

Quick Guide for School Staff

HAYFEVER VS. SUMMER COLDS

During the final months of term, pupils often present with symptoms such as sneezing, a runny nose, watery eyes, tiredness, and headaches. But are these symptoms caused by hay fever, a summer cold, or something else?

Hayfever symptoms in children and teenagers

- **Frequent sneezing:**
Often in bursts, particularly after time outdoors or on high-pollen days.
- **Runny nose with clear, watery discharge:**
Younger children may report feeling generally unwell.
- **Itchy, red, or watering eyes:**
Pupils may rub their eyes repeatedly.
- **Itchy throat or roof of the mouth:**
Children may describe it as an "itch" or a "tickle".
- **Blocked or stuffy nose:**
Can affect concentration, sleep, and appetite.
- **Mild fatigue, difficulty concentrating:**
Pupils may say their head is "heavy" and attribute this to poor sleep rather than hayfever.

Good to know:

Despite the name, hayfever does not cause fever.

Hayfever symptoms persist throughout pollen season and are typically worse on warm, dry, and windy days, even when it's cloudy. They do not improve after a week or two as a cold would.

Pollen season generally runs from late February through to November.