Managing student illness in schools during COVID-19

One of the most important things we can do to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community is to stay at home when we are unwell, even when we have the mildest of symptoms.

What you need to know:

1. If a child is unwell, even with the mildest of symptoms, they must stay at home

If a child becomes unwell during the day, they must be collected from school as soon as possible.

2. If a child has any of the symptoms of COVID-19 outlined below, however mild, they should get tested and they must remain at home until they receive their results:

- fever
- chills or sweats
- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath
- runny nose
- loss of sense of smell or taste.

In certain circumstances headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea may also be considered symptoms.

For further advice:

- call the 24-hour COVID-19 hotline on 1800 675 398
- call a general practitioner
- use the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) online self-assessment tool.

Visit: Where to get tested.

3. A child must stay at home until they are symptom-free, even if their COVID-19 test is negative

If a person has tested positive for COVID-19, they must isolate until they receive clearance from the DHHS. Read the What to do if you've tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) factsheet for more information.

If a person is a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, the DHHS will get in contact to tell them they are a close contact of a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. A close contact must quarantine at home. Read the What to do if you have been in close contact with someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) factsheet for more information.

For information on the minimum periods students need to stay at home for other conditions, refer to the [DHHS school exclusion table](#).

4. Children do **not** need a medical certificate before returning to school

Once symptoms have cleared, there is no requirement from the CECV or DHHS for students to have a medical certificate before they return to school.