

Guidelines on when you should keep your child home sick

- A **runny nose** or “leaky faucet” is the way many children respond to dust, pollen or simply a change in season. The runny nose can also be accompanied by watery (clear drainage) eyes. If it isn’t a common cold, then it may be an allergy and allergies are not contagious. *There is no need to keep the child home.* **Remind your child to use a tissue to wipe their nose, discard tissue, and immediately wash hands!**
- A **bad cough or cold symptoms** can indicate a severe cold, bronchitis, flu or even pneumonia. Some children suffer one cold after another all winter long and a run-of-the-mill cold should not be a reason to miss school. But if your child is not acting “right”, has difficulty breathing, or a fever, it could be something more serious. Check with your physician. **Remind your child to cover coughs and sneeze with the bend of their arm/inner elbow - in their sleeve!**
- **Fever** is an important symptom. When a fever occurs along with a sore throat, an earache, nausea, listlessness or a rash, your child may be carrying something contagious. **PLEASE keep children home during the course of a fever and for an additional 24 hours after the fever has passed WITHOUT fever reducing medication.**
- **Diarrhea and vomiting** make children very uncomfortable and being near a bathroom becomes top priority. If your child has repeated episodes of diarrhea and/or vomiting accompanied by fever, a rash or general weakness, consult a doctor and keep your child out of school until the illness passes. When your child has the stomach bug please keep them home for 24 hours **after** the symptoms have subsided!
- **Strep throat and scarlet fever** are two highly contagious conditions caused by a streptococcal (bacterial) infection. They usually arrive with a sore throat and fever. Sometimes nausea and headache are present too. A child with either strep throat or scarlet fever should be kept at home and treated with antibiotics, as prescribed by their physician. After 24 hours on an antibiotic, a child is usually no longer contagious and may return to school.
- **Conjunctivitis or pink eye** is highly contagious and uncomfortable, so take heed when your child complains of eyes burning, itching, the whites of their eye bright red and producing yellow/green drainage. Prescription eye drops are required for treatment of bacterial conjunctivitis. Please keep your child home until their doctor states it is ok to return, usually 24 hours after prescription drops have been started.
- **Ear infections** are usually secondary to cold like symptoms and can be painful. A child may or may not have a fever with an ear infection. Please follow the 24 hour rule for fever and antibiotic treatment.
- **Flu** season is approaching! If your child has the flu they should stay home 24-48 hours after the fever is gone and they are able to participate in school activities. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to receive the flu vaccine! Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors’ visits, and missed school due to the flu. The more people who get vaccinated, the more people will be protected!