

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell. There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

Coughs and Colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, **keep them off school** until it goes away.

Cold sores

There's **no need to keep your child off school** if they have a cold sore.

Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, **keep them off school** until all the spots have crusted over.

This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Conjunctivitis

You **don't need to keep your child away from school** if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

COVID-19

If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school.

Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities

What to do if your child has tested positive

Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Ringworm

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.

It's fine for your child to go to school **once they have started treatment.**

Sore throat

You can still **send your child to school** if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a **high temperature**, they should **stay at home** until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

Head lice and Nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.