



2024-25

Student Health Handbook

Revision date: 6/11/2024

How to Use This Handbook

The 2024-25 Student Health Handbook serves to provide health guidance for the 2024-25 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 the School Nurse, Kathryn Gale, at health@ngfs.org. The School Nurse is available during the school year on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 7:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., except when the school is closed for holidays. If there is an urgent need outside of this time, please contact the school reception directly by calling 336-299-0964.

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The Important Role That Families Play

At NGFS, we layer multiple risk mitigation strategies to limit the spread of infectious disease. Best practices include staying away from those who are ill, vaccination, the use of well-fitted face masks and physical distancing at appropriate times, 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 School Nurse at health@ngfs.org when your student is sick or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19. This allows us to work with you to get your student back in school as quickly as possible.

Student Medical Information, Authorized Pickups, and Emergency Contacts

Parents must complete and submit required student medical information prior to the first day of school. This is done annually for the upcoming school year on the Enrollment form accessed through the [ParentsWeb Family Portal](#). This also includes identifying emergency contacts and authorized pickup persons. Please consider your emergency contact and authorized pickup list carefully. If your student must go home for any reason, parents/guardians, emergency contacts, or authorized pickups should be able to pick up your student within 30 minutes of receiving a call from the school.

Please ensure that your student's information stays up to date. You can make updates to your student's emergency contacts and authorized pickup persons at any time during the school year on the *Student Information Form* in ParentsWeb Family Portal. The portal 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. If your student will receive prescription or over the counter (OTC) medications while at school, these must be authorized and signed by a physician or provider on the **Medication Administration Authorization Form**. This form must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the student's health care provider each year (the form is good for 12 months). You can 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 the School Nurse or her designee. If only submitting this form for OTC medications, you may email it to health@ngfs.org or fax to 336-346-3169.

Please see the [Appendix](#) for the NGFS 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 the Medication Administration Authorization Form. The Medical Action Plan specifies when and how a student should receive the emergency medication when it is needed. Medical Action Plan forms for Food Allergy, Asthma, Diabetes, and Seizure are located on the [School Health page](#).

The rescue medication and the Medical Action Plan will travel with the student throughout the school day. Teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the medication follows the lower school student throughout the day. Middle and Upper School students will carry their emergency medications (these include inhalers, EpiPens and seizure medications, etc.) for themselves throughout the day. Parents/guardians will also need to send in a backup for the school to keep.

All of the student's teachers will be notified of the specific allergies or conditions. If a student experiences an allergic reaction, the student should be monitored by the parent/guardian when 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.

Contact the School Nurse with any questions about the Medical Action Plan.

Immunizations

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

Get the COVID-19 vaccination. 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 recommended 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 our families in making the decision they and their medical provider decide is in the best interest of the student.

Physical for Athletic Participation

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

Illness Prevention

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 at school. 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 fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications, the student may return to school.
- When your student is ready to return to school, please inform the School Nurse by sending an email to health@ngfs.org. Please wait to receive a clearance response before sending your student 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.
- We understand that some students may experience chronic symptoms. If a student falls into this category, please let the School Nurse by sending an email to 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 that can be at school within 30 minutes.
- Before the student returns to school, please send a status update to health@ngfs.org; the School Nurse will provide guidance for next steps.
- COVID testing may be recommended in certain situations.
- Please wait for clearance before returning to school.
- If your student will be out of school, it is helpful to 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 school staff determine the student needs to see a health care provider, the school will contact the parent/guardian.
- If a head injury (collision with another child, bump, etc.) occurs at school, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible. If a student experiences a concussion, the School Nurse or an administrator will reach out to parents for certification of readiness to return to school. This allows us to prepare for the student's return to school.

COVID-19

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, NGFS has taken a layered approach to mitigating the risk of COVID-19. We will continue to rely on the guidance, consideration, and mandates established by national, state, and local health experts and leaders, our medical advisors, and our School Nurse. 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. Please send COVID test results to the School Nurse at health@ngfs.org. The School Nurse will provide guidance for next steps.
- If COVID test results are negative and symptoms are significantly improved, the student may return to school.
- Please wait for clearance from the School Nurse before returning to school.

Positive Test for COVID

- If a student tests positive, they will quarantine for a minimum of 5 days.
 - The date symptoms start is considered day 0.
 - If a student does not have any symptoms but tests positive for COVID, the date of the positive test is considered day 0.
- Please note that healthcare provider guidance may vary. **Please follow NGFS guidance for health protocol.**
- 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
 - Please notify the School Nurse the morning before the student's return with a status update.
- The student must mask when indoors through day 10.

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 or more over a 24 hour period.
- If a student has an exposure and is unable to isolate from the positive individual, please notify the School Nurse and she will work with you to make the best plan. The **last** date of exposure is considered day 0.
- A student who has a one time or “casual community” exposure, will probably not have to quarantine as long as they are asymptomatic, but is encouraged to mask 5 days following the exposure. Please seek specific guidance from the School Nurse.
- A PCR test is the best measure for COVID-19 infection, and we recommend PCR testing between days 3 and 5 after the last date of exposure. If a PCR is not done, two rapid tests 24-48 hours apart between day 3 and 5 is a good measure.

Masking

- CDC guidance strongly recommends indoor masking when:
 - respiratory viruses are causing a significant amount of illness in your community
 - you or the people around you were recently exposed to a respiratory virus
 - you are sick with an infectious illness or are recovering from an infectious illness
 - you or the people around you have risk factors for severe illness
- For those who opt not to mask, they assume some risk of exposure.
- Masking at school remains optional but is a key factor in preventing the spread of respiratory illness. The School Nurse may request that your child mask if they are sneezing, coughing, or having a constant runny nose.

COVID-19 Testing

- NGFS no longer requires testing; however, it may be requested.
- If recommended testing is not done, alternative measures will be offered to the family.
- We are aware it is challenging to find free rapid COVID tests. We have rapid take-home tests available at school (while supplies last). Request a test by sending an email to health@ngfs.org.

COVID Case Notification

- When there is a COVID case on campus, 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 and the protocol will not be different from the initial email, a second notification may not be sent. If the case count continues to increase, involved groups 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 respiratory droplets through coughing, sneezing, talking, or by touching surfaces that contain the Flu virus and then touching the eyes, mouth, or nose. Symptoms usually start 1-4 days after being infected and can 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

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

Antibiotics do not treat the Flu. Consult with your healthcare provider for treatment of symptoms. Please contact the School Nurse at health@ngfs.org so that we may guide your child's 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

Lice

If your child is determined to have lice, report this to the School Nurse. You must treat your child for lice, and upon their 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.

For further health questions, please contact the School Nurse at health@ngfs.org.

Thank you for your partnership in keeping our community healthy!

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 non-prescription (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 can 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 in order 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 an emergency medication bag labeled with the student's name. Teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the medication follows the lower school student throughout the day. 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

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