



## Managing Minor Illness in Children

Where there are concerns about a child's attendance it is best to think carefully before automatically taking the decision to keep the child at home for a minor illness. Remember that if you send your child into school, staff will be observant and we will always contact you if we notice that your child is too unwell to cope with the school day.

When your child tells you they are unwell and you feel undecided about whether they should have a day off or not ask yourself the following questions;

*Would you take the day off work if you had the same symptoms?  
Do they have a high temperature above 37.5c?  
Are they suffering from a contagious illness?*

If you answer yes to any of these questions or if your child has any of the following symptoms then we suggest that they remain at home and you seek medical advice;

- A high temperature that does not reduce with the correct dose of paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Sleepy and too lethargic to play
- Not eating or drinking
- Unusually quiet
- Laboured breathing
- The development of a rash
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Coughing blood
- Passing blood in urine

### **Infection Control.**

If your child is suffering from an infectious illness, please keep your child at home until they have recovered. Infectious illnesses include chicken pox, measles, impetigo, diarrhoea and vomiting.

### **Management of Minor Illness**

Many minor illnesses can be controlled by paracetamol / ibuprofen. If your child is slightly unwell you can give a dose of medicine between 8 and 9am and this will help them feel comfortable until lunchtime. If you feel it will be necessary you are welcome to come into school at lunchtime and give your child another dose to help them cope with the afternoon session.

If you decide to keep your child off school and they perk up later in the morning you are welcome to bring them to school for the afternoon session. Although they may be marked in as late for the morning the total number of absences can be reduced if they are present for the afternoon session.

### **Common Colds**

Colds are classified as a minor illness. If your child has a sniffle please send them into school unless they have a raised temperature and other symptoms.

### **Coughs**

A cough is also a minor illness and if there are no other symptoms such as a temperature, asthma and or laboured breathing please send them into school.

### **Headaches**

A headache will usually disappear with a dose of paracetamol and a drink of water. If the headache is accompanied by other symptoms such as a raised temperature, vomiting or a rash then it is best to seek advice from your GP.

### **Sore Throat**

A sore throat is usually a minor illness that will not require a day off school. If your child has a raised temperature and puss on their tonsils then it is best to seek advice from your GP.

### **Tummy ache**

Children often confuse tummy ache with a feeling of anxiety or nervousness. So it is worth checking out with your child if they are worried about anything. If there is no evidence of diarrhoea and vomiting, no other symptoms and they are still eating and drinking as normal then it is probably safe to send your child into school. If your child has had diarrhoea or vomiting then we ask you to keep them off school until 48hrs has passed.

## **Keeping Your Child Healthy**

### **Hand Washing.**

This is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of infections. The common cold is often transmitted on contaminated hands. Soap and water are sufficient to keep you healthy as it creates a slippery surface in which nasty micro-organisms slide off. To help reduce infection and to keep your child healthy we recommend that you help your child to wash their hands when they get home from school, after using the toilet and always before eating.

### **Diet**

A healthy diet plays an important part in helping the body to develop a good immune system. Encourage your child to eat a healthy diet including fruits, vegetables, proteins and give them plenty of water to drink.

### **Sleep**

It is important for children to have a good sleep pattern. The body restores its energy levels and renews its cells at night and this helps to keep their immune system in tip top condition.

We understand that when children are unwell it is always a concern and sometimes it is difficult to know whether to send them into school or to remain on the safe side and allow them to stay at home. We have produced this leaflet as a guide to help you in your decision making and we hope that you find it useful. If you are ever in any doubt about your child's health we would always recommend that you seek medical advice.