



KL02AT

April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

We have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

We are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so we have laid out some information which we hope you will find helpful.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose and sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. Please refer to the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk).

In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. DfE has published useful guidance [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

We understand each student and their family circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents/carers to provide the best education for every student. Should you have any concerns that you wish to discuss, or any details you think we should be aware of relating to family circumstances please contact your child's/wards Head of Year.

Kind Regards,

*Mrs J Holland*

**Mrs J Holland**  
**Attendance Officer**