

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS ON KEEPING ILL STUDENT HOME

It is not always easy to know when to send your child to school, and when to leave your child home. These Guidelines are based on public health science. If you have any questions about them, please reach your school nurse.

Please **do not** send a child with the following symptoms to school:

- **Fever** of 100.5°F or more, taken orally (or 101°F taken by ear, rectally or temporal scan). For infants under age 1 year, the upper limit for temperature is 100 degrees (rectally, by ear or by temporal artery), not 101 degrees. Student may return to school *if fever-free the preceding evening/night*, without the help of acetaminophen (eg, Tylenol) or ibuprofen (eg, Motrin, Advil). During county health department-declared epidemics, the definition of fever may change.
- **Cough and difficulty breathing** – do not send to school if child has labored breathing (heaving of chest muscles with each breath), rapid breathing at rest, blue color to skin, or wheezing (if never previously evaluated and treated), and see a doctor. Keep home if your child has pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days of antibiotics have been received, or tuberculosis (until treated).
- **Rash that is undiagnosed**, especially when there is a fever and behavioral change.
- **Chicken pox** - keep home until all blisters are scabbed over and there are no signs of illness.
- **Diarrhea** - keep home if the student wears diapers, if there is blood or mucous in the stool (unless from medication or hard stool), if the stools are all black or very pale, or if the stools are very watery and are increasing in frequency. See a doctor immediately if diarrhea is accompanied by: no urine output for 8 hours; jaundiced skin; or child looks/acts very ill.
- **Vomiting** more than once a day or accompanied by fever, rash or general weakness. May return if does not vomit breakfast.
- **Impetigo** - Keep the child home for 24 hours after starting an antibiotic treatment.
- **Ringworm** (a contagious skin fungus infection). Keep home until treatment is started. If it is in an exposed area, upon return, cover visible area with dressing and/or clothing. Ringworm on the scalp requires an oral medication, but child may return to school if covered with appropriate cream or covered.
- **Cold sores** - Cold sores can be passed from one person to another, but only through direct contact. Children who drool or place toys in their mouths when they have cold sores should stay home; other children may come to school.

Antibiotics

Children who are placed on antibiotics for impetigo, strep throat, and several other bacterial infections, should be on them for a **FULL 24 hours** (longer for Pertussis/Whooping Cough) before returning to school to prevent the spread of those infections. If you are uncertain, ask your school nurse.

If at any time you are unsure if your child's illness is contagious, you may want to call your child's primary care provider. If you have further questions, please contact your school site to speak to the school nurse. Thank you for your continued support of the families in our school community.

Please keep the office at your child's school informed of your current contact numbers. It is very important to be able to reach you when your child is sick at school and needs to go home or when your child needs medical attention.