



May 15/19

Dear Parent and/or Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there has been a case of pertussis (whooping cough) at Bayside Middle School. Individuals who have attended the school may have been in contact with the bacteria, which are spread by coughing.

Pertussis begins with cold-like symptoms that may progress to a severe cough with a distinctive 'whooping' sound, which may be followed by gagging and/or vomiting. Symptoms can last for several weeks. This can be very serious, particularly for infants under one year of age. Pregnant mothers in their third trimester can also be at risk as they may expose their new born infant after birth. If you or any of your family members develop symptoms as described above, please contact your health care provider to test for pertussis bacteria.

If someone is diagnosed with pertussis, antibiotic treatment will be needed. After five days of treatment, the individual will no longer be considered infectious and can return to school or work.

**It is also important to ensure that your children are up to date with their immunizations against pertussis.** These immunizations are normally given to children during the first year of life, at 18 months, and upon entering kindergarten. There is one additional booster shot when children are in grade 9. Please take this opportunity to check if pertussis immunizations are up to date for children in your family. You can receive vaccines at your local Public Health Unit or at some doctors' offices.

A Health File on pertussis is attached for your information.

When attending a health care clinic, we suggest taking this letter with you to help provide clarity.

For more information, please call your local Public Health Unit:

Health Unit	Address	Telephone
Esquimalt	530 Fraser Street, Victoria	(250) 519-5311
Peninsula	2170 Mt. Newton X Road, Saanichton	(250) 544-2400
Saanich	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, 3995 Quadra Street, Victoria	(250) 519-5100
Sooke	104-6672 Wadams Way Sooke	(250) 519-3487
Victoria	1947 Cook Street, Victoria	(250) 388-2200
West Shore	345 Wale Road, Langford	(250) 519-3490
Salt Spring Island	#1 – 137 Crofton Road, Salt Spring Island	(250) 538-4880