



6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Parent/Carers

**Re: Scarlet fever/Strep A**

You will be aware from the news that there is concern about the number of case of scarlet fever, and other conditions caused by a bacteria called group A streptococci (strep A). I wanted to write to you to make sure you had key information and to tell you what the school is doing in response.

The information below is taken from the latest [UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep](#), which was last updated on 2 December.

**Scarlet fever** is usually a mild illness, but it is highly infectious. Therefore, look out for symptoms in your child, which include

- A sore throat, headache and fever, along with a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel.
- On darker skin, the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel.

**Contact NHS 111 or your GP** if you suspect your child has scarlet fever, because early treatment of scarlet fever with antibiotics is important to reduce the risk of complications such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection. **If your child has scarlet fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.**

**Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called group A streptococci.** These bacteria also cause other respiratory and skin infections such as **strep throat and impetigo**. In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called **invasive Group A strep (iGAS)**. While still uncommon, there has been an increase in invasive Group A strep cases this year, particularly in children under 10.

Investigations are also underway following reports of an increase in **lower respiratory tract Group A strep infections in children** over the past few weeks, which have caused severe illness.

There are lots of viruses that cause sore throats, colds and coughs circulating. These should resolve without medical intervention. However, children can on occasion develop a bacterial infection on top of a virus and that can make them more unwell.

**As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:**

- your child is getting worse
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
- your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration

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- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is very tired or irritable

**Call 999 or go to A&E if:**

- your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when your child breathes
- your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

Good hand and respiratory hygiene are important for stopping the spread of many bugs. By teaching your child how to wash their hands properly with soap for 20 seconds, using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, and keeping away from others when feeling unwell, they will be able to reduce the risk of picking up or spreading infections.

**At school, we will be:**

- remaining vigilant to the signs and symptoms linked to scarlet fever and strep A, as listed above
- making sure that children are washing their hands more frequently
- continuing with antibacterial cleaning fluids in classrooms to help with cleaning high frequency touch spots such as door handles etc.
- continuing to deep clean all areas of the school as appropriate

We will keep the situation under daily review and will consider further control measures as appropriate.

If your child is exhibiting any of the symptoms in the bullet points above, we would ask you to keep them at home and seek medical advice urgently.

Yours sincerely

*T Skeggs*

**MRS T SKEGGS**  
**Executive Headteacher.**