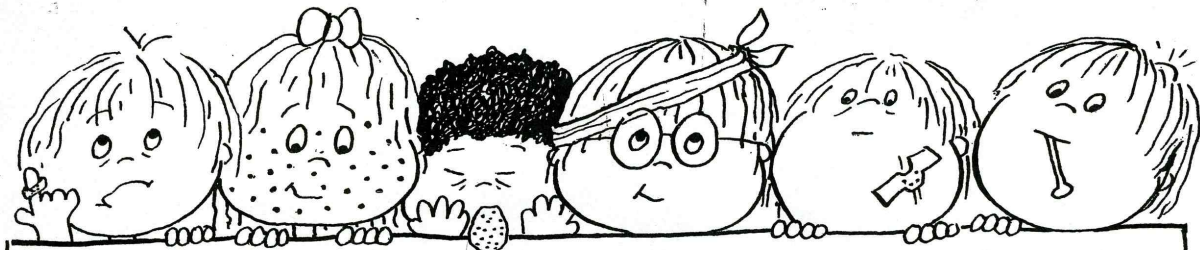


## From the Health Clinic



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### Is My Child Too Sick to Go to School?

*"I am usually a pretty good judge of when my children are too sick to go to school or daycare, but other times - like when my youngest seems to be dragging but has no fever - I'm really just not sure. How can I tell when they are well enough to go to school and when they should just stay at home?"*

### Sound familiar?

Many parents have a hard time deciding if their children are well enough to go to school. After all, what well-intentioned parent has not sent a child off with tissues in hand, only to get that mid-morning "come get your child" phone call?

But making the right decision is not as tough as you might think. It basically boils down to one question: Can your child still participate in school activities? After all, having a sore throat, cough, or mild congestion does not necessarily mean a child cannot be active and participate in school activities.

So trust your instincts. If your son has the sniffles but has not slowed down at home, chances are he is well enough for the classroom. On the other hand, if he has

been coughing all night and needs to be woken up in the morning (if he typically wakes up on his own), he may need to take it easy at home.

Of course, never send a child who has a fever to school or one who is nauseated, vomiting, or has diarrhea. Kids who lose their appetite, are clingy or lethargic, complain of pain, or who just do not seem to be acting "themselves" should also take a sick day.

If you decide that your child is well enough to go to school, check in first. Most childcares, preschools, and grade schools have rules about when to keep children home. For example, pinkeye or strep throat usually necessitates a day home with appropriate treatment. Usually, children cannot return to school or childcare until at least 24 hours after a fever has broken naturally (without fever-reducing medicines).

Saint Ambrose illness policy as stated on page 49 of the Parent Student handbook is as follows:

**Children with fevers, contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school, afterschool and extracurricular activities. Students who experience vomiting and/or diarrhea need to be symptom-free, without medication, for a full 24 hours before returning to school.**

