Sick & Recovering Students Guidelines

Background Statement

The school has a duty of care to all its students. It will provide the necessary care as required if a student falls ill at school, has a seizure or has an accident. This may include calling emergency services or calling parents/carers to come and collect the student. Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the health needs of their child.

The school has a duty of care to its students and staff to exclude the risk of cross infection from sick or recovering students. Some students have fragile health and are a higher risk to cross infection. Students who become unwell at school, or return before they are completely well, are best transferred to the care of a parent/guardian/caregiver.

Under Occupational Health & Safety legislation, the school must ensure a safe and healthy working and learning environment for all. The school has identified students’ inability to manage their own personal hygiene as a significant risk to the health and wellbeing of other students and staff. This includes students who require full assistance with blowing and clearing nasal mucus, or an inability to cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. In order to ensure that other students, staff and visitors are not exposed to unnecessary risks to their health or safety, students who are sick or not completely well and who cannot manage the necessary personal hygiene skills to prevent cross infection to others, should not return to school.

Parent/caregivers should make the decision to keep your child at home, if he/she:

- is too ill to engage in classroom learning
- is ill and sleeping for parts of the day
- has high temperatures (fever)
- has an infection (e.g. chest, throat, production of mucus)
- is recovering from an infection or hospitalization
- has been vomiting or had diarrhoea (student needs to remain at home for a period of at least 24-48 hours after the cessation of the last episode.)
- is not completely well and requires ongoing assistance to maintain personal hygiene practices throughout the day

Where the principal becomes aware of a student with a known:

- infectious illness or contagious diseases, especially those associated with vomiting or diarrhoea
- ongoing infection involving excessive excretions of bodily fluids including, nasal mucus, phlegm, blood or pus

It is the role of the school:

- to contact the parent requesting the child to be taken home
- in the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact person will be requested to take the child home, or where this is not possible
- the student will be transferred to the hospital for further medical assessment

It is the role of parents to:

- provide the school with reliable contact details including Emergency contacts
- cooperate with the school on all student health matters
- keep the child at home when there is a significant risk of cross infection to other students or staff
- to keep the child home until they are completely well
- to liaise with the child's medical practitioner about the implications of the child's health condition for their schooling

The principal reserves the right to ask parents/carers to keep their child at home. Any decision in this regard will, if possible, be made in consultation with DET Student Health in Public Schools Policy, Hunter New England Health providers, carers, parents and, where permission is granted from medical practitioners.