



# Sick Child Policy

June 2020  
Review date June 2022



# Sick Pupil Policy & Covid 19 Measures

## Purpose:

- To ensure that, when appropriate, pupils who are ill are cared for at home.
- To protect pupils and staff from preventable cross infection, including, but not limited to Covid 19
- To enable staff and parents/carers to be well informed about the matters to consider when deciding whether a pupil should be in school

## Introduction.

Rutherford School recognises that the health and well-being of our pupils is of paramount importance to enable them to access the curriculum. For the comfort and well-being of all pupils, the following policy gives guidelines to school staff and parents/carers to help them decide if a pupil is well enough to be attending school. However, in case of doubt parents are requested to speak to the school nursing team or their child's GP **before** sending their child in to school.

It is also important to be mindful that many of our pupils have chronic health conditions such as reflux, or excessive secretions which may frequently present in a similar way to an infectious illness.

The recent Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak has highlighted the importance of all members of the school community being aware of and working within the school sick pupil policy. At time of writing, Covid 19 remains active within the community at large, so it is imperative that measures are in place to limit transmission of this disease within the school community.

It must be noted that the school does not have a designated sick bay, so any pupil who is unwell will have to remain in the classroom with other pupils while awaiting collection by a parent. This increases the risk of infectious illness to all the other staff and

pupils in the room; therefore it is important that parents are mindful of this when being asked to collect their child.

## General guidelines:

The school is very aware of the needs of working parents, and of the needs of our parents and carers to have some time away from the care of their children, however, if a pupil is clearly infectious, or feeling too unwell to access the curriculum then it is essential that they are not in school. The highly infectious nature of coronavirus means that this is more important than ever.

The following list gives general guidelines for common childhood illnesses and conditions, but is in no way exhaustive.

**CONTAGIOUS DISEASES:** any child who is diagnosed by a healthcare professional with a contagious disease will be excluded from school until they are no longer infectious. The school nurses will liaise with the parents/carers, and the doctor treating the pupil if necessary to agree how long the child needs to stay home from school. If necessary, Public Health England will be contacted for advice.

**VOMITING AND /OR DIARRHOEA:** Any pupil who has vomiting or diarrhoea **MUST** remain at home for **48 hours** after the **LAST** episode of vomiting or diarrhoea. The pupil must be tolerating his or her usual diet or enteral feed before returning to school. The school nurses will take into account other medical conditions and medications that a pupil has which may cause vomiting or diarrhoea before deciding if a pupil needs to remain at home, and will make contact with the parent or carer to find out whether there has been a change in diet or medication which may be causing the vomiting or diarrhoea. However, where it is not clear what is causing the problem, the school nurses will err on the side of caution and request that the pupil stays off school for the required 48 hours.

**COUGHS AND COLDS:** It is accepted that **minor** coughs and colds are common, particularly during



the winter months. A pupil who has a slightly runny nose, or a **mild infrequent** cough **may** be allowed to attend school but this will be at the discretion of the school nursing team. If the pupil is miserable and unable to access the curriculum, if they are impacting on other pupils' learning, or if classroom staff are having to spend a large amount of time assisting the pupil with hygiene due to a runny nose, then the pupil will need to stay at home until symptoms improve. If the cold gets worse during the day, they will need to go home **It is imperative to note that Covid 19 frequently presents with a cough, (coughing a lot, for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (NHS coronavirus website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>)** Therefore, any pupil who has developed a cough, even if they remain otherwise well, will be sent home and the parent asked to seek medical advice before the pupil can return to school. See Covid 19 below also.

**RAISED TEMPERATURE:** Any pupil who has a raised temperature will need to remain at home until the temperature is back to what is normal for that pupil. If the temperature becomes raised at school the parents will be contacted and asked to collect the pupil. Paracetamol may be given if safe to do so while waiting for the parent, but this will not be given in order for the pupil to remain at school. due to the potential for the fever to be caused by Covid 19 This will be decided by the school nurses. Baseline observations are recorded regularly for each pupil when they are well. If a pupil's temperature goes up following an epileptic seizure this will be recorded in the care plan. See Covid 19 below also.

**ANTIBIOTICS** If a pupil is prescribed antibiotics, it is vital that the parents/carers discuss this with the school nursing team **before** the pupil returns to school. If the antibiotics are for an infection which could be passed on to other pupils, the parents/carers must find out from the prescriber when it is safe for the pupil to return to school. If there is no risk of infection to other pupils, and the pupil seems well in themselves, they can attend school and the school nursing team will administer

the antibiotics. Parents must ensure that they comply with the school medication policy and give written consent for the antibiotics to be given.

**SKIN RASHES:** Marks on the skin are very common with our pupils, due to the orthotic devices they wear, and sometimes due to the medication they take. If a pupil has a skin rash, the parents/carers, school nurses and if necessary the pupil's GP will need to decide whether the rash is caused by an infection, and whether the pupil should be in school.

**POST-SURGERY:** If a pupil has had surgery, the parents/carers must take advice from the surgeon as to when it is advisable for the pupil to return to school. In the case of orthopaedic surgery, due to the nature of our pupils, it may be decided that an early return is advisable in order for the pupil to receive the necessary physiotherapy. If regular analgesia is required this can be administered by the school nursing team under the direction of the GP or consultant. Nurses will work closely with classroom staff when deciding if a pupil needs analgesia. Parents would be required to consult with the physiotherapy team or school nurses to ensure that the pupil's extra needs can be met in school.

