

*A parents guide to*

# **MANAGING SICKNESS ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**



# Remember

You can prevent the spread of infections by ensuring routine immunisations, high standards of personal hygiene, particularly hand washing and maintaining a clean environment.

Always try to inform the school before 9.30am every day your child is absent from school due to illness.

By law, only the Headteacher can authorise your child's absence. It is important to keep the school informed if your child is going to be absent that day.

Each school will have its own process for the recording and monitoring of sickness absence. If your child is frequently missing school due to illness, medical confirmation may be requested from your GP and/or a referral may be made to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service or Education Welfare Service.

If your child attends school and feels unwell during the school day the school will contact you to arrange for them to be collected.

Make use of the 'Choose Well' chart on the NHS Direct website to give you advice about how to manage your child's symptoms.

**For further help or advice in your area please contact:**



# Illness

As we all know children are sometimes too ill to attend school. All schools monitor attendance and engage with parents as soon as a pattern of absence is identified.

This leaflet has been designed to help you decide whether or not your child is too unwell to attend school.

## Ask yourself these questions:

**Is your child well enough to go out to play?**

**Is your child well enough to carry out their daily school activities?**

If you answered **No** then it is advised you seek advice from NHS Direct or consult your GP if necessary.

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

**Would you take a day off work if you had the same condition?**

If you answered **Yes** it is advised you seek advice from NHS Direct or consult your GP if necessary.

A number of illnesses can be classified as a minor health condition and whether you send your child to school will depend on how ill you deem your child to be.

There is a range of common conditions that occur in school age children and they all have varying incubation periods based on the guidelines of the Health Protection Agency (HPA). There may be children and staff who are at greater risk to infectious disease who need to be protected where possible.

**Any health-related enquiries should be directed to health professionals on the national helpline 0845 46 47 or your family GP/health visitor.**

The following table provides guidance for parents on the recommended time off school:

Illness	Recommended time off school	Comments
Hand Foot and Mouth	<b>None</b>	Please contact your local health board if a large number of children are affected. Children may be required to refrain from school in some circumstances
Conjunctivitis	<b>None</b>	If an outbreak occurs contact your Local Health Board
Glandular fever	<b>None</b>	
Head lice	<b>None</b>	Treatment is required
Threadworm	<b>None</b>	Treatment is recommended for the child and all household contacts
Tonsillitis	<b>None</b>	There are many causes but most are due to viruses
Slapped cheek	<b>None</b>	Keep away from vulnerable children and pregnant females
Chickenpox	5 days from onset of rash	Keep away from vulnerable children and pregnant females
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment	Antibiotics reduce the infectious period
German Measles (Rubella)	6 days from onset of rash	Preventable by immunisation (MMR x2)
Measles	4 days from onset of rash	Preventable by immunisation (MMR x2)
Ringworm Scabies	Not usually required Child to return after first treatment	People with close contact require treatment
Scarlet Fever	Child can return to school 24 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment	Seek advice from GP as antibiotic treatment is recommended
Shingles	Keep home only if rash is weeping and cannot be covered	Can cause chickenpox in people who are not immune. Keep away from vulnerable children and pregnant females
Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting	Keep home for 48 hours from the last episode of vomiting/diarrhoea	Many causes, if persistent see GP as further time off school may be required
Flu	Until recovered	Avoid contact with vulnerable children and babies
Whooping cough	5 days from commencing antibiotic treatment or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment	Preventable by vaccination. After treatment, non infectious coughing may continue for many weeks
Mumps	5 days after onset of swelling	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x2)