

Martin County School Health Services

Guidelines for Keeping Sick Children Home

Each day many parents are faced with a decision: should they keep their sick child at home or send them off to school? Often the way a child looks and acts can make the decision an obvious one. Please consider these guidelines:

- **Colds:** Please keep your child at home if he/she has a fever over 100 degrees or is experiencing discomfort that would interfere with his/her ability to perform in school. (i.e. uncontrollable coughing, severe lack of energy). If your child experiences green nasal discharge that continues throughout the day, or a cough lasting longer than ten days, or is accompanied by fever or chills and is productive of discolored sputum, consult with your physician.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink-eye):** Following a diagnosis of bacterial conjunctivitis, the child may return to school after the first dose of prescribed medication.
- **Diarrhea/Vomiting:** A child with diarrhea and /or vomiting 3 or more times during the school day should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom-free for 24 hours.
- **Fever:** The child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100°. The child can return to school after he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin).
- **Impetigo:** The child with impetigo may return to school 24 hours after treatment has begun. A doctor's note is required to return to school.
- **Rashes:** Common infectious diseases with rashes are most contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash should return to school only after a health care provider has made a diagnosis and authorized the child's return to school.
- **Strep Throat:** A child with strep throat may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.

A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows the child an opportunity to rest and recover.

Martin County School Health Services
Guidelines in reference to Head Lice, Pink Eye, and Ringworm

The following medical conditions are easily spread from person to person. Therefore, the school system has guidelines that must be followed in order to prevent outbreaks of these medical problems within the school. Human lice, pink eye, and ringworm are the most common infectious diseases in schools. If your child presents with symptoms of these diseases the following guidelines will be followed:

Human lice (Pediculosis) are tiny insects that live in the head or the hairy parts of the body and clothing. They hatch from small eggs called nits.(Martin County Health Services Manual) Nits multiply very rapidly. Nits (lice eggs) hatch within 7 to 10 days into lice. If your child has nits and lice he or she will need to be treated immediately. Someone from the school will contact you to come pick up your child and he/she will be excluded from school until treated. **Your child may return to school after one shampoo treatment for lice has been completed. You will need to send in the box top of the treatment used with the child when he/she returns to school.**

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) is a redness and swelling of the conjunctiva (protective tissue and the white part of the eye). Symptoms include redness, watery or purulent discharge from the eye, itching, and crust in the eye, especially when waking from sleep. There are three types of Conjunctivitis: Viral, Allergic, and Infectious (bacterial). To determine which type your child may have they will need to be seen by their physician and receive the appropriate treatment. If your child has pink eye they will be excluded from school. **Your child may return to school with a doctor's note stating when treatment was started.**

Ringworm is an infection caused by a fungus. It appears as a reddish patch, often scaly or blistered. The infection may appear on the skin, head, or nails. Ringworm is easily spread by direct contact with infected animals, people, soil, and objects. If your child has ringworm he/she will be excluded from school. **Your child may return to school after treatment begins. For ringworm of the skin, you must send the box top of the antifungal medicine with your child when he/she returns to school. For ringworm of the nails and scalp, you must send a doctor's note to school with the child stating the child has been treated.**

Because these infectious diseases are so easily spread from one person to another, we have to follow these guidelines in order to keep and maintain a healthy environment for all students here at East End Elementary School.