

Guidelines on an unwell child

When your child is unwell, it can be hard to decide whether to keep them off school or not. Below are a few simple guidelines we hope will help.

Not every illness needs to keep your child from attending school. We trust your judgement as a parent to use common sense on whether your child is too ill to attend school. To assist this process you can ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- 2 Does my child have a condition that can be passed to others?
- 3 Would I take a day off work if I had the same condition?

These are some of the conditions that are common in all schools. Guidance below shows you if and for how long you should keep your child from school: (This information was sourced from the NHS Choices Website.)

Chickenpox

If your child has chicken pox keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

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

Conjunctivitis:

You do not need to keep your child away from school. Do get advice from a pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regular.

Cough and cold: 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, visit the GP and return to school 24 hours after they start to feel better. If your child has a more severe and long-lasting cough, consult your GP. They can give guidance on whether the child should stay off school.

Covid : If your child has tested positive for COVID, they should stay at home for 3 days. They can return to school on day 4 if they have no symptoms.:

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature 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. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

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Headaches: 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 keep the child off school and consult your GP.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.
You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

Impetigo : If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. 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 things like towels and cups with other children at school.

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

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

Scarlet fever: If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a 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: 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. But let the school know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

Sore Throat

A sore throat alone doesn't have to keep a child from school. If it's accompanied by a raised temperature, the 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.

Vomiting and diarrhoea:

Children with these conditions should be kept off school. They can return 48 hours after their symptoms disappear. Most cases of vomiting or diarrhoea get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult your GP.

Remember to tell the School.

It's important to inform the school if your child is going to be absent. On the first day of your child's illness, telephone on 01189375566 option1 or email attendance@whitleypark.reading.sch.uk to inform the school that your child will not be attending school. Please include the nature of your child's illness.