

When your child is ill – information for parents

När barnet är sjukt – föräldrainformation

Very young children are often ill. Children up to the age of 4 years have, on average, 6-8 respiratory infections each year. These infections enable children to build up their immune defence. The spread of infections cannot be completely avoided where groups of young children are concerned, but it can be limited. As a parent, you must be prepared to stay at home with your child several times each term to allow the infections to run their course and to reduce the risk of the infection spreading to others.

Your child's general condition, i.e. how your child copes with pre-school activities, is decisive in determining whether your child should be at pre-school. At home you might not always notice as a parent that your child is ill, but at pre-school among other children and adults doing different activities, staff can easily see that a child does not have the energy to join in activities as usual. If a child becomes too tired, does not eat/sleep, cannot concentrate or exhibits in some other way that something is wrong, it is important that the parents collect the child as quickly as possible and take him or her home. Pre-school staff will be familiar with the child's behaviour in the pre-school environment, and if there is any doubt about your child's general condition, the assessment of the pre-school's staff should be the determining factor.

If as a parent you are unsure whether your child should attend pre-school or not, give the pre-school a call. For medical advice, call your local health care centre or the health care advice line on 1177.

Guidelines for when children should stay home from pre-school:

- *In the case of fever.* The child should be free from fever for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before he or she returns to pre-school.
- *In the case of tiredness.* Stay at home with your child when he or she is too tired to cope with the usual pre-school activities, e.g. when he or she has been unable to sleep due to a cough.
- *In the case of diarrhoea and/or vomiting.* Stay at home until your child has not vomited or had watery diarrhoea for at least 48 hours and can eat normally.
- *In the case of an infectious disease, e.g. impetigo.* Stay at home until the sores have dried up.
- *In the case of treatment with antibiotics.* Stay at home until the child's general condition, fever, etc. has improved and he or she has been taking antibiotics for at least two days. Antibiotics and other occasional medicines should be administered by the parents.

Fixed routines like eating and sleeping regularly are necessary for children to feel healthy and happy. Physical activity, preferably outdoors, is both fun and healthy for children. Security blankets, cuddly toys and similar items that are taken to pre-school must be washable.

Hand hygiene and coughing/sneezing into your elbow are included in the hygiene advice provided for pre-schools. Pre-school staff have a comprehensive picture of the infection status of the school's children and can decide when hygiene routines need to be stepped up.

For more information

- To find out what to do if your child has a sore throat or earache, for example, please visit: www.1177.se
- The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare's book *Smitta i förskolan*: www.sos.se

Confirmed as read: Date:..... Signature:.....