

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they're unwell. There are government guidelines for schools. These say when children should be kept off school and when they can attend.

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.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis.

High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it 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.

Ringworm

It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Slapped cheek

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.

Threadworms

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms.

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:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities

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.

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.

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).

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

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.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.

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.

Sore throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. However, a sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.