

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the Christmas period, we are aware that there are a number of illnesses circulating across Oldham which could have similar symptoms. These include a high temperature, diarrhoea, vomiting, and rashes.

The table below gives details of some common infections, their symptoms, and what you should do if your child develops them. The information does not replace advice from a medical professional, so please seek advice if you are worried.

Illness	Symptoms	Treatment	Should my child go to school?	Comments
Diarrhoea and vomiting	Diarrhoea and / or vomiting	Encourage fluids to prevent dehydration Seek medical attention if not improving.	Children should not return to the setting until they have been symptom free for 48hours	
Scarlet Fever	Fever, sore throat, followed by a sandpapery rash that starts on the tummy and chest, and/or a white coating on the tongue that can leave a "strawberry tongue" which is red with bumps	Antibiotics are needed and you should see your GP	Children can return to the setting 24hrs after starting antibiotics.	A person is infectious for 2 to 3 weeks if antibiotics are not administered.
Hand, Foot & Mouth	Rash across palms of hands, soles of feet & inside of mouth. Tiredness, Fever	No treatment is required but see a healthcare professional to confirm diagnosis	There is no requirement for children to stay off school unless the child is generally unwell	
Influenza (flu)	Fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, cough, sore throat, runny nose	Drink fluids, take paracetamol, if able, to take to reduce fever. Seek medical attention if not improving.	It is recommended that your child stay away from school until they are well enough and no longer have a fever.	Please consider having the flu vaccine for children. Check www.nhs.uk for further information
COVID 19	Fever, chills, new continuous cough, loss or change in sense of smell or taste. Shortness of breath, general tiredness, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, blocked or runny nose, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting	Drink fluids, take paracetamol, if able, to take to reduce fever. Seek medical attention if not improving.	Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either have a high temperature, do not feel well enough to go to school, college or childcare,	Please consider having the COVID vaccine if eligible for it. Check www.nhs.uk for further information

Illness	Symptoms	Treatment	Should my child go to school?	Comments
			or do their normal activities.	
Chicken Pox	An itchy, spotty rash that becomes blistered, then scabs over, a high temperature aches and pains, and generally feeling unwell loss of appetite	Drink plenty of fluid, take paracetamol to help with pain and discomfort, use cooling creams or gels from a pharmacy	Your child should stay at home for at least 5 days from onset of rash and until all blisters have crusted over.	Pregnant people who have had contact with someone with chickenpox should consult with their GP or midwife.

Some of these illnesses can be infectious and spread to other children within an education setting. Therefore, if your child is unwell, it is important to let the school or nursery know what the illness is. This will enable the school to ensure that other children are not affected.

In addition, there are some general actions that you can take as a family to prevent getting infections during these winter months. These include:

- Getting vaccinated against influenza (flu) or COVID 19 if you are eligible,
- Regularly washing your hands with soap and water or, if hands are visibly clean, using alcohol hand gel
- Remember to "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" - Using tissues to catch sneezes or runny noses, disposing of them and then washing your hands
- Remember to trust your instincts when your child is unwell. You know your child and how they usually are. If you are worried, please seek medical attention through either 111, your GP, or 999 if needed.
- Visit <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/10/25/5-ways-to-protect-your-under-5s-this-winter/> for further information on the 5 ways to protect your family during winter.

Thank you.