

Minor Illness and School Attendance



A Guide for Parents

Introduction

Potters Gate School works closely with the Educational Welfare Service and School Health and many other agencies to ensure that children and young people can benefit from all the educational opportunities available to them.

To achieve this aim, we also work in partnership with parents to make sure all our pupils attend as fully as possible.

We have found a steady increase in the number of children missing school due to assumed illness. We need the support of all parents to tackle this trend.

To help avoid unnecessary school absences while promoting child welfare, Potters Gate has produced this leaflet as a general guide to help parents decide whether their child is well enough to attend.

If your children are at home because they are unwell.

If your child gets better during the school day please bring them in late. We would rather see them for the last lesson, than not at all.

If they are well enough to go shopping or play boisterous games they are well enough to return to school.

We do not usually give school work to children who are off school because they are sick. If they are well enough to complete it they are well enough to be in school.

Some common rules about illness absences

Minor illness

If your child is unwell on a school day, please always contact the school in the morning to let us know.

Longer term absence

If your child is absent from school for 3 or more days, or is often absent for short spells, the school may ask you to present a doctor's note to confirm the reason for absence. A letter from a parent is needed when:

- A child has any condition requiring hospital or surgical care.
- The child returns to school with a cast or stitches.
- The child needs restricted PE lessons or playtime activities.

In cases of concern, school or parents can ask for the advice of the school nurse, who may visit the child either in school or at home.

Good common sense

Use good common sense when deciding whether your child needs to stay at home. Work on the basis that sick children belong at home and well children belong in the classroom!

Please remember that early morning aches often pass, so don't keep your child at home 'just in case' when they could be learning in class. If you are not sure, check the guidance in this leaflet. For further advice you could talk to a member of the school staff, your doctor or the school health staff at the number below.

Is my child well enough to attend school?

Raised temperature

If your child looks or feels shivery, unusually cold or hot, they may have a raised temperature. This may be due to a variety of reasons. If your child has a raised temperature, they should not be in school. You may wish to contact your GP if a high temperature persists. However, your child should be able to return to school 24 hours after they feel and look better.

Cold and Cough

A child may attend school with minor colds and coughs.

However, children with bad or long-lasting coughs need to stay at home. When the cough is disappearing and the child is feeling better, they need to return to school.

Rashes

A rash could be the first sign of one of childhood's many illnesses, such as chicken pox or measles. The rash or 'spots' may cover the entire body or just appear in only one area.

Do not send a child to school with an unexplained rash or skin eruption until you have consulted your doctor.

If you think your child has meningitis, seek help from your doctor or hospital immediately.

Minor aches and pains

If your child has a persistent tooth or ear ache they need to see a dentist or a doctor without delay.

A child whose only complaint is minor headaches does not usually need to be kept at home.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea

If vomiting occurs, keep your child at home until they can keep food down. A child with diarrhoea should also be kept at home. Children must be kept at home until 24 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Consult your doctor if your child does not improve as you expect.

Sore throat

If your child complains of a slight sore throat and has no other symptoms, they are fit to go to school.

If the sore throat occurs with a raised temperature, they need to stay at home.

Headlice

Once a headlice treatment has been used there is no need for children to be kept at home.

Your contact details

Please make sure that the contact details the school has are current and up to date. It is important that the school is able to make contact with you during the day if your child is not well enough to stay in school.

Our contact details

01252 715619

School Health Service

01483 782922

Education Welfare Service

01483 517868

Other useful contact and information

NHS Direct - Available 24 hrs for you to find out more about illnesses, operations, tests and treatments
Tel: 0845 4647 Website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Website on Meningitis: www.meningitis.org