

## Guidelines for Assessing Your Child's Health

The patterns that children develop regarding health and illness often carry over into future school years as well as into adulthood and the work world. Attendance is a crucial aspect to success. We encourage students to remain at home when they are sick, however, students do need to attend school consistently to be successful in classes. Our goal is to work with students, parents and staff to promote optimal health thus creating the best environment for learning.

### **Guidelines for you to use in deciding if your child should stay home or go to school:**

1. **Temperature:** Your child's temperature should be below 100 degrees for 24 hours, without the use of medication to reduce fever, before returning to school. If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, this usually indicates an infection (viral or bacterial) of some nature. If this elevated temperature is discovered at school, you will be contacted at home/work to ask that you take him/her home.
2. **Colds/Flu:** Upper respiratory infections are most often caused by a virus. We recognize that no one feels good when they have a "cold", yet some viruses may last as long as three weeks. Extra rest and plenty of fluids will improve symptoms. If phlegm or drainage turns green, contact your doctor as this may indicate an infection in need of antibiotics.
3. **Headaches:** Students are encouraged to remain in school with headaches. If your child has frequent headaches, keep a log of when the headache occurs, what relieves the headache and how long they last. Over-the-counter medication is available in the health office for occasional relief.
4. **Stomachaches:** Students are encouraged to remain in school with stomachaches unless the pain or discomfort is associated with a temperature greater than 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea or lethargy. For elementary age students, stomachaches may occur easily with anxiety or stress and oftentimes a short rest or discussion about the source may relieve the pain so that they may return to class. If your child has a food allergy or is lactose intolerant, please inform the Nurses' Office so that proper information is communicated as to what action must be taken for ingestion of allergic substances.
5. **Lice:** Lice are tiny insects that live in human hair. They lay their eggs directly on the hair shaft, close to the scalp. These eggs are called "nits" and stick to the hair. They spread among children when personal items are shared such as combs, brushes, hats. Encourage your child not to share these items. Present of live lice in the hair will constitute exclusion from school. Once treatment is obtained, the student needs to be checked for absence of live lice before readmission to school is allowed.
6. **Asthma:** Students with asthma who require inhalers must have a physician and parental consent to either have them kept in the nurse's office or carry them during the school day. If your child has asthma that is not well controlled, please alert the school nurse so that an action plan can be set up to manage any asthma "attacks". Below are suggestions on when to send/not to send a child with asthma to school.

#### **When to go to school**

Stuffy nose but no wheezing  
Slight wheezing that goes away with medicine  
Able to do usual activity  
No extra effort needed to breathe

#### **When to stay home**

Infection, sore throat, painful neck glands  
Fever over 100 degrees, face hot or flushed  
Wheeze or cough that persists after medication  
Difficult, fast breathing, cannot do activities