**COVID 19:** Covid 19 is a new disease and at the time of writing, information about the signs, symptoms and transmission of this disease are still emerging. The school nursing team will use the latest government and NHS information available when considering whether a pupil may have symptoms consistent with Covid 19. Due to the highly infectious nature of this illness, the nurses will **always** err on the side of caution and ask for a pupil to be collected if they are showing any symptoms which could suggest that they have Covid 19. They will be asked to stay at home for 7 days, or until they have a test for Covid 19 which proves negative before they can return to school. If a family member has symptoms consistent with Covid 19 the pupil must remain at home for 14 days.

During times of rapid community spread of Covid 19 such as the time of writing, all pupils' temperatures will be checked and recorded on



arrival at school. Any significant increase in temperature will necessitate the pupil returning home and remaining there for at least 7 days as per government advice.

The latest government advice can be found here; [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Government guidance regarding vulnerable and extremely vulnerable people can be found here; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

It is imperative that we all work together to avoid Covid as much as possible in our school community. Due to the needs of our pupils, social distancing is not always possible, although this will be adhered to as much as possible.

### **Arrangements for Pupils who become unwell during the school day.**

If classroom staff feel that a pupil is unwell, they will contact the school nurses who will check the pupil's temperature, and other vital signs as appropriate, such as oxygen levels, and, after comparing these with the pupil's baseline observations, will decide whether the pupil should remain in school. This decision will be a joint decision between the class teacher and the nurse, taking into account the above guidelines.

The teacher or nurse will contact the parent/carer to advise them that their child appears to be unwell. The parent may be able to give the teacher or nurse more information which will explain the symptoms for example, the pupil has just had an immunisation, or has been given laxatives. The nurse will then decide, based on this information whether the pupil needs to go home. However, in the current climate of Covid 19 infection, in the interest of the whole school community, the nurses will always err on the side of caution.

If a pupil needs analgesia the nurse MUST first ensure that none has been given in the previous 4 hours, to avoid over-dosing.

- Therefore, before 12.30 (or if the child has been in school less than 4 hours) the nurse will contact the parent/carer to find out this information.

- If no contact can be made, the pupil will NOT be given analgesia until after 12.30.
- After 12.30 (or 4 hours after the pupil has arrived in school) analgesia will be given. The nurse will still attempt to contact the parents, but if no contact can be made the analgesia will be given.
- When analgesia is given in school, the time and dose is written in the Home/School book by the nurse who administered, and the parent may also be informed by telephone if this is felt necessary.

If a pupil needs to be collected during the day, it is the responsibility of the parents/ carers to collect their child.

If a pupil's condition deteriorates severely while at school, an ambulance will be called and the parents/carers notified accordingly.

While waiting to be collected, the unwell pupil will remain in the classroom in the most comfortable position for them. If the pupil appears to be infectious, they will be looked after as far away from other pupils as possible, if possible in another room, although this may not always be practical. If the pupil is displaying Covid 19 symptoms staff caring for the pupil will wear apron, gloves and surgical mask until the pupil is collected, and avoid caring for other pupils in the class as much as possible.

If a pupil is very unwell, an ambulance will be called, as per the Ambulance Policy.

If the pupil has a care plan for the condition they are exhibiting, e.g. epilepsy or difficulty with breathing, the nursing care plan will be used in conjunction with the clinical judgement of the school nurses when deciding how the pupil should be treated.

### **Working together.**

In order to maintain good relationships between parents/carers and school staff, here are some general points which help to avoid un-necessary



telephone calls and requests for pupils to be collected.

### **PARENTS:**

Communicate with class staff via the Home/School book any changes to a child's routine, such as medical changes, new medication, use of laxatives, immunisations, late nights/poor sleeping; this information may help the nurses to decide whether or not an unhappy pupil is actually an unwell pupil.

Ensure the school has up –to- date contact numbers. If parents/carers are going to be unobtainable on a day, they must ensure the school has details of another responsible adult who could collect the pupil if necessary. If the school cannot get hold of the usual parent, the school will try all the numbers on the pupil contact sheet.

If analgesia has been given, inform the school in writing via the Home/School book or email stating name of medication, time given and the reason for giving.

Ensure the school nurses have a supply of all medication that their child needs, including emergency medication.

Ensure that isolation of a pupil is adhered to if any family members have symptoms of Covid 19 (see above)

### **SCHOOL STAFF**

#### **Nursing Team**

Ensure that all medication held for a pupil is in date, and that all requests for more medication are sent to parents prior to medication becoming out of date.

#### **Nursing team / Class Staff / Therapists**

##### **Staff/Therapists**

Communicate with parents if a pupil has not been responding in their usual manner so that the parents/carers can observe any changes during the evening.

Liaise with other school staff, so that any calls to parents/carers are kept to a minimum.

Ensure that all staff do not come into work if they have an infectious illness. Comply with self-isolation requirements if they or any members of their household have symptoms of or a positive test for Covid 19

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**Nurse Manager**

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# Rutherford School

Caring First  
Respect Always



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