

# WHAT IF MY CHILD IS UNWELL?

Inform the school at the start of the day, giving the reason for absence.

Update the school daily on your child's absence and when they are likely to return.

On return to school write a letter/email or fill out the school slip confirming the reason for your child's absence.

Write down the number of your child's school to make things easier

School name

School phone numbers

**Emergencies** - For very severe or life threatening conditions go to A&E at St. Marys Hospital or call 999.

**Urgent Care 111** - If healthcare is needed urgently call the 111 urgent care service who will help direct you to the right service.

**GP Medical Services** - For symptoms and illnesses that don't get better call your doctor or between 6pm and 8am go to the Beacon Centre (at the main entrance of St.Mary's Hospital).

**Pharmacist** - For expert advice on common ailments and the best medicines to treat them.

**Advice** - [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or [www.iwight.com](http://www.iwight.com)

**Self Care** - Look after your child using a well stocked home medicine cabinet.

## SORE EYES

Your child can attend school with red eyes or discharge. These symptoms often clear on their own or you can get advice from your pharmacist. If symptoms persist visit your GP. To prevent sore eyes children should be advised to not touch their eyes.

## IMPETIGO AND SEVERE SKIN INFECTIONS

Impetigo is a highly contagious skin infection which causes sores and blisters either fluid filled or with yellow crusts and is very contagious and children should always see a GP. Children can return to school when the lesions are crusted and healed, or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment.

## ECZEMA AND LONG TERM RASHES

Children can attend school with rashes as most are non-infectious. Some young children often get a rash with a mild viral infection. If your child is otherwise well, but has a rash which disappears when a clear glass is pressed firmly over it, they should see their GP if the rash persists for more than

3 days. Untreated eczema can be very itchy and sore and disturb sleep, therefore it is essential to follow the advice given by your GP to care for their skin.

## HEADLICE

Children can go to school with headlice or nits but they and the rest of the family must be treated for the condition regularly until they are clear to help prevent it spreading and it being very uncomfortable for the child. See your pharmacist for advice on treating lice – wet combing and use of over the counter treatments are effective.



## THREADWORMS

Children can attend school but the whole family should be treated using an over the counter treatment from the Pharmacy. Children should wash hands regularly and nails should be kept short. All bedding and pyjamas should be hot-washed and the child should be bathed daily in the morning to reduce reinfection.

## CHILDHOOD RASHES

The vaccinations children receive prior to starting school will protect them against the most serious of the childhood rash diseases such as measles and rubella (German measles) but most children are likely to get 'Slapped Cheek syndrome' or Fifth disease as it is also known as, Roseola Infantum, Chicken Pox and Hand, Foot and Mouth disease all of which feature a rash often on particular parts of the body. A child with Chicken Pox should be kept off school until the spots have crusted over; for the other rash diseases the child should return to school as soon as they feel well even if the rash is still present. These diseases are not serious but can leave a child feeling unwell and paracetamol and plenty of fluids can help. If concerned about a child who is unwell with a rash and a raised temperature you should consult your child's GP.

## KEEPING YOUR CHILD WELL

Provide your child with a balanced diet and regular meals, especially breakfast. School meals are an easier way to ensure they eat a balanced diet than packed lunches. Ensure they drink enough water.

Encourage at least 60 minutes of daily exercise and daily time out of doors.

Keep bed times regular. School aged children need 8-10 hours of sleep each night.



Remind your child to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Ensure your child bathes and washes their hair regularly. Use tissues and dispose of them hygienically. Ensure the food they eat is fresh, and stored and cooked properly; also try to prevent your child sharing drinks and food with friends and family.

Encourage your children to dress appropriately for the weather.

If you use over the counter medications - use only those that are specific for your child's symptoms. **Never give children aspirin, adult medications, someone else's medication or medication left over or outdated.**

For more information please visit **Healthier Together [www.what0-18.nhs.uk](http://www.what0-18.nhs.uk)**

If you have difficulty in understanding this document please contact us on (01983) 821000 and we will do our best to help you.

