



## **SERENDIPITY CENTER, INC. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SUBJECT:** Communicable Disease in Students

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 2011, Revised February 2023, June 2023, Oct. 2025

**ATTACHMENTS:**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment by preventing and reducing the spread of illness. This is achieved by providing clear procedures for students and staff which help maintain regular attendance, minimize absenteeism, and protect the entire school community.

### **POLICY**

Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease are asked to telephone Serendipity's Health Assistant so that other students who have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

A student diagnosed with certain school restrictable diseases is not allowed to come to school while the disease is contagious. This restriction is removed after the school receives a written statement from the local health officer or a licensed physician (with the concurrence of the local health officer) that the disease is no longer communicable to others in the school setting. The following diseases require such a statement for the student to return to school:

- Diphtheria
- Hepatitis A or E
- Hepatitis B (in students with higher risk of transmission - unable to control biting and/or spitting)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Meningitis
- Plague
- Rubella
- Diarrheal diseases: Salmonella enterica (Typhi serotype), Shiga-toxigenic E. coli (STEC), Shigellosis
- Tuberculosis (not restricted in latent/chronic phase)
- Typhoid fever
- Whooping cough (pertussis)

A student *exposed* with the following diseases is not allowed to return to school until they are cleared by a licensed physician: Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B.

For the following diseases, the restriction to attend school may be removed by a school nurse or by parent confirmation of treatment.

- COVID-19 - exclude until fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications and other their symptoms are improving. Masks are highly recommended through day 10 from symptom onset or positive test results which ever came first.
- Chicken pox - exclude for at least seven days after onset of symptoms, until scabs are dry.
- Fifth disease - exclude until rash resolves or until cleared by a healthcare provider.
- Hand, foot, mouth - exclude until rash resolves or until cleared by a healthcare provider.
- Meningococcal disease (meningitis) - after treatment and clearance by a healthcare provider.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) - exclude until eyes are clear for 24 hours after starting antibiotics. The restriction may be removed after the parent communicates with the school that a recognized treatment has been initiated.
- Streptococcal infections (Scarlet Fever, streptococcal sore throat) - exclude until antibiotic treatment has been given for at least 24 hours. The restriction may be removed after the parent communicates with the school that a recognized treatment has been initiated.
- MRSA - exclude if area draining and not able to be contained/covered.
- Impetigo (staphylococcal infections) - exclude until antibiotic treatment has been given for at least 24 hours. The restriction may be removed after the parent communicates with the school that a recognized treatment has been initiated.
- Scabies - exclude until effectively treated. The restriction may be removed after the parent communicates with the school that a recognized treatment has been initiated.
- Lice - exclude until effectively treated. The restriction may be removed after the parent communicates with the school that a recognized treatment has been initiated.
- Ringworm - exclude if exposed part of the body is involved and cannot be covered.
- Shingles - exclude if lesions cannot be covered, or until lesions scab over. May attend with healthcare provider clearance or after lesions have dried/scabbed.
- Pinworms - exclude in students that are unable to control bowel function.

## **PROCEDURE**

If a child shows any of the following symptoms due to illness, the student should be sent home or kept home from school until symptoms are improved for at least 24 hours:

- Fever: if over 100.4 °F. May return when fever-free without use of fever-reducing medications (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.)
- Cough: if interfering with activities or if the student will consistently not cover

- his/her mouth.
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
  - Stiff neck or Headache with Fever: call parent to take child to a healthcare provider for evaluation.
  - Diarrhea: if a student has 3 episodes of liquid stool accompanied by abdominal pain or nausea.
  - Vomiting: if a student vomits more than once and it does not appear to be self-induced or related to motion sickness.
  - Sore throat: if interfering with swallowing, if fever present, or if there is a sandpapery red rash covering the body.
  - Ear pain: if drainage other than cerumen (ear wax)-call parent to take child to a healthcare provider for evaluation.
  - Eyes: if inflamed, excessive tearing, draining, discharge or yellow in color.
  - Rash: if weepy/draining, new or growing, unexplained cause or cannot be covered.
  - Behavioral changes or confusion/altered mental status- call parent to take child to a healthcare provider for evaluation.

Students who complain of illness, and who do not appear to meet the above criteria, will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Often, this will involve allowing the student to call home and inform the parent/guardians of physical complaints. Unless a pattern of excessive absences results, parents/guardians may decide on the response to complaints.

Parents with questions should contact the health assistant.