

Kilcoskan National School Sickness Policy updated September 2024

Introduction

The school has a duty of care to all its pupils and members of staff. This policy aims to set out procedures to be followed when children become unwell, to ensure that they are well cared for and that, where the cause is of an infectious nature, others are not exposed needlessly.

When children should be kept at home:

Parents are asked **not** to send their child/ren to school if any of the following apply:

The child has symptoms of an infectious illness, including:

- **CHICKEN POX:** The child should not attend school until all scabs are dry and crusted over. This is usually 5-7 days after appearance of the rash.
- **DIARRHOEA:** When your child has had diarrhoea due to infection, he/she should only return to school once 48 hours have passed following the last loose bowel movement. For example, if your child has his/her last loose bowel movement at 11 am on Sunday morning, he/she cannot return to school until Wednesday morning.
- **VOMITING:** As in the case of diarrhoea, the child should remain at home until 48 hours have passed since last episode of vomiting due to infection.
- **FEVER:** The normal body temperature is 36.5 to 37.2 C. If the child develops a temperature, she/he should remain at home until 24 hours after the fever has passed.
- **HEAVY COLD SYMPTOMS OR FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS:** e.g. large amount of yellow-green nasal discharge, sleepiness, sore throat, ear pain and/or fever. The child should be kept at home until these have subsided and the he/ she is able to participate in the normal school curriculum.
- **MILD COLD SYMPTOMS:** If a child's mild cold symptoms would prevent him/ her from participating in normal school curriculum, e.g. significant weariness at onset, streaming watery discharge from nose, persistent cough, earache, he/ she should be kept at home.
- **MEASLES:** Measles is a viral infection that spreads very easily. It starts with cold like symptoms roughly ten days after becoming infected. If you suspect your child has measles do not send your child to school and attend your GP. The child should not attend school for at least four days after the rash first appears.
- **SLAPPED CHEEK SYNDROME:** The first sign of slapped cheek syndrome is feeling generally unwell for a couple of days; high temperature, headache, sore throat.
- **COVID- 19:** Your child should stay at home if they have symptoms of Covid-19 and are unwell/have a high temperature. You can send your child back to school if they have not had any new symptoms for 48 hours.
- **CONJUNCTIVITIS:** Inflammation of the lining of the eye and eyelid, causing sore or red eyes; can be highly contagious if bacterial or viral. Children with red eye/s and a watery or sticky discharge must be evaluated by a doctor, who will advise regarding return to school – at least 24 hours after start of treatment, perhaps until fully recovered.

- **IMPETIGO:** The fluid inside the blisters is very infectious. The child should be taken to the doctor who will advise regarding return to school, usually when blisters have dried and healed or a minimum of 24 hrs after commencing antibiotics.
- If your child **does not feel well enough to participate** in the normal programme of curriculum activities.
- If **antibiotics** are prescribed for a contagious illness or infection, the child should not attend school **until 24 hours after treatment has begun and must be showing signs of improvement.**
- If headlice or ringworm is noticed, the child may not come/return to school until treatment has commenced.

If a child has been sent to school and is clearly unwell, as described above, a parent or guardian will be asked to collect him/her from school as soon as possible. The child should not return to school the following day if symptoms are still present.

Responsibility of the School

If a child feels unwell or appears unwell, on arrival at school or during the school day, the school will contact the parent/guardian. If sent home by the school the child should not be sent in the next day if the same symptoms are still present. This is for the wellbeing of the child who is sick and also for the wellbeing of all members of the school community.

On an ongoing basis, we will aim to promote good hygiene practices that will help prevent transmission of infection. These practices will be taught as part of the SPHE curriculum and will be consolidated throughout the school day. They will include:

- Teaching and implementing effective handwashing throughout the school, with staff leading by example
- Teaching and implementing respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, e.g. to cover coughs and sneezes
- Facilitating the Schools Immunisation Programme
- Provision of gloves, aprons, suitable sanitising cleaning products and cleaning equipment for staff who are in contact with bodily fluids when caring for a child

Common Conditions requiring Immediate Treatment

HEAD LICE: It is important to avoid contact between an affected child and others. If parents/guardians notice head lice, or are advised that they have been noticed in the child's hair at school, treatment must begin before the child returns to school. So long as the treatment begins before bed-time, the child may attend school the next day.

RINGWORM: A child with suspected ringworm should be taken to their GP and, if ringworm is confirmed, treatment should begin as soon as possible. Once parents/guardians attend to this, the child may return to school.

Good to know

Please advise the school via the Aladdin app if your child is ill and cannot attend school. You can also cancel your child's lunch via the Lunch Bag app if you know your child will not be attending school.

If your child needs to take any medication, you will need to sign a Medicine Administration Form with the office to allow us to administer medicine to your child.

Further guidelines and advice is available on the following link to the HSE website:

<https://about.hse.ie/news/back-to-school-health-tips-from-the-hse/>