

# Al-Khair School Oldbury

## Pupil Sickness Policy



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## Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Parental Duty of Care	2
3. Absence reporting procedure	2
4. Decisions regarding attendance or absence	3
5. Common Conditions:	3
6. How Long Should a Child Remain at Home?	4
7. What will the school do if a child is ill in school?	5
8. Collecting a sick child from school	5
9. Administering Medicines in school	5
10. Covid 19	
11. References	

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## 1.Introduction

This policy outlines procedures to be followed in the event of a pupil illness. As illnesses are diverse in nature it will not cover all eventualities. It also does not cover children with a known medical condition, who have a logged care plan with the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:-

- To ensure sick children are identified
- To ensure sick children are cared for appropriately
- To protect children and adults from preventable infections
- To enable staff and parents to be clear about the requirements and procedures when children are unwell
- To give guidance to parents and carers so they understand the recommended time scales for keeping children off school in case of a common illness

## **2. Parental Duty of Care**

Making sure a child attends school regularly is the legal responsibility of the parent/guardian. It is also crucial for the child's education and future. Full attendance enables a child to make the most of their education. Children who miss days at school risk not understanding classes and not making expected progress. By law, only the school can authorise your child's absence.

It's important to keep the school informed if your child is going to be absent because they are ill.

## **3. Absence reporting procedure**

There is a clear process for you to follow to inform the school that your child may not be attending because they are ill:

1. The parent/carer must telephone the school between 8.00 am and 8:40 to inform the school that their child is absent and the cause of the absence. The school will ask for the nature of the illness (in the case of sickness/diarrhoea, the checklist in Appendix A will be used) and the expected duration of the absence. The administrator will give guidance on the recommended length of absence if appropriate.
2. Parents coming into school to drop off siblings of the sick child must inform the office of the absence as well as the respective teacher.
3. If the school does not receive a phone call, within the above time frames, from a parent/ guardian the school will phone home to ascertain the child's whereabouts and reason for absence. If the school can't contact the parent at home, school will contact emergency contacts until whereabouts of the child and their well-being can be confirmed. This is part of our safeguarding procedures.

## **4. Decisions regarding attendance or absence**

Common sense is the best guide when deciding whether or not to send your child to school. Ask yourself:-

- Is your child well enough to join in the varied activities of the school day? (The school cannot always offer to supervise your child if you do not think they can go outside at playtimes.) If not keep your child at home.
- Does your child have a condition that can be passed on to other children or staff? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition? If so, keep your child at home.

## **5. Common Conditions:**

Most conditions can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend how serious you judge the illness to be. This guidance can help you make that judgement.

**Coughs and Colds** – a child with a minor cold or cough may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by shivers, drowsiness or a fever please keep your child away from school until the symptoms have been reduced and your child feels well enough to join in with a normal school day – usually 24 to 48 hrs. If your child has a severe cough it is best to consult your GP, who can provide guidance as to whether the child should stay at home. A severe cough can be debilitating for the child, interrupt lessons and your child will not be at their best.

**Raised temperature** – if your child has a raised temperature they should not attend school until the temperature has returned to normal and they are feeling better.

**Rash** – rashes can be the first sign of many infections such as chicken pox and measles. Children with these conditions should not attend school. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or nurse before sending them to school.

**Headaches** – a child with a minor headache does not normally need to be kept off school. If the headache is accompanied by a fever or rash, then keep your child off school and consult your GP.

**Vomiting and diarrhoea** - Children can be sick for many reasons – eating too many sweets and fizzy pop, eating a food which disagrees with them; you know your child and whether any of the above have caused the sickness. Some children also have specific intolerances to certain foods; they may be sick or have diarrhoea but are then well once the offending food has left their system. If you can be sure that any of the above are the reason for the vomiting then the child may return to school once they feel well – after 24 hrs.

Vomiting can also be caused by a viral condition. It is this form of sickness that concerns us most as we do not want other children to be infected and viral conditions can spread through a school quickly. If you cannot identify a reason for your child's sickness or if other members of the family have been ill or the sickness is accompanied by a fever, listlessness, a temperature and a general feeling of being unwell, you must not send your child to school for 48 hrs following the last incident of vomiting or diarrhoea. Some children recover very quickly and may appear to be well after 24 hrs but if the vomiting was not clearly linked to overeating or type of food eaten you must keep your child away from school for the full 48 hrs just in case they are still carrying a virus.

