

When to Keep a Child Home

The guidelines that follow are designed to tell you when your child must stay home from school. However, if your child feels unwell, is uncomfortable, and cannot participate in class, the HUMC Preschool staff will send your child home even if fever, vomiting, or other significant symptoms are not present. For the safety of our community, children who have been ill should not return to school until they are 100% symptom free for the specified period as indicated in the guidelines. If a child comes back to school too soon, he or she will be sent home. We know children are eager to return to their friends, but it is hard to learn when they are still tired and feeling unwell. We will look forward to welcoming your child back when they are fully well!

Illnesses Guidelines:

If your child feels unwell, we may call you to pick up your child even if these guidelines are not met.

1. Fever- Your child must be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication and have no other symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. A fever is a temp over 101.
2. Vomiting – Any occurrence of vomiting will result in your child being sent home. Your child must be able to keep food and liquids down for 24 hours and have no other symptoms before returning to school.
3. Diarrhea – Any occurrence of diarrhea will result in your child being sent home. Your child must be diarrhea free with no other symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. Strep Infection or on an antibiotic – Your child must be on a prescribed antibiotic for 24 hours and be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. If unmedicated, the child's health care provider must provide written documentation stating the child is not contagious and is able to attend school.
5. Conjunctivitis or Pink Eye – When a child has red eyes or eyes with drainage, they are required to see their doctor and have the condition diagnosed and treated for 24 hours before returning to school.
6. Rashes – Any rash on your child that is unidentifiable will be required to be diagnosed by your physician. If the rash is contagious, we require that your child be treated for a minimum of 24 hours or the amount of time that your physician prescribes before returning to school.
7. Runny nose – If a child has a thick green and gunky nasal discharge they must stay home.
8. Cough – If a child has a severe cough (gets red or blue in the face, makes a high-pitched croup or whooping sound while coughing) they must stay home.
9. Earache, red eyes, and sore throat – A child should be kept home if they exhibit any of these symptoms. If any of these symptoms develop during the school day, they will be sent home.
10. Head lice – If live lice or nits are discovered you must notify the preschool office. A child who has head lice may not return to school until the child has been treated with an appropriate head lice treatment and is nit free.
11. New medications – to be aware of any adverse reaction, please keep your child home for 24 hours before sending them to school when they are taking a new medication.
12. Please inform your child's teacher of any allergies your child has so we can accurately observe symptoms.
13. If your child is uncomfortable or overtired and unable to participate in class, regardless of other symptoms, they should stay home.

Child Becomes Sick at School

The Preschool staff has been trained in Daily Health Observations. At arrival, teachers are assessing children to determine if there is cause for additional attention. Cold-like symptoms, rashes, temperature, etc. will all be assessed and re-evaluated throughout the day if necessary.

If your child becomes sick at school, a staff member will take care of them until you arrive. The school will first call parents at home and/or at work. If parents cannot be reached, we will call the emergency contacts that you provided.

Communicable Diseases

All communicable diseases (i.e., chickenpox, fifth disease, hand-foot-mouth disease, strep throat, lice, influenza, COVID-19, etc.) should be reported to the office as soon as possible. We follow the recommendations of the Communicable Disease Reference Chart for School Personnel provided by the Virginia Department of Health regarding exclusion and admission to school.

Health Check

You may be asked some health-related questions before leaving your child in our care. If your child has a fever or other symptoms at drop-off, they will not be allowed to attend school until they are symptom free for the specified period in the guidelines. You must not use fever-reducing medications before bringing your child to school. So that we can track the presence of illness within the school, if your child is sick, you must contact the office to inform us of your child's symptoms. This allows us to be aware of illnesses occurring in our student population.

Pandemic Outbreak

The Preschool will follow the *Fairfax County Pandemic Response Plan* if the need arises. If all county schools are closed, Herndon United Methodist Preschool will also close. The Preschool will also close if the number of ill students at Preschool exceeds 20% or if an appropriate teacher/student ratio cannot be maintained. If HUMC Preschool is closed, school days will not be made up.

COVID Specific Health Information

Due to the changing COVID situation, we must all take precautions to protect our community from illness and be flexible with our procedures. We will follow best practices as outlined by the CDC and the Fairfax County Health Department when making decisions surrounding our COVID policies. We understand and acknowledge that young children are often unable to wear a well-fitting mask effectively or for extended periods of time. When applying CDC guidelines, we will consider your child's capacity to wear a mask. **These are subject to change at any time.**