



Pupil Absence - Medical and Illness Guidance for Parents

Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils as much of the work they miss is never made up, leaving these pupils at a significant disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is a clear link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement. We need your help and support to deal with this problem.

The main reason for pupil absence from school is illness. When deciding whether or not your child is too unwell to attend school ask yourself the following questions:

- Is your child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition?

Common conditions

If your child is ill it is likely to be due to one of a few minor conditions. Whether you choose to send your child to school will depend on how severe you think the illness is. This guidance may help.

- Coughs, 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 you should consult your GP.
- Headache. A child with a headache does not normally need to be kept away from school. If the headache is more severe and accompanied by other symptoms, you should consult your GP.
- Rashes. Rashes can be the first sign of many infectious diseases. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhoea. Children with these symptoms should be kept away from school for 48 hours after their symptoms have gone. If symptoms persist consult your GP.
- Chicken pox. Children should be kept off school for 5 days from the onset of the rash.

There is no reason to keep your child away from school for minor ailments such as:

- Warts and verrucae
- Ringworm
- Conjunctivitis
- Head lice
- Threadworms

You should however, seek treatment for the above.

Remember, if you are concerned about any aspect of your child's health you should consult a health professional. Advice can be obtained from the school nurse, NHS direct, your local chemist, walk in centre or GP.

If your child requires a medical appointment they should be made outside of school hours whenever possible. However, if your child has an appointment in school time you should take an appointment card or medical note to the school office so your child's absence can be authorised.

Think carefully before keeping your child off school for medical reasons. If they wake up saying they are unwell, consider whether the symptoms mean they have to stay at home. **Please do not keep your child away from school 'just in case' when they could be in class learning with their friends.**