Notes from Evans County School Nurses:

With cold and flu season upon us, please keep the following guidelines in mind when deciding whether or not to send your child to school. We want this to be a healthy season and want to share some information with our parents/guardians.

• For a temperature greater than 100 degrees. Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school and not taking fever reducing medication to control symptoms.

• If diagnosed with a strep infection. Students need to be on an antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours, fever free, and feeling well before returning to school.

• If your child has vomited or had persistent diarrhea during the night or in the morning before school.

• If your child has a heavy, moist productive cough, chest congestion, or discolored nasal drainage.

• If your child has pinkeye (conjunctivitis). Students need to have completed 24 hours of medication, and have no visible redness or discharge before returning to school. Students returning to school should be kept home until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

This is important for your child’s health and the health of his/her classmates. Please continue to remind your child of the importance of frequent hand washing, healthy eating, proper use and disposal of tissues during this cold and flu season, and the importance of coughing/sneezing in their elbows.

The School Nurses will continue to monitor closely any reported cases of head lice in the school setting. If at any time you would like the nurse to check your child’s hair, please send a note to school to the attention of the nurse and we will be happy to do this. If you are not sure what to look for, please call the nursing office so we can be of assistance. Thank you for your attention to this important matter concerning the health of our students. Please feel free to contact the school nurses with any questions or concerns.

We are working with our staff, students, and community to ensure that your child/children are healthy, happy, safe, and well educated. Thank you for all you do!
Common cold

1. The common cold is a viral infection of your nose and throat.
2. It is usually harmless, although it may not feel that way.
3. There are many types of viruses that can cause a cold.
4. Children younger than 6 are at the greatest risk of cold, but healthy adults can also expect to have 2-3 colds annually.
5. Most people recover in a week to 10 days.
6. Although they go away in a few days there are somethings you can do to take care of yourself
   a. Get plenty of rest and drink plenty of fluids
   b. Tylenol and motrin as directed
   c. Over-the-counter cold and cough meds may help ease symptoms in adults and older children, they do not cause the cold to go away but they help ease symptoms
   d. Always check with a doctor before giving children any medicine
   e. Antibiotics DO NOT treat the common cold
7. Prevention of the common cold
   a. Always wash your hands. Everyone should wash their hands after nose wiping, diapering, using the bathroom, and before preparing or eating food
   b. Disinfect your environment. Clean commonly touched surfaces
   c. Use hand sanitizers to stop the spread of germs
   d. Use paper towels instead of sharing cloth towels to dry hands
   e. Avoid smoking or second-hand smoke
Flu

1. The flu attacks the lungs, nose, and throat. Symptoms include fever, chills, muscle aches, cough, congestion, runny nose, headaches, and fatigue. It is contagious 1 day before symptoms develop and 5 days after the symptoms begin.
2. The flu can be deadly, especially in high-risk groups.
3. The flu is very common and spreads easily by coughs and sneezes, skin to skin contact (hugs and handshakes), by saliva (kissing or sharing drinks), and touching contaminated surfaces.
4. Most symptoms are pain in the muscles, cough, chills, dehydration, fatigue, fever, flushing, loss of appetite, body aches, sweating, congestion, runny nose, sneezing, chest discomfort, head congestion, headaches, nausea, shortness of breath, or sore throat.
5. The flu is primarily treated with rest and fluids to let the body fight off the virus on its own.
6. Over the counter anti-inflammatory pain relievers (ibuprofen) may help with symptoms.
7. Bed rest and reducing activity for a short period of time to promote healing.
8. Throat lozenges, decongestants, cough meds, and pain meds can be used to help also. These meds are not recommended to give children under the age of 6 without first consulting your doctor. They can cause serious side effects.
9. DO NOT use medicine that contains ASPIRIN!!!
10. As with the common cold help reduce spreading by:
   a. Always wash your hands. Everyone should wash their hands after nose wiping, diapering, using the bathroom, and before preparing or eating food.
   b. Disinfect your environment. Clean commonly touched surfaces.
   c. Use hand sanitizers to stop the spread of germs.
   d. Use paper towels instead of sharing cloth towels to dry hands.
   e. Avoid smoking or second-hand smoke.
f. Always see your doctor as needed and

