



2023-24

Student Health Handbook

Revision date: 8/16/2023

How to Use This Handbook

The 2023-24 Student Health Handbook serves to provide health guidance for the 2023-24 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 health related challenges. Please feel free to pass this handbook 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 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.**

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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 when your student is sick or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or other infectious illness. This allows us to work with you to get your student back in school as quickly as possible.

Student Medical Information and Emergency Contacts

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. If your student must go home for any reason, 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 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.

Medication Administration Policy

This policy covers prescription and non-prescription medications. New Garden Friends School has adopted this medication policy in compliance with North Carolina State Law and the North Carolina Board of Nursing regulations to ensure the health and safety of students who need medication during the school day. Medications to be administered at school, both prescription and non-prescription, must be authorized, and signed by a physician or provider on the **Medication Administration Authorization Form**. If your student will receive prescription or over the counter medications while at school, the Medication Administration Authorization Form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and the student's health care provider each year (the form is good for 12 months). Please download the Medication Administration Authorization form from the [School Health page](#).

This form may be dropped off with the School Nurse along with the prescription medication. You may also give forms and medications to Renee at the front desk of the Lower School Campus or to Hanna at the front desk of the Middle and Upper School Campus. Please be aware that controlled substances, including pain medication and many ADHD medications, must be given directly to Kathryn Gale, the School Nurse or her designee. If only submitting this form for non-prescription medications, email it to the Health team at health@ngfs.org or fax to 336-346-3169.

Please see [Appendix](#) for the Medication Administration Policy in its entirety.

Medical Action Plans

Students with severe allergies or other conditions that may require the use of Emergency rescue medications, such as an EpiPen or inhaler, are required to have a Medical Action Plan on file in addition to a Medication Administration Authorization Form. Medical Action Plan forms are located on the [School Health page](#). It is school policy that the rescue medication and the Medical Action Plan travel with the student throughout the school day. All of the student's teachers will be notified of the specific allergies and action plan. Contact the School Nurse with questions. If a student experiences an allergic reaction, the student should be monitored by the parent/guardian away from school for the day (following a daytime reaction) or for the following day (following a nighttime reaction.) More food allergy information can be found in the Handbooks for each level.

Immunizations

NGFS follows the North Carolina general statute that mandates children receive required immunizations. More information about required immunizations can be found here: <https://immunization.dph.ncdhhs.gov/schools/ncruleslaws.htm> In compliance with this statute, NGFS must receive documentation of immunization within 30 days of the first day of school.

Get vaccinated. As a school, we believe in the efficacy of COVID, Flu and other 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 and other immunizations. For more information about COVID and Flu vaccination, visit these sites: [NC DHHS website](#), [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.

Physical for Athletic Participation

Students are not required to have annual physicals for school unless they plan to participate in athletic programs and are in grades 5-12. Please see the [Athletics page](#) of our website for more information.

Preventing Illness

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.

Sick Policy

The number one safety measure is to keep a student home when sick.

- 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.
- Please inform the Health team by sending an email to health@ngfs.org, when your student is ready to return to school.
- 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.
- 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.

What Happens if a Student Gets Sick 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 that is listed as an authorized pickup in the FACTS family portal and that they 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 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.

Injury

- Staff are able to treat minor cuts and scrapes that occur at school. In the case of a significant injury or if the staff determines the student needs to see a health care provider, the school will notify the parent/guardian.
- If a head injury (collision with another child, bump, etc.) occurs at school, parents/guardians will be notified. If a student has a concussion the School Nurse or administrator will reach out to parents to have the Certification of Readiness to Return to School form filled out so we can prepare for the student's return to school.

Lice

If your child is determined to have lice, report this to the School Nurse or to Carolyn Howes on the Lower School campus or Hanna Hobson on the Middle and Upper School campus. You must treat your child for lice, and upon return to school, we will check to confirm your child's head has substantially fewer nits. The student will be rechecked on a regular basis until clear of nits. Parents/guardians are expected to follow through with head checks at home.

The school will conduct lice checks as needed. If a live louse is found, the student will be sent home, and we will follow the procedures described above.

COVID-19

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, NGFS has taken a layered approach to mitigating the risk of COVID-19. Our goal is to keep school operations and instruction calibrated to public health conditions in NC, specifically in Guilford County. We will continue to rely on the guidance, consideration, and mandates established by national, local, and state health experts and leaders, our medical advisors, and our school health team. Regular monitoring of the overall health and well-being of our school community will also be considered independently.

COVID-19 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

When Does a Student Need to Quarantine or Isolate?

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.
- Please consult with the Health team to determine the appropriate testing plan.
- If COVID test results are negative and symptoms are significantly 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.
- If symptoms develop after the positive test date, the 5-day isolation period will start over (day 0 changes to the first day of symptoms).
- On Day 6, the student may return to school **if**:
 - symptoms have significantly 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.
 - 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

- Students should not have continued contact with a 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.
- If a student has an exposure and is unable to isolate from the positive individual, the student **must stay home**. When the positive individual is no longer required to isolate, the asymptomatic student may return to school with a negative test and masking for 7 days.
- A student who has a one time or “casual community” exposure, will probably not have to quarantine as long as they are asymptomatic, but will need to mask 7 days following the exposure. Please seek specific guidance from the NGFS Health team.
- A PCR test is the best measure for COVID and is recommended for students between day 5 and 7 after the last date of exposure. If a PCR is not done, two rapid tests 24 hours apart between day 5 and 7 is a good measure and may be required before returning to school. (The LAST date of exposure is considered day 0.)
- Test results may be sent to 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.

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 LOW 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.

COVID-19 Testing

- Rapid testing may occasionally be required.
- 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 still be available through [local](#) and [state](#) programs. Please note many testing programs have ended.
- If you need help acquiring at home tests, please reach out to the NGFS health team for assistance.
- There are a variety of places that perform COVID tests, including local pharmacies such as CVS and Walgreens, urgent care, and Dr's offices.

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.

Influenza

Influenza, commonly known as the Flu, is a contagious virus spread by contact with droplets from the respiratory system (nose, throat, lungs) through coughing, sneezing, talking or by touching surfaces that contain the Flu virus and then touching their eyes, mouth, or nose. Symptoms start suddenly, usually 1-4 days after being infected and may last for about 7 days. (Guilford County Health Department)

Symptoms can be very similar to COVID-19 symptoms. Please see [this information from the CDC](#) about the similarities and differences between the Flu and COVID-19.

FLU SYMPTOMS

may include any of the following:

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue/ feeling tired and weak
- Fever
- Possible vomiting or diarrhea

Prevention and Treatment for Flu

We strongly encourage all eligible household members to get the annual Flu vaccine early in the season. Other important prevention measures include hand washing, covering your cough and coughing into your elbow (not your hand), avoiding other people that are sick and of course staying home if sick.

Antibiotics do not treat the Flu. Consult with your healthcare provider for treatment of symptoms. Please contact the health team at health@ngfs.org so that we may guide your return to school as quickly and safely as possible.

RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus)

RSV, is another 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](#))

RSV SYMPTOMS

may include any of the following:

Runny nose
Decrease in appetite
Coughing
Sneezing
Fever
Wheezing

For further health questions not addressed in this handbook, please contact the NGFS Health team at health@ngfs.org.

Appendix

Medication Administration Policy

Introduction

Some students require administration of prescription and/or non-prescription medication during school hours on a regular or temporary basis. New Garden Friends School has adopted this medication policy in compliance with North Carolina State Law and the North Carolina Board of Nursing regulations to ensure the health and safety of students who need medication during the school day.

Policy

The School Nurse must oversee all medications (over-the-counter, prescription, and emergent) for all students. New Garden Friends School does not permit students to keep medications in their possession without the knowledge and consent of the School Nurse. By supervising the storage and administration of medication, the nurse provides families with the assurance that student health needs are addressed in a safe manner. The parent/guardian shall be responsible for providing all medications to be administered, except for certain over-the-counter medications that are available in the School Nurse's office (see below). Medications to be administered at school, both prescription and non-prescription, must be prescribed, authorized, and signed by a physician or provider on the **Medication Administration Authorization Form**. The form must also be signed by the student's parent/guardian. This form must be completed and turned in to the School Nurse before any medication will be administered. All medications and forms will be reviewed by the School Nurse prior to administering medication to a student. As an alternative, parents may choose to come and administer medications to their child. Please download the **Medication Administration Authorization Form** [here](#).

Prescription Medications

Medications must be brought to the School Nurse's office by a parent/guardian, not the student. Each medication must be listed on the form signed by the prescribing health care provider and the parent. If the dosage is changed, a newly labeled container and an updated **Medication Administration Authorization Form** must be provided. No medication will be given beyond the expiration date. Controlled substance medications (such as ADHD or pain medications) will be counted by the nurse, or their designee with the parent/guardian on receiving or returning of medications. When treatment has been completed or at the end of the school year, unused medication should be picked up by the parent/guardian. At the end of the school year, all expired and unclaimed medication will be safely discarded.

No student may carry medications or self-medicate except for students with diabetes or students who require rescue medications such as epinephrine auto-injectors (epi-pens) and inhalers for asthma. A completed **Medication Administration Authorization Form** must be on file. Students with diabetes may self-administer insulin and carry glucagon if deemed appropriate by their healthcare provider and the School Nurse. Self-medication privileges may be revoked if the student exhibits a lack of responsible behavior. Prescription medications must be provided in a current pharmacy-labeled container. The label should state the student's name, name of medication, dosage, frequency and method of administration, and the name of the prescribing physician. (Parents may want to have the pharmacist label two containers, one for home use and one for school use, if the child is to receive the medication at both).

Non-prescription Medication

All medications will be administered according to manufacturer's recommendations on the label unless otherwise indicated by the healthcare provider on the **Medication Administration Authorization Form**. The following over-the-counter medications are available in the Nurse's Office: Tylenol (acetaminophen), Advil (ibuprofen), Tums, Dramamine (meclizine), Pepcid (famotidine), Loperamide (anti-diarrheal), Pepto-Bismol, Benadryl (diphenhydramine), After Bite Itch Eraser, Anti-itch cream, and Saline eye drops. For students in 6th grade and younger, a parent or guardian will be notified prior to administering non-prescription medication to obtain verbal consent. For students in middle school and high school, verbal consent is not needed for non-prescription medication and parents/guardians will be notified of the medication, dosage, and time of administration in an email.

Administration of Medication

Only New Garden Friends School employees to whom such responsibility has been delegated by the School Nurse will administer medications. The training of staff will include the following:

- The 6 “Rights” of medication administration: Right Child, Right Medication, Right Dosage, Right Time, Right Route, Right Documentation
- Safe storage and handling of medication
- Appropriate action for medication error

Documentation

Administered student medications will be documented on a medication log that includes the date, time, full name of student, name and dosage of medication given, and signature of the person administering the medication. Logs will be kept in the Health Room until the end of the school year. Administered medications may also be logged in a student's electronic medical record.

Medication storage

Daily non-emergent medication will be kept in the Nurse's Office or in a locked medication box/file cabinet in the front office as deemed appropriate by the School Nurse. The School Nurse and delegated staff will be responsible for its supervision. Emergency rescue medications for individual students in the Lower School, such as epinephrine auto-injectors and inhalers, will be placed in the classroom first aid backpack. Responsible students in middle and high school who have healthcare provider authorization and who demonstrate proficiency may self-carry emergency medications. A **Medication Administration Authorization Form** must be on file with the School Nurse.

Off-Campus Trips

The **Medication Administration Authorization Form** is the authorized form used for all on-campus and off-campus activities, including overnight trips and day field trips. Specific teachers/chaperones on the trip will be identified to administer medications while students are off campus. The School Nurse will provide the appropriate completed **Medication Administration Authorization Forms** to these individuals. No students on an off-campus trip will be allowed to self-carry any medications except in the case of rescue medications (epinephrine auto-injectors, inhalers and diabetic supplies). For medications normally taken at home outside of school hours, this may require advance planning to ensure necessary medication forms are completed.

When medications must be taken on overnight trips, the following safety measures should be taken:

- Send only essential medications on the trip.
- Send only the required amount of medication in a pharmacy-labeled or over-the-counter labeled bottle.
- Identified teachers/administrators accompanying the student will hold the medication and supervise the student taking the medication.

Please email health@ngfs.org with questions regarding the Medication Administration Policy.