

# Is my child too ill for school?

**It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they're unwell.**

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about health protection and managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

See Percy Hedley School's attendance policy and guidance for their exact procedure.

## What to do about other conditions

### High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

### Feeling anxious or worried

It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse.

Find information and advice about how to help children with anxiety.

### Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

### Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, 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 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**

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis, unless they are feeling very unwell. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Measles**

If your child has measles, they'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.

## **Sore throat**

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.

A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

## **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 diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

**Thank you to the NHS for providing this guidance.**