

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This note is being sent home to remind you of how we can help everyone in our school community to be as healthy as possible and reduce spreading germs by keeping children at home if they are unwell or still recovering from a recent contagious illness.

Children who have suffered from vomiting, diarrhea, the flu, chest infections, chicken pox, whooping cough or other contagious conditions need to be kept at home until they are completely recovered.

We also have a child in our class who has **cystic fibrosis**. Cystic fibrosis is not contagious but is a genetic illness that causes a build-up of mucus in the lungs and pancreas, causing problems with both breathing and digestion. Common colds and other viruses can have more serious consequences for people with this condition, possibly resulting in several weeks in hospital. Continuous infections for a person with cystic fibrosis can cause scarring on the lungs and decrease their capacity to function. One important part of the daily medical regime that a person with cystic fibrosis needs to follow includes minimising the risk of catching infections from others.

Illness/Virus	Contagious for...	Stay home when...
Influenza (Flu) Symptoms include headaches, high temperature, feverishness, chills, dry cough, muscle aches, sore throat, loss of appetite and chest pain.	A person with the flu can transmit the virus one day before they even begin to show symptoms of the virus. They will continue to be contagious for 5 days after they develop the symptoms.	If your child has a high temperature. If your child has the flu, it is usually ok to send them back to school after 5 days.
Common cold viruses Several different viruses can cause colds. They usually affect the nose and throat.	The common cold is contagious between 24 hours before onset of symptoms until 5 days after onset.	If your child has green mucus.
Chicken pox Symptoms include fever, feeling ill, sore throat, and loss of appetite.	A person who has chicken pox is highly contagious and it can be passed on between 1 and 5 days before the person has shown signs of a rash. The person with chicken pox is contagious for 5 days after the onset of the rash until lesions crust over.	Keep at home until the sores have crusted over or the GP gives the all clear.
Whooping cough Symptoms begin like a cold with runny nose, tiredness, mild fever and poor appetite. Then bouts of coughing develops followed by characteristic "whooping" sound when breathing in.	A person with whooping cough can be infectious for up to 3 weeks after the onset of the cough. If antibiotics are taken the person will be infectious until 5 days after taking a 10 day course of antibiotics.	Keep at home until no longer infectious. Other members of the family may need to take antibiotics too.
Gastro Symptoms include stomach pain or spasms, diarrhea and/or vomiting.	After exposure to the virus, a person can become sick within 18 to 72 hours. Most people feel better after a day or two, but are still contagious for at least 3 days. If a person has gastro they should not prepare food for 72 hours.	Keep your child at home for at least 24-48 hours after he/she has been affected by gastro.

It is impossible to avoid all infections, but by taking precautions we can lower the risk of catching and spreading them to each other and to particularly vulnerable classmates with conditions such as cystic fibrosis. We appreciate your support and cooperation.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards