



**Douglas G. Grafflin School
650 King Street
Chappaqua, NY 10514**

December 2009

Dear Parents,

It is Grafflin's philosophy that outdoor recess is an important part of a child's school day. It is an opportunity to enjoy physical activity, as well as being an invaluable tool in the development of socialization skills. Our rule of thumb is that children go outside if the temperature is above 20 degrees (including the wind-chill factor). We would like to ask for your help in making outdoor recess a safe and comfortable experience.

At this time please spend a few minutes speaking to your child about appropriate playground behavior. The throwing of snowballs is a favorite for children but it can be very dangerous. Please remind your children that this activity is not allowed at school.

Also, in the winter months, it is extremely important that parents pay special attention to the outer clothing worn to school by their children. It is essential that each child have a winter jacket, a hat, and gloves or mittens. When snow is on the ground, boots and snow pants are mandatory for outdoor play. Please refer to the reverse side of this page for an article entitled *Winter Wear*. This will provide you with additional hints on ways to keep your child well protected from the cold temperatures.

With your cooperation, the children will thoroughly enjoy the beautiful outdoors and the camaraderie of good friends. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Carol Losey, School Nurse
Debbie Alspach, Assistant Principal



Winter Wear

With cold weather upon us, parents are likely to have questions about keeping their children healthy and safe this winter. Here are some health tips based on guidelines from the *American Academy of Pediatrics*.

- Make sure your child dresses in layers. There is warm air between each layer of clothing that helps maintain body temperature.
- Have your child wear wool. Wool keeps a person drier and warmer than many other fabrics. Your child can wear long underwear under the garment if the wool is irritating. **Also, for our purposes, snow pants are a must to play in snow during recess.**
- Pay special attention to hands and feet by wearing gloves and sock liners. Mittens hold in more heat than gloves.
- Make sure your child always wears a hat when the temperature is below freezing. Most body heat is lost through an uncovered head.
- A scarf helps protect the face against frostbite and wind burn.
- Have your child wear boots while playing in the snow. Toes are more prone to frostbite than other body parts.
- To prevent chapping caused by cold air that hits moist areas of your child's face— from runny noses or drooling— apply petroleum jelly to exposed areas of the face.

December



A Message from the Health Office

At this time of year, many children (and adults) suffer from one or more of the many symptoms associated with the “common cold” and flu. These upper respiratory and gastrointestinal complaints leave many of us with the question, “How sick should my child be to stay home from school?” Although there is no concrete answer, there are some guidelines that may help you in the decision making process.

Please keep your child home if he/she has:

- **Fever---** A child needs to be **fever-free for 24 hours (without medication)** in order to return to school. (Exception: A physician’s written OK to return to school along with a medication order from the physician).
- **Severe Cough---** This pertains to a cough that is so severe that he/she is unable to attend to tasks or concentrate in the classroom.
- **Purulent (yellow or green) nasal discharge---** This may be indicative of an infection.
- **Communicable disease---** These conditions include chicken pox, staph and strep infections, impetigo, flu, and conjunctivitis or pink eye.
- **Nausea and vomiting---** If your child has vomited during the night or in the early morning, your child should not come to school that day.
- **Fatigue---** Early bedtime is a must for young growing bodies.

If a child has been ill, his/her resistance is low. By returning too early, your child will be exposing him/herself to other children’s germs as well as exposing other children and the staff. Please keep your child home if he/she is sick.

Also, please reinforce preventive techniques at home. **Frequent hand washing** is the most important method of reducing cross contamination and preventing spread of infection. Also encourage your child to use tissues to cover coughs and sneezes.

If your child is “iffy” and you decide to send him/her to school, please make sure that he/she knows where you will be and how to reach you.

I hope you find these tips to be helpful.

Carol Losey, Grafflin Nurse