

Sickness policy

Alwyn Infant School

(to be read in conjunction with our attendance policy)

December 2020



When a child is unwell, it can be hard for parents/carers to decide whether to keep them off school. These simple guidelines taken from the NHS website should help. The NHS website address is <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Not every illness requires a child to stay away from school. Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by **9.00 am** or as soon as practically possible. They are required to phone the school and leave a message on the answerphone.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

When deciding whether or not a child is too ill to attend school parents/carers need to ask themselves the following questions.

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day? If not, keep your child at home.
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would I take a day off work if I had this condition? If so, keep your child at home.

Common conditions

If a child is ill, it is likely to be due to one of a few minor health conditions. (see below)

Chickenpox

If a child has chickenpox, they must be kept off school until all their spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appear.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

Send your child to school after you have received advice from a pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Coughs and colds

A child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by a raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off school, and return 24 hours after they start to feel better. If

a child has a more severe and long-lasting cough, they should go to a GP. They can give guidance on whether your child should stay off school.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a fever or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their fever goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Check they do not have a sore throat or high temperature.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Headache

A child with a minor headache doesn't usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms, such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then the child should be kept off school and a GP consulted.

Impetigo

If your child has impetigo, they'll need antibiotic treatment from the GP. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share towels, cups etc.

Raised temperature

If a child has a raised temperature, they shouldn't attend school. They can return 24 hours after they start to feel better.

Rash

Skin rashes can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses, such as chickenpox and measles. Children with these conditions shouldn't attend school. If a child has a rash, check with a GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.

Ringworm

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see the GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from the GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks.

Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to the GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.

Sore throat

A sore throat alone doesn't have to keep a child from school. But if it's accompanied by a raised temperature, your child should stay at home.

Threadworms

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and keep their fingernails short.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting must be kept off school until at least 48 hours after their symptoms have gone. Most cases of diarrhoea and vomiting in children get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult a GP.

CORONAVIRUS (Please follow the latest government guidance)

Symptoms of coronavirus

If you, or your child, have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), get a test as soon as possible. Stay at home until you get the result.

Main symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

What to do if you have symptoms

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

1. Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.
2. You and anyone you live with should stay at home and not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.

Anyone in your support bubble should also stay at home if you have been in close contact with them since your symptoms started or during the 48 hours before they started.