

## *Groton Community School Family Handbook Excerpt*

### Child Illness Policy

If your child should become seriously ill (e.g., fever 100° F or higher, diarrhea, vomiting) during the day, we will make every effort to contact you directly. Children who are awaiting pickup due to illness are kept comfortable with an attending adult away from other children when possible. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the person(s) listed by you on the emergency forms completed at the time of enrollment. The person(s) you designate on the Authorization and Consent form should live in the local area so that he/she can pick up your child if necessary. Your child must be picked up within one hour of our phone call. **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OF ANY CHANGE IN HOME, WORK, OR CELL PHONE NUMBERS. Any child sent home from the School because of serious illness may not return the following day.**

**Families are asked to communicate health-related matters to the school via our [wellness@grotoncommunityschool.org](mailto:wellness@grotoncommunityschool.org) email, as well as notifying your child's classroom teachers.** We respect parental choice to use masking as a precaution to prevent the spread of illness, and require using a mask under certain conditions (i.e., upon return from having COVID-19). Thank you for your partnership in keeping us all healthy at school!

### **When to Stay Home:**

A general rule of thumb is that children should not attend school until they are fever free for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication), and do not have an illness that is contagious, prevents the child from participating in the program activities or resting comfortably, or results in greater care need than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children. If your child is instructed to take an antibiotic, he or she may return to school after taking the medicine for 24 hours.

**Please notify the school if your child is not feeling well. We ask that you keep your child home if she/he has:**

- Signs of severe illness (i.e., unresponsive, irritable/crying more than usual, difficulty breathing, quickly spreading rash)
- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher) or has had one during the previous 24 hours
- Bad cold with heavy nasal discharge
- Constant cough (unknown origin)
- Diarrhea
- Vomited 2 or more times in the past 24 hours
- Noticeable rash (unknown origin)
- Communicable illness (see examples below)
- [COVID-19, Flu or RSV symptoms](#)

Guidance on [COVID-19, Flu or RSV symptoms](#) can be found at [www.mass.gov/info-details/protect-yourself-and-others-from-getting-sick](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/protect-yourself-and-others-from-getting-sick). Please consult with your child's pediatrician and test for COVID-19 or Flu when applicable. Our [COVID-19 & GCS policy](#) can be found on the school website ([www.grotoncommunityschool.org/covid-19-gcs](http://www.grotoncommunityschool.org/covid-19-gcs)). GCS reserves the right to create its own COVID-19 policy for what is best for our school community.

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Current protocols for symptoms, isolation and exposure are informed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, local boards of health, and our state licensing agency. All GCS staff are strongly encouraged to be up-to-date for COVID-19 vaccination, and we gladly welcome vaccination for children.

**Please notify the school immediately if your child has a communicable illness (*see examples below*) so that other parents may be informed to monitor their children for symptoms.** Returning to school after a communicable illness is dependent on the specific illness, and further information will be provided to families. The chart below can be used as a reference for when your child should be kept out of school. This chart is not meant to be used as a tool for diagnosis, but rather as a guide.

<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>EXCLUSION</b>	<b>PREVENTION</b>
<b>Chicken Pox</b>	Exclude until all lesions have dried or crusted and no new lesions for at least 24 hours	Immunization
<b>Conjunctivitis</b> (Pink eye)	Exclude until 24 hours after treatment begins for purulent conjunctivitis (red or pink conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge).	Make sure hands are clean before treating child's eye and promote good hygiene; wash hands after contact with child's eye or with discharge.
<b>Head Lice</b> (Pediculosis)	Exclude until morning after treatment begins.	Early detection is best and avoid physical contact with infested person and their belongings; always keep belongings of children separated; wash and dry all items that come in contact with infected person.
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	Exclude until 1 week after onset or as directed by MDPH	
<b>Impetigo</b>	Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins.	Good hygiene, air out room daily, clean surfaces and utensils.
<b>Ringworm</b>	Exclude until after 1 <sup>st</sup> treatment	
<b>Strep Throat</b>	Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins.	Good hygiene, air out room daily, clean surfaces and utensils.

*Resources: American Academy of Pediatrics and MA Department of Early Education and Care*  
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