11. You can always help prevent the flu by getting an annual Flu shot!!
12. The CDC recommends yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older
13. There is no shortage of flu vaccines and anyone can the flu shot should. You can go
to your local health department, doctor, or pharmacy
14. The flu vaccine cannot give you the flu
15. The flu is not just a bad cold, nearly 100,000 people are hospitalized with the flu
each year. If you suspect you or your family member has the flu see your doctor

When you cough or sneeze do so in your elbow to prevent the spread of germs!!
Head Lice: Treatment and Prevention

Head lice are tiny, 6-legged insects about this long (-). They may be grayish white. If they are filled with blood, they will look red. They do not have wings, so they cannot fly. They do not jump but they can move very fast. This makes it hard to find them in the hair.

Nits are the eggs of the lice. They look like bits of dandruff in the hair but do not flake off when touched. They are stuck to the hair. They are about this size ('). Nits may be yellowish white to brown.

Head lice attach their nits to a hair shaft with waterproof "glue." The eggs are laid close to the scalp where the temperature is warm and constant. It is a perfect place for them to grow and hatch. Look for nits at the back of the neck and behind the ears. Usually the first sign of head lice is intense itching. Lice do not pass along disease. However, if the skin is scratched open, sores can get infected.

How to get lice

Lice are usually spread from child to child when sharing clothing, hats, scarves, combs, brushes, hair trims or helmets that have strands of hair with nits. Lice can also be passed when playing contact sports.

Life cycle of lice

Lice spend their entire life on human heads. A louse can live up to a month if it can feed on blood several times a day. If lice fall off the scalp, they will die within a day or two.

The female louse can lay up to 8 nits per day. The eggs hatch in about a week (6 to 9 days). The baby "nymphs" need a blood meal within minutes of hatching. In another 7 days, they grow to be adults and can start laying eggs. Knowing the life cycle will help you to understand the treatment of lice.

Treatment
There are no over-the-counter or prescription treatments that totally kill both lice and nits. Nits cannot be washed out or brushed out of the hair. They must be picked or pulled out with a special nit comb or by hand. Various natural remedies exist for treating lice but there is no scientific proof that they work. A combination of approaches is needed:

- Using over the counter or prescription lice medicine
- Removing nits with a nit comb and by hand, the single most important treatment!
- Environmental control, vacuuming and washing
- Regular head checks followed by less frequent head checks to detect re-infestation
- Checking others who have close contact with someone who has lice

**Treatment with lice medicine and removing nits**

Head lice shampoo is an insecticide. It should be used with caution. Many lice medicines are not recommended for children under 2. Check the instructions for suggested age limits. If you are pregnant or have a weakened immune system, ask your health provider if it is safe to handle lice shampoo.

Follow these steps for most lice medicine:

- Read the label to be sure how long the medicine should be left on the hair and how it should be washed out. Many medicines are left on for 10 minutes. Do not use more or keep it on the head longer than what is recommended.
- Wash the hair with regular shampoo. Do not use a conditioner. It can keep the lice medicine from working.
- Rinse well with warm water and towel dry. Do not use the towel again until it has been laundered.
- Use a regular comb to get out any snarls. This comb will need to be treated later (see Environmental Control below).
- Wear gloves and apply lice medicine only to the scalp. Avoid getting the medicine on other parts of the body. If it gets in the eyes, flush the eyes with water right away.
- Stay with your child while the medicine is on the hair. Do not put a shower cap or plastic bag on your child’s head.
- Sometimes it will be easier to remove the nits if you wet the hair with white vinegar while you are combing the nits out. Vinegar helps loosen the "glue" that holds the nits to the hair.
- Separate and comb small sections of hair at a time. It might be helpful to use hairclips to pin up sections of hair as you check your child’s head.
- Use a nit comb to remove the nits. Metal ones work best. Combing can take more than an hour, depending on hair length and the number of nits. You may have to pick out the nits with gloved hands if other methods do not work.

