

Winter 24-25 Health Notes

Absence from school at the beginning of an illness is beneficial to your child's health as well as prevent infection of schoolmates. Children should stay home with the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees F or more
- Cough that worsens in intensity and duration
- Shortness of Breath
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Suspicious Skin Condition

Your child's temperature should be normal and no episodes of vomiting or diarrhea should occur for 24 hours before returning to school.

The following are some illnesses we encounter at school. Please report any communicable disease to the school. We are required to report certain diseases to the MN Department of Health (MDH).

Respiratory Diseases: Covid-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are now under the umbrella of respiratory diseases when it comes to reporting. I would need to report to MDH if a threshold is met in our building. Your child will need to be excluded until they're fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and is well enough to participate in school activities. Please let me know if your child tests positive for any of these.

Gastroenteritis: Also called "stomach flu", with the most common symptom being nausea and vomiting. Other symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal pain, run-down feeling and mild fever. Symptoms usually last 24-48 hours. People can become re-infected with this illness many times because it is so contagious. Handwashing is the key to preventing the spread of this illness.

Chicken Pox: This virus has an incubation period of 2-3 weeks. The symptoms include a slight fever and general feeling of illness. In 3-4 days, small red spots develop blisters. These blisters continue to appear for 3-4 days and then rapidly break, scab over and dry. The disease is very contagious but one attack usually gives lifelong immunity. Students should remain home until all the blisters have dried and formed scabs (usually @ 6 days after rash onset). The vaccine is required by students entering kindergarten but it doesn't always prevent the disease but will lessen the severity of the disease.

Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever: Strep throat and scarlet fever (strep throat with rash) are caused by bacteria. It's spread by contact with secretions from the mouth and nose of infected persons. Children are contagious until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun. Symptoms include sore throat, fever, swollen glands and pus on the tonsils. Sometimes there is a fine, pink rash. Vomiting and stomach pain may also occur. A throat culture is used to diagnose. A child may return to school when they are on antibiotics and are fever-free for 24 hours.

Hearing & Vision Referrals: If your child was referred for any of these, you would have received a letter in the mail in October or November. Please let me know if the results of that visit so I can update our records.

Thank you for all your help in keeping our students healthy while they're at school!

Respectfully, Tana Kalnbach, RN, PHN, Licensed School Nurse