

## When to Keep Your Child Home

**Dear SES Families,**

One of the roles of your School Nurse is to partner with families and their physicians when students develop illnesses or sustain injuries. The School Nurse assists students and families with treatment plans, follow up care and accommodations when the student returns to school. My goal is to keep everyone healthy, safe and ready to learn. Here are important guidelines for your reference.

**Illnesses: When to contact the nurse and keep your child home from school.** If you decide to keep your child home due to a typical childhood illness, you must call the school and inform the school nurse on the day of the absence. Here are the top six reasons why students typically stay home.

<p><b><u>Fever of 100 degrees or more:</u></b> A child with a fever of 100 degrees or more will need to stay home and not attend school or afterschool activities the day the fever begins. A student may return to school after they have been fever free for 24 hours <i>without the use of fever reducing medications</i>.</p>
<p><b><u>Vomiting and Diarrhea:</u></b> A student with either vomiting and/or cramping diarrhea will need to stay home for 24 hours after the last episode. A student may return to school when they are genuinely feeling better and when their energy, appetite, and bowel habits return.</p>
<p><b><u>Sore throat:</u></b> A child with a fever and very sore throat that affects eating and swallowing, or wakes a child at night should be checked for Strep Throat. At school, we suspect Strep if there have been confirmed cases in the classroom, if the child's sore throat lasts more than a day and is accompanied by continued inability to comfortably swallow, the presence of a dull headache, stomach ache, and swollen and tender throat. A physician must evaluate students who have a suspected Strep throat infection. A student may return to school 24 hours after starting the first dose of antibiotic medication. ** A child who is fever free, <i>may</i> come to school with a mildly irritated, sore throat which is common prior to simple colds.</p>
<p><b><u>Conjunctivitis:</u></b> A doctor must evaluate and treat Pinkeye or Conjunctivitis. It is very contagious. Symptoms of pinkeye include a pink or reddened eye surface and/or eyelashes that are sticky from visible drainage. Your student will likely be prescribed antibiotic eye drop medicine. A student may return to school 24 hours after starting the first dose of this medication.</p>
<p><b><u>Earaches, Rashes or Hives, Infected cuts, Deer Tick bites:</u></b> Please contact your health provider for advice and have such conditions diagnosed, treated and monitored by a physician.</p>
<p><b><u>Congestion, a miserable runny nose, and persistent cough:</u></b> Often a day or two of rest will help resolve a bad cold and allow a student's energy to return. Our goal is to limit the spread of nuisance viral colds to classmates, teachers and staff.</p>

**Injuries: When to make a plan with the school nurse.** If your child was injured at home, and then brought to an ER or physician they may need close follow up to heal properly. If your physician has given your student a splint, cast or crutches, or your child was diagnosed with a concussion, you must inform the school nurse who will coordinate a health plan for during the school day.

It may be necessary to place limits on what your child can or cannot do at school. We request that the physician who is handling your student's care, rehabilitation, and recovery write a note to the school that explains the activity limitations from recess and/or PE. The nurse will share this information with the classroom teacher and the PE teacher.

Please don't hesitate to call or email with questions. Thank you!

**Jeannie Johnson, BSN, RN**

**413-665-1451**

**jeannie.johnson@frsu38.org**