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## When Is Your Child Too Sick For School?

Dear parent(s):

Early in the morning it is often difficult to make a decision about whether or not your child is sick enough to stay home from school. With minor symptoms you often cannot tell whether she/he is going to get better or worse during the course of the school day.

**The main reasons for keeping you child home from school are:**

- **If she/he is too sick to be comfortable at school**
- **If she/he might spread a contagious disease to other children at school**

**As a rule of thumb, a child should stay home if there is:**

- **A fever of 100 F or more**
- **Vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**
- **A frequent cough**
- **Persistent pain (ear, stomach, head, etc.)**
- **A widespread rash**

**Here are some other guidelines that may also help you:**

- **Fever-(100F or higher)** - It is an important symptom especially when it occurs along with a sore throat, nausea, or a rash. Your child could have a contagious illness, which can be easily passed to classmates and teachers. **Therefore, children with fever should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours without taking Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil (children should never take Aspirin).**
- **Sore throat**- A child should stay at home if she/he is too uncomfortable to complete his work and participate in other school activities. **If diagnosed with strep throat a child may NOT return to school until 24-48 hours after the first dose of antibiotics was given and the child is fever-free.**
- **Middle ear infections**- can cause great discomfort and often fever, but are not contagious to others. The child should see his doctor for diagnosis and treatment and **stay at home if she/ he has fever or pain.**
- **Flu**- is a highly contagious virus. Symptoms include body aches, high fever, chills, congestion, sore throat, and sometimes vomiting. **The child should stay home until symptoms improve, usually in five to seven days. (Flu shots are available at local physician's offices and the health department.)**
- **Impetigo**- is a staph or strep infection that causes red, oozing, crusted blisters to appear anywhere on the body or face. It can be passed to others by direct contact. **As the parent, you should contact your family doctor for how long to keep the student out of school.**

Thank you for your support in following these guidelines. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in class in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in our school and allows your child the opportunity to rest and recover. If you are in doubt if your child is too sick to stay home from school always seek the medical advice of your family doctor.

**Please remember to make sure that your child's school knows how to reach you during the school day and there is a back-up plan and phone number on file if we are unable to reach you.**

School Nurse

