School Health Services Guidelines for Exclusion

Listed below are Franklin County Schools' guidelines outlining when to keep your student at home due to illness. Please note, the list does not include every illness and serves as a guideline for parents and school staff on managing the most common illnesses/conditions seen in school age children. Families should follow the guidance of their health care provider for all illnesses. A general rule for all students – if your student is prescribed antibiotics, they should stay at home for at least 24 hours after starting the medication and may need additional time at home based on how they are feeling.

Symptom/Condition	When to keep student home/return to school guidelines
Fever: A temperature of 100.4^{o} F or higher may indicate an infection.	Students should remain at home until they are fever free for at least 24 hours WITHOUT fever reducing medicines (Tylenol, Advil or their generic form).
Symptoms of viral illness (COVID, flu, RSV, common cold, etc)	Anyone with general symptoms of illness (fever, cough, congestion, sore throat, etc) should remain at home until feeling better (symptoms have improved and able to participate in school activities) and seek guidance from your health care provider. Testing for various viral illnesses may be recommended by your health care provider, but is not required to return to school.
Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools in 24 hours): May be a symptom of a disease or condition that can be spread to others.	Student should remain at home during illnesses causing frequent loose stools. Students may return to school when at least 24 hours have passed since the last episode of diarrhea and they are feeling better. Students with persistent bouts of diarrhea should be evaluated by a physician and parents may be asked to provide written documentation from the doctor that no viral, bacteriological, or parasitic condition exists.
Vomiting (2 or more episodes in 24 hours): Usually caused by a virus.	Student should remain at home until at least 24 hours have passed since the last vomiting episode and they are feeling better.

Rashes: May be a sign of a contagious condition such as chickenpox, bacterial meningitis, impetigo, or MRSA.	Students who have any rash that is accompanied by a fever or a rash that is blistered or draining should see a physician and may be required to provide written documentation from the doctor to return to school.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Inflammation (redness) of the covering of the white part of the eye and inside of the eyelids; may be caused by allergens, viruses, and/or bacteria.	Students who are experiencing eye discharge that is sticky, thick and green/yellow in color should be evaluated by their physician for diagnosis and treatment. Treatment depends on the cause and is not required to return to school. Students may attend school as long as they are able to participate in activities and do not have other exclusion criteria (fever, etc).
Impetigo: A contagious skin infection that usually begins with blister-like bumps. The blisters break open and leave an oozing, sticky, honey-colored crust.	Students who are experiencing symptoms of impetigo should be evaluated by a physician for diagnosis and treatment. The student may return to school after beginning medical treatment if the lesions/sores can be covered until dry.
MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus): A type of skin infection caused by a bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics. Symptoms may include: redness, swelling, pain at the site, and white/yellow drainage.	Students who are experiencing symptoms of MRSA should be evaluated by a physician for diagnosis and treatment. Students with MRSA may attend school, however skin lesions must be kept covered while at school. NCHSAA guidelines must be followed for student athletes diagnosed with MRSA.
Scabies: A skin condition caused by small insects (mites) burrowing under the skin. This causes a very itchy rash that may be worse at night.	Students who are experiencing symptoms of scabies should be evaluated by a physician for diagnosis and treatment. Treatment must be started before returning to school. Treatment is usually completed overnight and repeated in a week.
Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever: Symptoms may include sore throat, fever, rash (fine, red sandpapery rash), upset stomach.	Any student with a sore throat and fever or sore throat with a rash for more than 24 hours should be evaluated by a physician for diagnosis and treatment. If strep throat or scarlet fever is diagnosed, the student should remain at home until they have been on an antibiotic for at least 12 hours and until fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.

Varicella (Chickenpox): A viral illness that causes a blister like rash (which may appear in different stages), fever, fatigue and cold symptoms (runny nose, cough).	Any person suspected to have chicken pox should be evaluated by a physician for diagnosis. Students may not return to school until all blisters have formed scabs (usually about 6 days after onset). Vaccinated individuals who may not form scabs may not return to school until no new red bumps have appeared for at least 24 hours. **Unvaccinated students (due to medical or religious reasons) who may have had contact may also be excluded for up to 21 days after the last diagnosed case (based upon guidance from the local Health Department).
Reportable Communicable Diseases: There are other diseases that may occur in the school age population that must be reported to the Health Department. Examples are: Measles, Mumps, Pertussis (whooping cough), Hepatitis B, Meningitis, etc.	Return to school for these diseases will depend upon guidance from the local health department. **For all vaccine preventable illnesses, unvaccinated students (due to medical/religious beliefs) will be excluded from school based upon recommendations/guidelines from the local Health Department and the CDC.
Other:	Students may also be excluded from school for any illness that prevents them from participating comfortably in school activities, any illness that results in a need for care that is greater than the school staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other students, or any condition that may suggest possible severe illness (fever, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing).