

## Is Your Child Fit for School? Advice for Blundell's Parents and Guardians

It can be very difficult to know if you should keep your child off school if he / she are unwell. As a general guide, the following signs and symptoms should warrant exclusion from school until further medical advice is sought;

**Fever:** The presence of a persistent fever, or temperature, often heralds the onset of an infectious illness. Many illnesses are at their most infectious in the early stages before other symptoms have developed. Pupils should not be sent to school if they have a persistent temperature over 37.5 Centigrade. This includes a fever that requires control with medication such as Paracetamol.

Please be advised that Aspirin should not be given to children below the age of 16, unless directed by a physician, due to the risk of Reye's syndrome, a serious encephalitic condition.

**Diarrhoea and/or vomiting:** Pupils should not return to school until symptom free for 48 hours to prevent the spread of gastrointestinal infections. Most children get better within a few days after a bland diet, rest and fluids. Medical advice should be sought if any diarrhoea or vomiting is accompanied by fever, severe abdominal pain, projectile vomit or signs of dehydration. Symptoms of dehydration include decreased and dark urine, sunken eyes, dried lips and tongue, lethargy and listlessness.

**Undiagnosed skin rash:** there are many reasons for a skin rash but any rash, particularly if accompanied by a rise in temperature, should be investigated by your GP. Being fully immunized protects against many illness that present with a fever and rash i.e. measles

**Untreated contagious conditions;** these need to be treated or they will rapidly spread around the school. In most cases your child may attend school once being treated for the following conditions;

**Impetigo:** a skin infection characterized by honey coloured crusts, especially common around the mouth, nose and limbs. Treatment is usually with a topical ointment.

**Conjunctivitis:** there are many causes of a 'pink' or 'red' eye. Please seek advice from your GP as to whether eye drops are needed.

**Ringworm:** a common fungal infection of the skin characterised by a ring shaped lesion, usually dry and scaly with a clear centre. Please seek advice from your GP as to whether a topical antifungal skin ointment is needed.

Your child may have other signs and symptoms which make you unsure whether he / she should attend school. Please call the San on 01884 232422 should you wish to ask any advice from the medical or nursing team.

Other sources of advice can be found on the following websites;

<http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk>

<http://www.patient.co.uk>