

SICKNESS AT SCHOOL

The Little Falls Board of Education follows the procedure for keeping students home from school when they are sick. There are several reasons listed on our website that state when a child should remain home from school. If a student has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit the child must remain home for 24 hours after the initial temperature of 100 degrees. The child may be taking medicine during this period to reduce the temperature but must stay home for 24 hours of the first elevated temperature. The child may return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine. For example if a child has a temperature of 100 degrees or greater at 6:00pm the child should be absent from school the next day. If the child does not have a temperature of 100 degrees or greater the following evening the child may return to school the following day. The child should not be taking medicine to reduce a temperature of 100 degrees or more and return to school. If the child still needs medicine to have a normal temperature they are not well enough to be in school.

A fever can be caused by a virus or bacteria. This is why the child needs to stay home for 24 hours so we can prevent the spread of infection to other students. This policy of not returning to school for 24 hours after a temperature of 100 degrees or greater is supported by our school physician, Dr. Diana. Many viruses and bacterial infections are airborne; this means they spread when someone talks, coughs or sneezes. The only way to decrease the spread of these germs is to make sure a child is healthy before they return to school.

Another reason to stay home is when a child has gastrointestinal problems such as repeated episodes of diarrhea or vomiting. Vomiting and diarrhea can lead to dehydration and fever. The pediatrician should be contacted for these gastrointestinal problems. These symptoms must have subsided for 24 hours before they return to school. A child that returns to school too early will be uncomfortable in school. The risk of spreading these germs to others can occur when a student does not stay home when they are sick.

Children that are taking antibiotics for streptococcal infections (strep throat) should take the medicine for 24 hours before returning to school. For example a child that starts an antibiotic at 3:00pm on a Tuesday can not return to school until Thursday morning. The same guidelines are used for conjunctivitis (pink eye). A student that starts eye drops for conjunctivitis must have taken the medicine for 24 hours before returning to school. The rationale is that after 24 hours on the medication the child is no longer contagious.

There is no way we can protect our children from all the viruses and bacterial infections around us. However, by enforcing hand washing, and following the above procedures we can reduce the amount of illnesses we have in our schools.

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