

6th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Increasing Rates of Scarlet Fever (Group A Strep)

We are writing to inform you that the UKHSA continue to see elevated levels of Scarlet Fever cases, particularly in young children. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the signs, symptoms and the actions to be taken.

Signs and Symptoms of Scarlet Fever

- Scarlet Fever is a common childhood infection caused by Streptococcus pyogenes, or group A streptococcus (GAS). The early symptoms of scarlet fever include **sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting.** Another sign may be **reduced drinking and less going to the toilet** (eg if nappies seem dryer than usual)
- After 12 to 48 hours the characteristic red, pinhead **rash** develops, typically first appearing **on the chest and stomach**, then rapidly spreading to other parts of the body, and **giving the skin a sandpaper-like texture.**
- The scarlet rash **may be harder to spot on darker skin, although the 'sandpaper' feel should be present.** Patients typically have flushed cheeks and pallor around the mouth. This may be accompanied by a **'strawberry tongue'.** As the child improves peeling of the skin can occur.

It is important that any cases are treated promptly with antibiotics. If you or a member of your family are showing any signs and symptoms, seek medical attention (see your GP or contact NHS 111 <https://111.nhs.uk/>). If your child is diagnosed with Scarlet Fever, please remember that they cannot return to school until 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

To reduce the spread:

Do

- **Wash your hands with soap and water.**
- **Use tissues to trap germs from coughs and sneezes.**
- **Bin used tissues as quickly as possible.**
- **Make sure open sores/wounds are covered as germs can spread much more easily into uncovered areas.**

Don't

- Do not share cutlery, cups, towels, clothes, bedding or baths with anyone who has symptoms of scarlet fever

Please be vigilant and **if your child is displaying any of the early symptoms: sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting, then they should stay off school as a precaution.**

Further information can be found via the following links.

[NHS Scarlet Fever Factsheet - includes useful information and images](#)

[UKHSA - 5 ways to Protect your Under 5s this Winter](#)

Yours sincerely,

Mr D. Kerbel
Headteacher