

When to keep your child home from school due to an illness:

At times it can be difficult to decide whether to send your children to school when they don't feel well. Illness is never convenient and as busy parents, we understand work schedules, childcare arrangements, transportation and other family matters are to be considered in that decision, and we understand you want what is best for your child's health.

Good attendance is extremely important at Paradise ISD for your child's success at school! Unfortunately, there are times when it is out of our control and your child may feel sick.

Texas law guidelines require exclusion for contagious diseases that could be spread at school, and must be enforced for the prevention of further spread to other students and for comfort and safety of all our students and staff.

If your child/children have the following symptoms, they should stay home and not come to school until these symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours without the help of medication, or until your doctor sends a note that states the condition is no longer contagious and it is OK for your child to come back to school.

FEVER- If a fever of over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit is present, DO NOT send him or her to school. Please do not send them even for just a short time in the morning to obtain "perfect attendance." Although giving fever medication may reduce the fever, it does not take care of the illness causing the fever, therefore coming to school sick (and possibly contagious) not only exposes other children to the illness, but also delays your child's healing time. Once the medicine wears off and the fever returns, your child must be picked up, then valuable healing time has been lost. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of medicine, before returning to school.

VOMITING/DIARRHEA - If vomiting or diarrhea happens more than once that day, or if they are associated with fever, you must keep your child home until they have been free of symptoms for 24 hours, without the use of medications. Vomiting episodes that are related to a single event such as gagging, positioning, mucus, running after eating, or eating spicy food are not considered to be from a contagious virus/bacteria; therefore the student can come to school. If these things happen only one time before school starts, and your child feels better immediately afterwards, it is important to watch for a few hours to see if it happens again before sending him or her on to class.

UNCONTROLLED COUGHING - Coughing that is uncontrolled by medications, drinking of fluids, or cough drops is a disruption to your child's/other students learning environments. Please keep your child at home if the coughing cannot be controlled by medication. Uncontrollable coughing may be an indication of a serious/contagious illness such as Pertussis (whooping cough). Please take your child to be seen by a physician if you are concerned or if your child has any of these symptoms: low grade fever, runny nose, and cough lasting about 2 weeks, followed by sudden/worsening coughing spells and “whoop” sound on inspiration. If your child needs over the counter medications/cough drops, please see the school nurse regarding our districts requirements for giving meds at school. Cough drops are considered to be an over the counter medication; therefore requiring an administration form to be filled out.

SKIN RASHES - If the rash has any fluid or pus coming from it, your child must remain out of school until the rash has been treated and a doctor's note states it is ok to return to school, or until the rash is gone, dried, or scabbed over with no new spots. Anytime a rash is accompanied by a fever, the child may not come to school until that fever is gone for 24 hours without medication. Sometimes a rash can be a sign of a contagious disease such as chickenpox. Other times rashes are not contagious but are uncomfortable and irritated from contact with something causing an allergic reaction, which in that case, please consider comfort measures such as an antihistamine in accordance with the district policy for medication administration at school and discussing possible treatment with your doctor and a care plan with the school nurse.

RED EYES, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS ALSO DRAINAGE OR CRUSTING AROUND THE EYE - Can often mean your child may have conjunctivitis (pink-eye). Not all pink-eye is contagious, and sometimes it can be allergies or other irritations that are causing the red color, but until we know for sure (which means we must have a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious, or until the redness and drainage are completely gone), your child must remain out of school.

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE) OR SCABIES – These are small insects that cause skin conditions and are uncomfortable and itchy, and could become infected with all the scratching. Check with the school nurse to get information on treatment and when your child may return to school if those conditions are present.

PICKING YOUR CHILD UP – The parent will be expected to come for the child within one hour or a reasonable time agreed upon with the nurse or school personnel. In the event the parent/guardian or designated contact cannot be reached, a parent conference may be held at the earliest opportunity to establish correct contact numbers, school district expectations, and parental responsibilities.

Other medical conditions:

If your child has other symptoms such as headaches, cramps, sore throat, cough and/or thick mucus, which do not require them to be out of school but will make them uncomfortable during class, please discuss the use of over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medications with your child's doctor. Remember to follow the district requirements for giving medications at school. Call the school nurse if you are not sure about those requirements.

My goal as Director of health services at Paradise ISD is to work with families and faculty to help create a healthy, safe environment for your child to learn. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's health. If your child has a chronic medical condition that requires a nursing care plan, please schedule a meeting with the me to make sure everything is properly set up for your child's needs throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

Kim Taylor, RN
Director of Health Services
Paradise ISD
940-969-5053