- Place nits and lice in toilet and flush or place in a small plastic bag. Seal the bag and throw it away.

- Wash your hands carefully. Be sure to scrub under your fingernails.

After treating with lice medicine
- Have your child put on clean clothing after every lice treatment.

- Check for lice again in 8 to 12 hours. Use the nit comb to remove dead lice and nits.
  - If some are still present but moving slowly, do not shampoo again.
  - If lice are still active and no dead lice are found, call your health care provider. These lice may be resistant to the medicine. Do not use more than one head lice medicine at a time without asking your doctor.

- Do not rewash hair for 1 to 2 days after the lice treatment. It may reduce the effectiveness of the lice medicine.

□ Continue to check hair and use the nit comb to remove nits and lice every 2 to 3 days for 2 to 3 weeks. This process should be done for as long as nits and lice are still found on the head.

□ Many lice medicines recommend a second treatment in 9 to 10 days. This will kill any new nymphs that have hatched since the first treatment. Do not treat a person more than 2 times with the same medicine without talking to your doctor.

□ Do not use conditioner for 10 days after any treatment.

If all nits are not removed, they may hatch into live lice. The hair will be re-infested and you will have to start the treatment process all over again.

Environmental control
Since both lice and nits cannot live away from a source of human blood for more than 2 days, you do not need to spend a lot of time or money on housecleaning. Nor do you need to throw away any items. It is best to treat anything that your child has used or where your child has rested in the last 3 days.

Washable Items
- Machine-wash items in hot, soapy water, then dry. Use the hot cycle of a dryer for at least 20 minutes. Wash all washable clothing (including hats, scarves and coats) and all bed linens, blankets, sleeping bags, towels and washcloths that have had contact with your child.
• Soak combs (including nit combs), brushes, hair barrettes, hair bands and sports helmets:
  o In hot, scalding water (above 130° F) for 10 minutes, or
  o In a solution made with the Nix Creme Rinse® for 1 hour, or
  o In rubbing alcohol for one hour, then wash in scalding, hot, soapy water.

Non-washables
• Vacuum all carpets and furniture, including beds. This will remove any hairs that might have nits attached that are still alive.
• Do not spray insecticides on carpet and furniture nor hire a pest control company to treat your home. It is not necessary and could expose children to harmful chemicals.
• Pillows, stuffed animals, clothing and other things that cannot be washed may be dry-cleaned. Or you can put them in a tightly-sealed plastic bag for 3 days (Picture 1). Any nits or lice on these things will die in 2 days.
• Check the hair and scalp of all family members every 2 to 3 days by combing the hair until no live lice are found for 10 days. If you find nits or lice, treat that family member’s hair and clothing the same way. It is not necessary to treat anyone unless they have lice. Treatment that is not needed increases resistance to the lice medicine.

When to call the doctor
• The lice treatment has not been effective.
  o Lice remain as active as before treatment.
  o After 2 treatments, your child still has lice.
• Your child has open, oozing sores or crusting on the scalp.
• Your child has a fever or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck.

School and other parents
• Tell parents of your child’s closest friends to check their children for lice since the children play together
• Tell the school nurse at your child’s school. The nurse can check other children for nits to be sure they are treated.
• Check the lice policy at your child’s school. In some schools a child cannot return until he or she has received one treatment and is checked for live lice by the school nurse. If live lice are found, the nurse will send the child home. Although unusual,
some schools may require that a child’s hair must be free of all nits before being allowed to go back to school.

**Prevention**
The single most important thing to prevent lice is to "Never Share What Touches the Hair." Teach your child to not share combs, brushes, hats, scarves, hair accessories, "scrunchies," helmets, headphones, or pillows.

Check your child's hair often during the school year.