

Incubation and absence time guidance for common diseases

Disease	Normal incubation period	Minimum period of exclusion (provided child is well enough to be in school)
Chickenpox Shingles	14 – 21 days	5 days from onset of rash (not necessary for all scabs to be gone).
Measles	10 - 15 days	5 days from onset of rash.
Mumps	16 – 20 days	5 days from onset of swelling.
Rubella (German measles)	14 – 21 days	5 days from onset of rash
Whooping cough	7 -10 days	5 days from commencing antibiotic treatment.
Impetigo		Until dry and healing or 48 hours after antibiotic treatment started, unless lesions can be covered. Hygiene advice is essential.
Verrucae		Exclusion from barefoot exercises unnecessary provided warts remain covered with an occlusive plaster. Athlete's foot Exclusion from barefoot activities unnecessary but hygiene advice advisable
Meningitis	2 -10 days (commonly 2-5 days)	Until recovered.
Food poisoning	Variable according to cause	Until well and diarrhoea and/or vomiting has stopped for 24 hours.
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	3 – 5 days	Children in school should be excluded until lesions are healed.
Conjunctivitis	Bacterial 1 -3 days Viral 2 – 7 days	Until improvement begins with medication if recommended by GP. Hygiene advice essential.
Threadworm	14 - 42 days	No need for exclusion but should be treated promptly. Hygiene advice essential.
Headlice	Headlice are very common in schools. As a preventative measure parents are advised to keep a close watch on children's hair and to make sure that all family members thoroughly comb their hair twice daily.	