

# Pupil Illness Policy



**Expect the BEST, Give the BEST, Be the BEST**

November 2018 - 2021

Signed ..... A.P. Cawsey ..... Headteacher

Signed ..... J. Whalley ..... Acting Chair of Governors

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## Introduction

This policy outlines procedures to be followed in the event of a pupil illness. As illnesses are diverse in nature it will not cover all eventualities. It also does not cover children with a known medical condition, who have a logged care plan with the school. The school has sought the advice of the school nurse in the preparation of this policy as well as Public Health England.

The purpose of this policy is to:-

- To ensure unwell children are identified
- To ensure unwell children are cared for appropriately
- To protect children and adults from preventable infections
- To enable staff and parents to be clear about the requirements and procedures when children are unwell
- To give guidance to parents and carers so they understand the recommended time scales for keeping children off school in case of a common illness

Making sure your child attends school regularly is your legal responsibility as a parent/carer. It is also crucial for your child's education and future. Full attendance enables your child to make the most of their education. Children who miss days at school risk not understanding classes and not making expected progress. By law, only the school can authorise your child's absence. It's important to keep the school informed if your child is going to be absent because they are unwell.

## Absence reporting procedure

There is a clear process for you to follow to inform the school that your child may not be attending because they are unwell:

1. The parent/carer must telephone the school between 8.30 am and 9.15am to inform the school that their child is absent and the cause of the absence. The school will ask for the nature of the illness and the expected duration of the absence. The administrator will give guidance on the recommended length of absence if appropriate. This phone call is logged in the office and the reason for absence recorded. Parents coming into school to drop off siblings of the sick child must inform the office of the absence as well as the respective teacher.
2. If the school does not receive a phone call, within the above timeframes, from a parent/carer the school will phone home to ascertain the child's whereabouts and reason for absence. If the school cannot contact the parent at home, school will contact emergency contacts until the whereabouts of the child and their well-being can be confirmed. This is part of our safeguarding procedure.

## Decisions regarding attendance or absence

Common sense is the best guide when deciding whether or not to send your child to school. Ask yourself:-

Is your child well enough to join in the varied activities of the school day?

(The school cannot always offer to supervise your child if you do not think they can go outside at playtimes.)

**If not keep your child at home.**

Does your child have a condition that can be passed on to other children or staff?

**If so, keep your child at home.**

Would you take a day off work if you had this condition?

**If so, keep your child at home.**

## Common Conditions:

Most conditions can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend how serious you judge the illness to be.

This guidance can help **you** make that judgement.

**Coughs and Colds** – a child with a minor cold or cough may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by shivers, drowsiness or a fever please keep your child away from school until the symptoms have been reduced and your child feels well enough to join in with a normal school day – usually 24 to 48 hrs.

If your child has a severe cough it is best to consult your GP, who can provide guidance as to whether the child should stay at home. A severe cough can be debilitating for the child, interrupt lessons and your child will not be at their best.

**Raised temperature** – if your child has a raised temperature they should not attend school until the temperature has returned to normal and they are feeling better.

**Rash** – rashes can be the first sign of many infections such as chicken pox and measles. Children with these conditions should not attend school. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or nurse before sending them to school.

**Headaches** – a child with a minor headache does not normally need to be kept off school. If the headache is accompanied by a fever or rash, then keep your child off school and consult your GP.

### **Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Vomiting and diarrhoea can be caused by a viral condition. It is this form of sickness that concerns us most as we do not want other children to be infected and viral conditions can spread through a school quickly. Please do not send your child to school for a full and clear **48 hrs following the last incident of vomiting or diarrhoea**. Some children recover very quickly and may appear to be well after 24 hrs but please keep your child away from school for the full 48 hrs just in case they are still carrying the virus. If you return your child to school before the 48 hrs, the school will ask you to take your child home for another day even if they appear well. This requires a level of trust that parents will provide us with accurate timings about the length of time that has passed since their child has been clear of the symptoms of vomiting and diarrhoea.

Vomiting and diarrhoea may also be caused by other factors but following advice from Public Health England we must follow the 48hr recommendation unless we have written evidence from a medical professional to say otherwise.

**Sore throat** – a child with a sore throat alone does not have to be kept from school. If your child feels unwell along with a sore throat, the child should stay at home. A sore throat is often a precursor to a cold. If your child has not been their normal self at home but is not showing signs of illness when brought to school, parents should mention this to staff and ensure that contact details are correct and that they are obtainable.

**Other health issues** – there may be other health issues that prevent your child from attending school and medical advice should always be sought should you have any concerns about your child.

To minimise the risk of transmission of infection to other children, and staff, we follow the guidelines as set out by Public Health England in their ‘Health Protection in Schools and other Childcare Facilities’ document. This is regularly updated and can be found using the following link to chapter 9 – Managing specific infectious diseases:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases>

### **What will the school do if a child is ill in school?**

If a child complains of feeling unwell the staff will initially monitor their condition and keep them comfortable depending on their symptoms. Sometimes getting some fresh air, sitting quietly for 10 minutes settles the child and they may recover. If a child is still feeling unwell they will be seen by a First Aider, all our teaching staff are qualified in First Aid and if a decision is made to send a child home the parents/carers will be contacted in the order they appear on the schools emergency contact list. In the meantime the child will be kept as comfortable as possible until a parent arrives. If the member of staff considers the illness/situation to warrant immediate medical attention, they will report to a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will contact emergency services or take the child directly to hospital and the carer or parent notified accordingly.

### **Collecting a sick child from school**

The school administrator or teacher will describe the child's symptoms, any treatment given and direct the parent to this policy on the school website before bringing the child back to school.

The parent/carer will be asked to collect their child and inform the school office that they are taking their child home.