



Guidance for Parents on Assessing Whether their Child is Well Enough to Attend School

The attendance of pupils at Godinton has always been very good, with average attendance figures above National averages. This reflects how many of our children enjoy school very much and how supportive our families are in promoting good attendance. Our aim is to ensure that this remains the case and to help support families, where we can, who may be struggling with illness or other issues which are impacting on their child's attendance.

The NHS have provided public information on the clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance. The NHS is aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so they have laid out information for schools, GPs and parents to help with this.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. The NHS guidance leaflet [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?'](#) provides parents with further information about a range of childhood illnesses and how many of these need not impact on a child's attendance at school. This includes illnesses such as conjunctivitis and hand, foot and mouth disease.

We would encourage positive uptake of the seasonal flu vaccination and routine immunisations for eligible children which will help to reduce absences and the disruption they cause. Children are able to have a Flu vaccinations in school during the autumn term.

If you are unsure as to whether your child is too unwell to attend school, our recommendation would be to send them in. We will always call you if their health deteriorates and we feel they would be better off at home.

In addition to respiratory illnesses, the **NHS** recognise that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. We are here to help. Should this be an issue impacting on your child's attendance, please get in touch. There are lots of things that we can do to assist.

The Royal College of General Practitioners (**RCGP**) recently approved [5 principles to promote school attendance](#). The **NHS** hope this guidance will support **GPs** in having sensitive and reassuring conversations with parents, and pupils about school attendance.

Good school attendance gives your child the opportunity of greater success and helps develop skills for life. Your child should attend every day unless there is an unavoidable cause such as illness. Missing school damages a child's learning, disrupts routines and can impact on their wellbeing.

I hope that by working together we can ensure that all our children achieve the best possible attendance.

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