

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

R5506
Page 1 of 3

Exclusion from School:

If a student/ staff member has or is exposed to any communicable disease/illness, the school nurse recommends to the Principal that the student/staff member be excluded from school for the appropriate time as defined in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulation.

Procedure:

1. The school nurse assesses the student/staff member regarding his/her condition and determines the need for exclusion.
2. The school nurse recommends to the Principal or designee that the student/staff member be excluded from school.
3. The school nurse contacts the parents/legal guardians of the student to discuss the treatment plan for the student.
4. Disclosure of the nature of the disease/illness is shared on a need-to-know basis and the privacy of individual students and families or staff is protected at all times.
5. In consultation with the Principal, the school nurse notifies teachers in affected classrooms of the nature of the infectious disease/illness.
6. The school nurse instructs teachers and custodians about precautions within the classroom and for the disinfection of school equipment for the purpose of decontamination.
7. The school nurse notifies other parents/legal guardians when necessary of the presence of the infection and precautions to be taken at home.

Excludable Communicable Diseases/Illnesses:

The following is a list of communicable diseases/illnesses that exclude a student/staff member from school for the stated period of time:

1. Chicken Pox and Shingles: A student/staff member with chickenpox (or shingles with a rash that cannot be covered) may return to school when all lesions are dried and scabbed over which is usually 5-7 days.
2. Conjunctivitis: A student/staff member may return to school 24 hours after treatment has begun or after 3 doses of medication.
3. Diphtheria: A Student/staff member must stay home until completely recovered. Complete recovery has occurred when the student/staff member has had two negative nose and throat cultures taken at least 24 hours apart.
4. Fever: A student /staff member with a fever of 100°F or greater should remain home until the day after the fever has resolved.
5. German Measles (Rubella): The student/staff member should remain home for 7 days following the appearance of the rash.
6. Hepatitis A: A person with Hepatitis A should remain home until the end of the febrile period or until the end of symptoms. Proper handwashing guidelines must be reinforced.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

R5506
Page 2 of 3

7. Impetigo: The student/staff member cannot return to school until 24 hours after topical or oral antibiotics have been started.
8. Infectious Diarrheal Diseases (Giardia, Shigella, Salmonella, and Campylobacter): The student/staff member should remain home until severe diarrhea has subsided. Strict handwashing procedures must be followed.
9. Measles: The student/staff member should remain home for 7 days following the onset of the illness. The student/staff member may or may not experience a fever, cough or appearance of the rash.
10. Meningitis (Bacterial): The student/staff member with bacterial meningitis is excluded until 24 hours after the initiation of appropriate antibiotic therapy.
11. Mumps: The student/staff member should stay home for a least 9 days from the onset of the illness or until all swelling is gone.
12. Pediculosis (Lice): The student/staff member will be sent home immediately upon discovery of lice or nits. The student/staff member then cannot return until the morning after the first treatment, nit removal, and cleaning of personal items. The Westford Public Schools have a “No Nit” regulation, so the student/staff member must report to the school nurse to be checked upon reentry into school. It is left to the discretion of the school nurse as to whether or not the student/staff member may return to class.
13. Pertussis (Whooping Cough): The student/staff member must remain home for 5 days after initiation of antibiotic treatment. A person without treatment must remain home for 21 days after the cough onset.
14. Ringworm of the Scalp: The student/staff member may return after the first dose of oral medication.
15. Ringworm of the Skin: The student/staff member may return after the first dose of topical medication.
16. Scabies: The student /staff member may return to school once treatment has been started. Because it is not unusual for the rash to last four to six weeks, students/staff members may return if the rash is still present.
17. Strep Throat: The student/staff member cannot return to school until 24 hours after topical or oral antibiotics have been started.
18. Tuberculosis: The student/staff member should stay home until the treatment is initiated if the TB is active.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

R5506
Page 3 of 3

Reentry:

1. A student/staff member is readmitted according to the above criteria for specific diseases/illnesses.
2. The school nurse determines if a note from the student's/staff member's health care provider is required for the student/staff member to return to school. The student/staff member presents a note to the school nurse upon return to school.
3. The school nurse provides the classroom teachers with any information necessary to support a student's safe return to school.
4. The school nurse reports to the Principal that it is safe for a staff member to return to school.

References:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health 105CMR 300 – Reportable Diseases and Isolation and Quarantine Regulations.

Regulations Adopted:
Regulations Reviewed:
Regulations Revised:

WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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