



All Souls' Church of England Primary School

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Wednesday 7th December 2022

Strep A Guidance for Parents

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am sure you all will have seen the news documenting the rise in cases of both Scarlet Fever and Strep A across the UK. Understandably this has caused concern for parents and carers, therefore we wanted to send you some useful information and guidance on what to look out for and appropriate action if necessary.

Scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is a contagious bacterial infection that mostly affects young children. It is easily treated with antibiotics. The first signs of scarlet fever can be flu-like symptoms, including high temperature, a sore throat and swollen neck glands (a large lump on the side of your neck).

A rash appears 12 to 48 hours later. It looks like small, raised bumps and starts on the chest and tummy, then spreads. The rash makes your skin feel rough, like sandpaper. On white skin the rash looks pink or red. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin, but you can still feel it. A white coating also appears on the tongue. This peels, leaving the tongue red, swollen and covered in little bumps (called "strawberry tongue"). The rash does not appear on the face, but the cheeks can look red. The redness may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

Contact a GP if your child:

Has scarlet fever symptoms
Does not get better in a week (after seeing a GP)
Has scarlet fever and chickenpox at the same time
Is ill again, weeks after scarlet fever got better - this can be a sign of a complication, such as rheumatic fever
Is feeling unwell and has been in contact with someone who has scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is very easily spread. Check with a GP before you go in. They may suggest a phone consultation.

What to do if you feel your child seems seriously 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.



Children with scarlet fever should stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others. They can return to school/nursery after 24h of antibiotic use if they do not have a fever anymore. If no antibiotics have been administered, the individual will be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks and should be excluded for this period.

Invasive group A Strep infection

In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (iGAS). The initial signs of iGAS are the same as for other severe infectious diseases. As a parent, if you feel that a child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Here is some general advice for parents:

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
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 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

As a school we will be reminding children of the importance of good hand and respiratory hygiene (washing hands for 20 seconds, using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes) as these remain the most important steps in preventing and controlling spread of infection.

We also ask parents to speak to the school office if you feel your child might be experiencing any symptoms that may be linked to either scarlet fever or strep A. It is important that we all take responsibility and where necessary, the appropriate precautions to keep our children safe.

Many thanks

Mrs Ransley
Headteacher

