

Dear Parent:

Cold and flu season has hit with full force. Our school, along with many others, has experienced an increased number of absences over the past weeks. King County Public Health is tracking an increase in the reporting of flu-like symptoms from around the area. We are working with Public Health to report our absences as part of their tracking system.

As a parent, what can you do to keep your child healthy and to help keep other children healthy? First, please remind your children about these three basic health practices that will reduce their chances of getting sick and spreading it to others:

Wash your hands – it's the single most important thing you can do, scrubbing with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.

Do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing.

Second, here's advice from King County Public Health regarding the symptoms that mean you should keep your child home from school:

Fever – over 100 degrees F. orally. Temperature should remain normal (98.6 degrees) for 24 hours before returning to school.

Diarrhea – more than one episode in a 24 hour period

Vomiting – within the past 24 hours

Rash – body rashes not associated with heat, or allergic reactions to medications

Drainage from the eye – the eye crusted and difficult to open, especially upon waking

Sore throat – especially if associated with fever or swollen glands

Appearance/behavior – unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused

Nasal discharge (yellow or greenish) – Chronic sinus infections can cause a yellow or greenish discharge and are not contagious but should be followed by a physician. However, if your child's nasal mucus has a color and is accompanied by a fever and/or coughing, sneezing, drowsiness, and general signs of not feeling well, your child may be contagious and should remain at home until the symptoms subside.

If you have any questions about whether your child should stay home, please consult your physician.

Sincerely,

Principal