

Guidelines for Parents on Keeping Ill Student Home

As it is not always easy to determine when your child should attend school or be kept home, here are some guidelines based on public health science to assist parents in the process. If you have questions about them, please contact your school nurse.

➤ Fever

Keep home if...100.5° F or more, taken orally 101°F, if taken by ear, rectally or forehead scan.

➤ Runny nose, coughing, congestion

Keep home if...Child has all these symptoms, or just one but it's very bad (for example, congestion that makes it hard to breathe). Additional signs: rapid breathing at rest, blue color to skin, or wheezing. If your child has pertussis (whooping cough) keep home until 5 days of antibiotics have been received, or tuberculosis (until treated).

➤ Sore throat

Keep home if...it really hurts the child to swallow, even if there is no fever. See the doctor if this symptom persists as it could be strep. If it is, the child can return to school 24 hours after starting on antibiotics with a note from the doctor.

➤ Earache

Keep home if...the pain is so bad that the child is waking up at night or crying. Since earaches aren't contagious, it is fine to send the child back to school as soon as they start to feel better.

➤ Vomiting or diarrhea

Keep home if...the child has either one of these symptoms, because they're a sign that the child is contagious. If their stools are very watery AND are increasing in frequency or if they are vomiting more than once a day or accompanied by fever, rash or general weakness, your child may need to see the doctor. Your child may return to school when symptoms subside.

➤ Rash

Keep home if...rash is unusual or severe, especially with fever and behavioral change. Many viruses and some bacteria can cause a rash. The doctor has to see it to determine if it's contagious (and for how long).

Cold sores: are passed from person to person but only by direct contact.

Ringworm: Contagious fungal infection of the skin. Keep home until treatment is started. If ringworm is in an exposed area, upon return to school, cover areas with dressing and/or clothing.

Impetigo: Contagious skin infection. Occurs around the mouth and nose. Student can return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.

➤ Eye Infection

Keep home if...the eye(s) appear very red or there's discharge. It could be pinkeye (conjunctivitis), which is very contagious within close contact (especially within families). Exclusion from school is usually not necessary. Extended school absences w/pink eye will need doctor's note to return to school.

Unless otherwise indicated, students with above symptoms need to be absent for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school. If at any time you are unsure if your child's illness is contagious, you may want to call your primary care provider. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact your school site to speak to the school nurse. Your continued support of the families within our school district is appreciated.

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.