

# ILLNESS POLICY

Revised January 2025

The Children's House is committed to helping children stay healthy and stay in school. The following policies and procedures are in place to help facilitate this goal.

- Immunization Policy  
[http://traversechildrenshouse.org/downloads/immunization\\_policy.pdf](http://traversechildrenshouse.org/downloads/immunization_policy.pdf)
- Handwashing requirements for staff and students
- High cleaning standards for classroom equipment and building maintenance
- Grace and Courtesy lessons in the classrooms that teach personal hygiene practices
- Annual staff training on health and safety practices

The decision to exclude a child from school because of illness involves a conversation between the parents and staff. The needs of the child and keeping the child at school when possible are priorities. The following guidelines are used when deciding to exclude a child from school:

## Reasons for Temporary Exclusion from School:

- **Three Key Criteria for Exclusion - When staff determines that the illness:**
  - This prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities
  - Results in a greater need for care than staff determine they can provide without compromising their ability to care for other children
  - Poses a risk of harmful disease to others
- **Evidence of the Following Symptoms:**
  - **Severe illness** suggested by fever with behavior changes, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying or complaining, difficulty breathing, a progressive rash with the above symptoms
  - **Fever (above 98.6)** with behavioral change or other symptoms (sore throat, rash, vomiting, etc.). Any fever requires 24 hours before return.
  - **Diarrhea** if stool is not contained in a diaper or if the child is toilet trained and having accidents; stool with blood or mucus (requires 24 hours after last episode before return)

- **Fever** of 100.4 or above, no other symptoms present (requires 24 hours before return).
  - **Rash** with fever or behavioral change
  - Persistent **abdominal pain**
  - **Oral lesions** if the child is unable to contain drool or unable to participate
  - **Skin lesions** if lesions are weeping or draining and cannot be covered with a waterproof dressing.
  - **Vomiting** 2 or more times
- **Specific diagnoses of the following conditions (these are just a few, contact Kim Gallagher or Dr. Adrienne Edgren for questions):**
    - **Strep throat** or other streptococcal infection until 24 hours after treatment has started
    - **Influenza** medical diagnosis requires the student or staff to stay home until symptoms subside; the fever must be gone for at least 24 hours before returning with influenza
    - **Head lice, impetigo, ringworm** - until after first treatment
    - **Scabies** - until after treatment
    - **Chickenpox, Rubella, mumps, measles, pertussis** - until return is authorized by health consultant
    - **Hepatitis A** virus infection until 1 week after onset of illness or as directed by the health department
    - **COVID-19** - in children, this may present with symptoms included in our “no exclusion” list, so please plan for illness to be handled on a case-by-case basis, see attached.

### **Conditions Not Requiring Exclusion from School:**

- \*Common cold, runny nose and coughs
- Eye discharge without fever, pain, or eyelid redness
- Pink Eye without Pain (If more than 2 children in a group develop pinkeye in the same period, the school may seek advice from the health consultant regarding exclusion.)
- \*Fever under 100.4 without any signs or symptoms of illness in children older than 4 months
- Rash without behavioral changes and/or fever (exception – rapidly spreading bruising or small blood spots under the skin)
- Thrush
- The Fifth Disease in someone with a normal immune system

- Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease without behavioral change and /or fever or when a child has control of drooling

\*COVID-19 can cause these symptoms if there is an active outbreak, so this may require exclusion in certain circumstances.

### **Child's Return to School:**

- Children may return once symptoms have disappeared, treatment has been received, and quarantine has ended.
- The school will rely on the family's description of the child's behavior to determine if the child is well enough to participate unless the child's status is unclear from the family's report.
- A health professional's note will be required if the health professional's advice is needed to determine whether the child is a health risk to others or if the health professional's guidance is needed about any special care the child requires.

### **School's Notification Process to Parents:**

- Parents are notified at once when staff observes changes in the child's health.
- Parents are notified when a child experiences a significant accident, injury, or incident.
  - To avoid unnecessary reporting of an injury or incident, discretion based on the severity, age of the child, and circumstances is used.
- Parents are notified by phone, email, and/or text. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact person on the child's information card may be contacted.
- A conversation between the parent and the staff helps determine the course of action. In some cases, the parent may pick the child up from school. In other cases, the staff and parent may decide to give the situation some time to see if it progresses or improves.
- Parents are notified by email about illnesses in the school population that might impact their child.

### **Parent's Responsibility of Notification:**

- Parents are required to report a communicable disease to the school as soon as it is diagnosed. This includes, but is not limited to COVID-19, Strep throat, Influenza, etc.
- The school is required to report all communicable diseases to the Grand Traverse Health Department.

## COVID-19 – Additional Information:

- If experiencing symptoms, you must stay home until your symptoms have subsided.
  - The fever must be gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
  - Other major symptoms must be gone
  - Lingering cough or runny nose are not considered “major symptoms”.
- Masking is per your discretion and recommended upon return for:
  - 10 days from the date of symptom onset or positive test

OR

- Until you receive 2 negative tests 24 hours apart
- If you received a positive test but remained asymptomatic, you may return to school upon your discretion.

### Recommended websites for information about children’s illness:

[www.aap.org/](http://www.aap.org/) American Academy of Pediatrics – Parenting Corner

[www.kidshealth.org/parent](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent) Kids Health for Parents

TCH *Illness Policy* was reviewed with the help of school health consultants Dr. Josh Kroll, Michigan Child Care Licensing. Medical reference: *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools*, American Academy of Pediatrics