



# 2022-2023

## Student Health Handbook

Revision date: 1/11/2023

### How to Use This Handbook

The 2022-23 Student Health Handbook serves to provide health guidance for the 2022-23 school year. School policies and procedures have been implemented to safeguard the health of our community. Please read this handbook in its entirety.

We are committed to helping each family navigate this challenging time. Please feel free to pass it along to anyone who might be helping care for your children. If you have questions at any time, please contact us at [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org) and a member of the Health team will be in touch. **The NGFS Health team is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.- 5 p.m., except when the school is closed for holidays.**

### The Important Roles That Families Play

Here at school we have gone to great lengths to layer multiple risk mitigation strategies to limit the spread of infectious disease. For these strategies to be effective, our students, staff, and families must consistently adhere to personal behaviors outside of school that reflect best practices for limiting the spread of infection. These best practices include staying away from those who are ill, vaccination, the use of well-fitted face masks and physical distancing when appropriate, and frequent and thorough handwashing and hygiene.

Families play a vital role in maintaining safety at school. **The number one safety measure is to keep a student home when sick.** Please contact the Health team at [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org) when your student is sick. This allows us to work with you to get your student back in school as quickly as possible.

### How you can help at home

**Get vaccinated.** As a school, we believe in the efficacy of COVID and flu vaccines. We strongly encourage all eligible household members to receive the annual flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine and to stay up to date with boosters. For more information about vaccination, visit the [NC DHHS website](#). Please follow these links for [CDC guidance on COVID vaccination](#) and [vaccination against the flu](#).

We do not require that students be vaccinated against COVID or the flu, but it is strongly encouraged. We recognize and respect that these are confidential medical decisions involving many factors and fully support all of our families in making the decision they and/or their medical provider believe is in the best interest of their student.

### Stay home when sick

We understand that some students may experience chronic symptoms. If a student falls into this category, please let the school Health team know, [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org).

## Sick policy

- For vomiting or diarrhea, students must stay out for 24 hours after the last incident.
- For a fever of 100 or higher, students must stay out for 24 hours after the last incidence of fever. When the student has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications, they may return to school.
- Please note that students may not return to school midday and should plan to return on the next morning after the 24 hour time period. For example, if a student vomited at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, they may not return until Thursday morning.
- When your student has severe symptoms or symptoms that last for more than a day or two we strongly recommend that you seek guidance from your healthcare provider. Please have your provider complete the **NGFS Return to School** form located [here](#).

### **COVID-19 and Flu SYMPTOMS may include any of the following:**

Runny nose or Congestion, a change from baseline  
Sore throat  
New or worsening headache, a change from baseline  
New or worsening cough, a change from baseline  
Fever/Chills  
Fatigue (extreme)  
Muscle aches/body aches  
Loss of taste or smell  
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  
Vomiting or diarrhea

Please see [this information from the CDC](#) about the similarities and differences between the Flu and COVID.

### **RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus)**

RSV, is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants and older adults. ([CDC](#))

### **SYMPTOMS may include any of the following:**

Runny nose  
Decrease in appetite  
Coughing  
Sneezing  
Fever  
Wheezing

## When does a student need to Quarantine?

### COVID Symptoms

- A student should stay home or go home if they have any symptom from the COVID-19 symptom list and should be tested for COVID-19. For further guidance, contact the Health team at [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org).
- Please consult with the Health team to determine the appropriate testing plan.
- If COVID test results are negative and symptoms are improved, the student may return to school.
- Please wait for clearance from the Health team before returning to school.

### Testing positive for COVID

- If a student tests positive, they will quarantine for a minimum of 5 days. Please note that healthcare provider guidance may vary. Please follow school guidance.
- The symptom start date is day 0. In the case of no symptoms, the positive test date is day 0.
- On Day 6, the student may return to school if:
  - symptoms have improved and
  - they have been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication and
  - a rapid antigen test is negative on the morning of their return.
  - Test results should be sent to [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org).
  - Please wait for clearance from the Health team before returning to school.
- The student must mask when indoors through day 10.
- If still testing positive on a rapid antigen test on day 11, the student may return to school **IF** the student has been symptom free for the last 5 days (last symptom on or before day 6). The student must continue to mask indoors until no longer testing positive.
- If still testing positive on day 11 on a rapid antigen test, and the student has had symptoms within the past 5 days, the student may not come to school until they have been symptom free for 5 full days or until they test negative.

