



**MIDDLE COUNTRY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**8 43RD STREET • CENTEREACH, NY 11720**  
**631-285-8005 • 631-738-2719 (fax) • [www.mccsd.net](http://www.mccsd.net)**

Roberta A. Gerold, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Francine McMahon, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction  
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James G. Donovan, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child may have been exposed to whooping cough (pertussis). Since December 1, 2023, the Suffolk County Department of Health has seen an increased number of whooping cough cases. Whooping cough is an infection that affects the airways. The bacteria that cause whooping cough can easily spread from person to person by coughing or sneezing. Whooping cough can cause a severe cough that lasts for weeks or months, sometimes leading to coughing fits or vomiting. Anyone can get whooping cough, but it can be very dangerous for babies and people with certain health conditions that may be worse with whooping cough. Family members with whooping cough, especially siblings and parents, can spread pertussis to babies.

Recommendations:

**1. If your child has a cough:**

- Keep your child home from school and activities, such as sports or play groups. See items 4 and 5 about when your child can return to these activities.
- Make an appointment with your child's doctor as soon as possible and tell the doctor that your child may have been exposed to whooping cough.

**2. If your child has a health condition that may be worse with whooping cough, such as asthma,** ask your child's doctor to prescribe antibiotics to your child as soon as possible to prevent whooping cough. Doctors should give antibiotics to a child with certain health conditions if they may have been exposed to whooping cough, even if he or she is not coughing.

**3. If your child lives with any of the following people,** ask your child's doctor to prescribe antibiotics as soon as possible to your child, even if he or she is not coughing:

- A woman who is pregnant
- A baby younger than 12 months old
- Anyone with health conditions that may be worse with whooping cough, such as asthma

**4. If your child has been diagnosed with whooping cough by his or her doctor:**

- Tell the school that a doctor diagnosed your child with whooping cough.
- School officials may request that you keep your child home from school and activities, such as sports or play groups, until your child has been on appropriate antibiotics for five days to treat whooping cough.
- Ask your child's doctor for a note that states your child has whooping cough.

**5. If your child's doctor says your child does NOT have whooping cough:**

- Ask for a note from the doctor telling the school that your child's cough is NOT whooping cough and that your child can return to school and other activities at any time.

Please make sure your family's whooping cough vaccinations are up to date. Protection against whooping cough from the childhood vaccine, DTaP, decreases over time. Older children and adults, including pregnant women, should get a whooping cough booster shot called "Tdap" to help protect themselves and babies. If you need Tdap, contact your doctor.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at 631-285-8130.

Sincerely,

***Thomas Bell***