salmonella and Rotavirus. The animals will only enter the farm park when the results are negative.

*Our animals are well looked after by our staff and if any of them become unwell they are placed into isolation and Rhian (business owner) is called to attend. We have sufficient hand washing facilities in place with hand wash stations within the petting area, outside the petting area and also outside by the paddocks. **Children are encouraged to wash their hands after touching any of the animals and are supervised by a member of staff whilst this takes place.***

Colliers Adventure farm comes under the tourist attraction category so therefore we have to follow strict guidelines from Public Health Wales and our local authority. We have regular site visits from our public health officer, Health and Safety team and Trading standards based within Caerphilly.

Public Health Wales have sent out guidance with the following advice.

To help reduce the risk of infection, people visiting farms are reminded to follow these hygiene precautions:

- **Avoid close contact with animals** - including holding, cuddling, or kissing - as this significantly increases the risk of illness.
- **Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water** after touching animals, after touching boots or clothing, and before eating or drinking. Alcohol based hand gels do not provide sufficient cleaning. **Always use soap and warm water.**
- **Do not eat or drink while touching animals or walking around the farm.**
- **Remove and clean footwear and wash hands after leaving the farm.**
- **Supervise children closely** to ensure they wash their hands properly and avoid close contact with the animals.

- **Pregnant women should take particular care** and avoid contact with newborn lambs during lambing season.

-

The main symptoms of cryptosporidium infection include:

- Watery diarrhoea
- Stomach pains or cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Mild fever
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss

Symptoms usually start two to 10 days after contact with the parasite and can last for up to two weeks.

Those who have been unwell with the above symptoms following a visit to a farm should:

- **Be especially careful to avoid spreading the infection to others at home** by practising good hygiene, including frequent handwashing with soap and warm water and not sharing towels, bedding or other personal items until you are fully recovered. It is particularly important to wash your hands before preparing food.
- **Avoid swimming for two weeks** after their symptoms have ceased.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a member of staff.

Many thanks.