### Exposure to COVID

- If a student has a household exposure and is unable to isolate, the student must quarantine 5 days after the last date of exposure. A negative test result is required before the student may return to school. Please seek specific guidance from the NGFS Health team.
- Quarantine may last longer if the student is unable to isolate from the COVID positive person.
- Students should not have continued contact with the COVID positive person. Even if one or both are masking, the student would be considered continually “exposed” if they are within 6 feet of a positive person for a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24 hour period.
- A student who has a one time or “casual community” exposure will probably not have to quarantine, but will need to mask indoors for 10 days following the exposure. Please seek specific guidance from the NGFS Health team.
- All students must mask when indoors for 10 days following the last date of exposure.
- A PCR test is recommended for students between day 5 and 7 after the last date of exposure. (The LAST date of exposure is considered day 0.) If a student tests positive, a day 5-7 PCR test is not required.
- Test results may be sent to [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org). Please wait for clearance from the Health team before returning to school.

## How do we count days?

### Day 0

- If a student develops symptoms and tests positive for COVID, we count based on the symptom start date, which is considered day 0. Quarantine will last for at least 5 days, days 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- If a student does not have any symptoms but tests positive for COVID, we count based on the test date. The date a positive test sample was collected is considered day 0. Quarantine will last for at least 5 days, days 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- If a student is exposed to a COVID positive person, the LAST date of contact is considered day 0. If a student has continuous contact with a COVID positive person, we do not begin counting days until the student is no longer in contact with the individual.
- If a student is asked to test after exposure, we count the date of LAST exposure as day 0 and we recommend PCR testing between day 5 and 7 after the exposure.

## What happens if a student gets sick at school?

### Sickness at school

- A student that is not feeling well will typically be brought to the Health office and the family will be called to pick up the student. Please be sure you have someone authorized to pick up your child that can be at school within 30 minutes.
- To return to school, some testing may be required or recommended.
- Once home, please update the Health team about how your student is doing. Please seek guidance from the Health team at [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org) regarding next steps.
- Please wait for clearance from the Health team before returning to school.
- If your student will be out of school, you may notify your student's teachers. You do not need to share health details with your student's teachers.

## Optional masking

- CDC guidance strongly recommends indoor masking when in a HIGH level of transmission in your community.
- For those that opt not to mask, you assume some risk of exposure.
- The community level for [Guilford County](#) at the time of this writing is at a HIGH level. More details for our area can be found [here](#).
- See more information about Flu and RSV [here](#). Masking at school remains optional but can help prevent the spread of respiratory illness. Please consider indoor masking if your student is sneezing, coughing or having a constant runny nose. Please note that in some cases, students may be required or strongly recommended to mask for a period of time following a known exposure or probable exposure.

## Testing

- Rapid testing may occasionally be offered on a limited basis at school.
- Please contact the Health team in advance if interested in testing.
- Families are strongly encouraged to have a number of rapid antigen tests on hand for at home testing should they be needed. Free tests may be ordered through [local](#) and [state](#) programs.
- If you need help acquiring at home tests, please reach out to the NGFS Health team for assistance.
- If you need testing outside of school, see this link for [local testing](#) information and test sites.

## **Case Notification**

- When there is a COVID case, involved groups will be notified by email.
- If there is more than one case in the same classroom or area within a short period of time, a second notification may not be sent if the protocol will not be different from the initial email. If the case count continues to increase, you will be notified.
- If a student opts not to mask when indoors, the student assumes a higher risk of exposure.
- The [COVID dashboard on our website](#) will be updated on a regular basis and can be used to track cases by campus.

## **Emergency Contacts and Medical Information**

Parents must complete and submit required student medical information prior to the first day of school. Please consider your *Authorized Pickups* carefully, and make sure this information is up to date. Parents/guardians or other authorized pickups should be able to pick up your student from school **within 30 minutes of receiving a call from the school if your student must go home for any reason.**

If you have any changes, please update your student's information as needed at any time during the school year. The *Student Information Form* is found in the parent portal called ParentsWeb/FACTS Family portal and can be accessed at the top of the home page of our website and on the home screen of the NGFS app.

## **Hygiene**

Students will be instructed in proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette techniques (examples: coughing into your elbow rather than your hands; turning away from others when you cough or sneeze; etc). Handwashing will be required at numerous times at school during the day, such as before and after eating; after toileting, sneezing, or coughing; and before and after outside break times. Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) will be available. Please reinforce these behaviors at home.

For further health questions not addressed in this handbook, please contact the NGFS Health team at [health@ngfs.org](mailto:health@ngfs.org).