If you return your child to school before the 48 hrs and the cause of the vomiting is suspected to be viral, the school will ask you to take your child home for another day even if they appear well.

**Sore throat** – a child with a sore throat alone does not have to be kept from school. If your child is ill with it, the child should stay at home. A sore throat is often a precursor to a cold. If your child has not been their normal self at home but is not showing signs of illness when brought to school, parents should mention this to staff and ensure that contact details are correct and that they are obtainable.

## **6. How Long Should a Child Remain at Home?**

To minimise the risk of transmission of infection to other children, and staff, the following guidelines are suggested:

Disease/Illness	Minimal Exclusion Period
Chicken pox and shingles	5 days after the onset of the rash. Immuno-compromised children/adults – should take separate advice from their GP
Conjunctivitis	A child should stay away if the eye is discharging until treated for 24 hrs and/or eyes appear normal again.
Diarrhoea & vomiting	Until there has been no diarrhoea or vomiting for 48 hrs
German measles – rubella	5 days from the onset of the rash and until the child feels well.
Head Lice	No exclusion but please treat immediately and inform school
Impetigo	Once the spots have crusted over or healed or 48 hours of antibiotics and the child feels well
Mumps	7 days from the onset of swollen glands and the child feels well.
Scabies	Child may return to school the day after treatment

## 7. What will the school do if a child is ill in school?

If a child complains of feeling unwell the staff will initially monitor their condition and keep them comfortable depending on their symptoms. Sometimes drinking water, getting some fresh air, sitting quietly for 10 minutes settles the child and they may recover.

If a child is still feeling unwell they will be seen by a First Aider, Our qualified First Aid staff will make a decision if the child needs to be sent home, and if a decision is made to send a child home the parents/carers will be contacted. In the meantime, the child will be kept as comfortable as possible until a parent arrives.

If the member of staff considers the illness/situation to warrant immediate medical attention, they will report to the Headteacher who will contact emergency services or take the child directly to hospital and the carer or parent will be notified accordingly.

## **8. Collecting a sick child from school**

The school administrator or teacher will describe the child's symptoms, any treatment given and direct the parent to this policy on the school website before bringing the child back to school.

If a child returns to school and staff feel that the child is still unwell we reserve the right to either ask the parent to take the child home or contact the parent to collect the child.

## **9. Administering Medicines in school**

On the rare occasions that children need medication during the school day a written parental consent form needs to be completed which is available from the school office. As a general rule: The school will only administer prescribed medicines that cannot be given outside the school day. For antibiotics that need to be given 3 times a day – these can be given before school, after school and at bedtime so there would be no need for staff to administer the medicine in school.

The school will not, under any circumstances, administer any Paracetamol or Ibuprofen products such as Calpol. If your child needs such medicines administered during the School day then they are probably not well enough to attend school. We do understand however that there may be exceptional circumstances where a child may need pain relief in school time. In these exceptional circumstances, agreement to administer Paracetamol or Ibuprofen products must be sought, in advance, from the Headteacher. In these circumstances it will be expected that the parent/carer will come into school to administer the medicine. The school will not accept a third party administering medicines to a child e.g. a friend of the parent.

If your child suffers from asthma you must provide the school with the child's prescribed inhaler. Children are not permitted to carry any medicines around school with them.

If your child has any severe allergy such as an allergy to nuts or fish and your doctor has prescribed an epipen for emergencies, you must supply the school with 2 epipens. These will be retained by the school for emergencies.

## **10. Covid 19**

**Children displaying symptoms such as cough and fever should be taken to the First aid room and if it is safe to do so they must wear a mask and have their temperature taken. The parent must be contacted immediately to pick up the child as soon as possible.**

All staff and pupils that are displaying symptoms of COVID 19 are excluded from the school site for at least 7 days or until they are symptom free or confirmed to be COVID 19 free by testing. After the test has come negative they must be symptom free for 48hours before returning to school. If a member in the household has been tested positive the child or a staff member must isolate themselves for 10 days.

(phe guidance: Stay at Home: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID 19 infection.)

## 11.References

This policy has been prepared in conjunction with the Government recommendations for **Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities which can be found at:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>