

SICKNESS POLICY

Introduction

The school has a duty of care to all its pupils and members of staff. This policy aims to set out procedures to be followed when children become unwell, to ensure that they are well cared for and that, where the cause is of an infectious nature, others are not exposed needlessly.

Parents are asked **not** to send their child/ren to school if any of the following apply:

- The child is showing any symptoms of Covid 19 (see below for more information on the symptoms)
- The child has a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- The child has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus
- The child has been living with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
- The child does not feel well enough to participate in the normal programme of curriculum activities.
- The child requires more care than the classroom team is able to provide without affecting the health, safety and schoolwork of the other pupils.
- If antibiotics are prescribed for a contagious illness or infection, the child should not attend school until 24 hours after treatment has begun and must be showing signs of improvement.
- If headlice or ringworm is noticed, the child may not come to school until treatment has begun.
- If a child has been sent to school and is clearly unwell, as described above, a parent or guardian will be asked to collect him/ her from school as soon as possible.

Pupil Absence – Informing the bus escort

If a pupil becomes ill overnight or at the weekend and is unable to attend on the next school day, the parent/ guardian should contact the bus escort so the school bus need not come unnecessarily to the house. The evening before a pupil returns to school, the parent/ guardian should phone the bus escort to ensure their son/ daughter is collected in the morning.

Pupil Absence – Informing the school

As well as contacting the bus escort, the parent/ guardian must also contact the school office, stating the reason for the child's absence. Ring the school on 015054898 and leave a voicemail if the phone is unanswered.

This is very important for the following reasons:

- If a child has an illness which is recognised by HSE as an infectious disease, staff, other parents/guardians or the authorities may need to be notified. It is vital that information about an infectious disease is passed to the school as soon as possible.
- National Educational Welfare Board requires the reason for absence to be recorded
- Child absences may affect how staff members are assigned during the school day.

Covid-19

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of cold and flu.

Getting an early diagnosis from your GP means you can get the help you need and take steps to avoid spreading the virus, if you have it.

Each member in the school community (staff, students, the BOM, parents, clinicians etc.) has an important role to play in slowing and avoiding the transmission of Covid-19.

No student should attend school if:

- They are showing any signs of Covid 19
- They have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- They have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus
- They have been living with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus and has been advised to get a Covid 19 test
- 48 hours after your child has had a “not detected” Covid 19 test result and are symptom free

No staff members are permitted attend school if they are experiencing ANY symptoms of Covid-19.

The BOM requires absolute adherence to this policy by the entire school community.

All staff must fill out the COVID 19 return to work questionnaire at least 3 days prior to arriving on site. All parents must fill in a return to school form on behalf of their

child before they return to school. Parents and staff may be required to complete these forms again after any significant breaks from school.

If a staff member begins to become unwell in school, they should immediately wear a face covering if they are not already wearing one and go home. If the staff member is too unwell to travel home immediately they will go to the designated isolation room via the designated route until they can be collected.

If a student begins to feel unwell or appears to present with Covid-19 symptoms during school hours they will go to the isolation room under guidance of the school's COVID officer via the designated route. Staff will maintain a distance of 2 metres from the individual who is unwell in so far as possible and must wear PPE as outlined in the Department's guidelines regarding a suspected case. Parent/guardians will be contacted immediately by a teacher, the principal or a member of the Behaviour Support Team.

Parents must be contactable at all times and must be available to collect their child immediately if called.

Parents should contact their GP by phone to seek testing and treatment.

Should the outcome of a COVID 19 test be positive, the individual, staff or student, should self-isolate for 14 days. If an individual, staff or students is waiting a test or a test result they should remain to self-isolate until a negative result is obtained.

In addition, staff should familiarise themselves with other preventative measures (including but not limited to hand hygiene etiquette) prior to returning to work. For more information on these measures visit

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-covid-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice//>. All staff should practice these measures at all times while at work.

For more information on what to do if your child presents with Covid 19 symptoms please log onto:

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

Other illnesses

In order to maintain a healthy environment within Stepping Stones, we would ask that any child feeling unwell, (e.g. bad coughs, colds, flu, etc) not be sent to school until they are feeling better.

Gastroenteritis is highly infectious and can spread rapidly across the school. We ask that children are kept at home until 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting/diarrhoea.

Any child who has contracted any form of contagious virus, (e.g., chicken pox, German measles, rashes, etc.) must not be sent to school until seen by their G.P. and given a clean bill of health.

For the health and safety of the children, antibiotics cannot be administered in school by any staff member.

If there are queries regarding the above policy, please contact The Board of Management. Otherwise, we would be obliged if you would sign below in acceptance of the above.

I/We, the parents/guardians of _____ agree to abide by the Stepping Stones School Rules as outlined above.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date