

16/12/25

Dear Parents and Carers

We were very proud of the average pupil attendance across our 11 primary schools last academic year, which was 96%—higher than the national average of 94.8%. Thank you for the effort you make every day to ensure your child attends school regularly; it really does make a difference. While attendance nationally is still not quite back to pre-pandemic levels, we know how important it is for children to be in school. Regular attendance supports learning, friendships, wellbeing and confidence, giving children the best possible start in life.

We also understand that it can sometimes be hard to decide whether your child is well enough for school. To help with this, the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, and other health professionals have shared guidance for parents and carers. You can find the full advice here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>. We've included a short summary of the key points below to make things easier:

Coughs and colds	It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold . But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.
High temperature	If your child has a high temperature , 38 degrees or above, keep them off school until it goes away.
Chickenpox	If your child has chickenpox , keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.
Cold sores	There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore . Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.
Conjunctivitis	You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis . Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.
Covid 19	If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a high temperature. • do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities. What to do if your child has tested positive Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.
Ear infection	If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better, or their high temperature goes away.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Impetigo	If your child has impetigo , they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.
Ringworm	If your child has ringworm , see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.
Scarlet Fever	If your child has scarlet fever , they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise, they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.
Sore Throat	You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat . But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis .
Threadworms	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms . Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.
Vomiting and diarrhoea	Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

We know there will be times, following the guidance above, when your child needs to stay at home to rest and recover—and that's absolutely the right thing to do for their health and wellbeing. When this happens, please remember to call the school or nursery on the first day of absence to let us know your child won't be in and share the reason why.

Every school has a key safeguarding responsibility to check on any absence that hasn't been reported. If we haven't heard from you, the school office will try to contact all the listed numbers until we can confirm the reason for absence. This is simply to make sure your child is safe and accounted for.

We hope this information is helpful, especially as we head into the winter months when coughs and colds are more common. Our schools are here to support you in maintaining positive attendance, and we understand that every family's situation is unique. If you have any concerns or would like to talk about your child's attendance, please reach out to your school leaders—they're always happy to help.

Yours Sincerely



Mrs J Robinson
CEO, YCAT