3120PH 01/17 LF

# EVERY DAY MATTERS



## SHOULD MY CHILD GO TO SCHOOL TODAY?

Children occasionally get unwell and need time off school to recover. As parents it can sometimes be difficult to judge whether to send your child in to school or not. Unless your child is very unwell and unable to cope with the activities at school or has a contagious illness, they should be there. If their symptoms can be managed using medication such as paracetamol or if they are well into a course of antibiotics, you can send your child to school. Your child's school can help them to take their medication at the right time and keep it safe.

**Every day of school that they miss can never be repeated and the more they miss the more impact this has on their ability to keep up and achieve the best they can.**

If your child needs to see a doctor or a dentist for a regular appointment or check up, you should ask for one out of school time. If your child needs to see a doctor or dentist for an emergency appointment but later your child recovers or the doctor or dentist recommends that they are able to return to school you should get them to school that same day.

Most children with a cold, cough, sore throat or earache do not need treatment from their GP, nor be seen by them.

If your child is off school with illness they should be kept at home and encouraged to rest and drink plenty of fluids. Your child's school or school nurse may contact you to check on their progress and give advice on their return to school or how they can access suitable educational resources.

Only children with signs of serious illness need to be seen by a doctor immediately; these include:

- Excessive drowsiness
- Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing
- Cold or discoloured hands/feet with warm body
- Abnormal pains in arms/legs
- Very pale or blue tinge to skin colour
- Meningitis rash



## ACHES AND PAINS

Children with headache, earache or stomach ache can go to school and often feel better very quickly. Let staff know they have felt unwell and give paracetamol and plenty to drink.

If headache, earache or stomach ache persist seek advice from your child's GP.

If your child has a sprain or ache which they can manage with in school except for PE then you can ask for them to be excused from physical activity.

If your young child dislikes paracetamol try other different flavours or ibuprofen.

If your child can manage tablets check with the pharmacist or doctor if they can safely take paracetamol or ibuprofen.

## HIGH TEMPERATURE

Give paracetamol or children's ibuprofen and plenty to drink. If your child feels better and the temperature comes back to normal take them to school even if it is part way through the school day. If the child's temperature continues to be high for 3 days or more then take your child to see their GP.



## COUGHS AND COLDS

Children can be given paracetamol or children's ibuprofen and plenty of fluids to drink and can be sent to school. Your local pharmacy can offer advice on how to manage their symptoms. Children should be encouraged to wash their hands and use tissues to limit the spread of infection. If you are concerned that the cough is very persistent (lasting more than 3 weeks) or the child is struggling to breathe please seek medical assistance, although non-infectious coughing may persist for several weeks in children.

If your child is asthmatic, remember they may need their blue inhaler more often.

## FLU

Flu is a viral illness with sudden and severe onset of symptoms including cough, runny nose, muscle and joint aches, fever and tiredness which makes a child feel very unwell. A child with flu may not want to eat very much and may want to sleep in the day. They should have lots of rest and be offered plenty of fluids. Paracetamol can relieve aches, chills and high temperature. If required, seek advice, by telephone, from your GP or practice nurse.



## SORE THROAT AND TONSILLITIS

Children can be given paracetamol or children's ibuprofen to relieve pain and be sent to school. If the child feels generally unwell with tonsillitis they may need time to rest and recover at home.

## TUMMY BUGS, DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING

Some children can experience a one-off episode of diarrhoea or vomiting as a result of other conditions or as an effect of medication or over indulgence and although the school will send them home if it occurs in school, if there is no more diarrhoea or vomiting or other symptoms in 48 hours they can return to school as soon as they feel better.

It is essential to ensure hands are washed, towels are not shared and toilets kept clean to reduce the risk of the infection spreading.

**A child must only be kept off school for 48 hours after the last occurrence of diarrhoea or vomiting if they have had:**

**a)** Diarrhoea (two or more separate episodes of loose stools in a 24 hour period).

Or

**b)** Vomiting and one additional symptom from: one or more episodes of loose stools in a 24-hour period, abdominal cramps, headache, muscle aches and fever.

Or

**c)** Diarrhoea and vomiting: One or more episodes of both symptoms occurring within a 24 hour period not associated with a pre-existing medical condition.

