



Registered Address: Canford Heath Infant School, Learoyd Road, Poole, BH17 8PJ
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Company Number: 09484306

Monday 5th December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Public Health Advice on Strep A and Scarlet Fever

As you may have heard on the media this weekend, there have been a number of cases of Strep A and Scarlet Fever reported in the past few days. As a result of this, I have contacted Public Health Dorset and are able to share the following information with you from them.

Information on Strep A and Scarlet Fever are best looked at on the NHS website for accuracy [UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). There are very few cases but it is infectious and you should not send your child to school if they have symptoms.

In summary:

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,
- 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.

If you have concerns, please 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.



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Currently, there is no evidence that a new strain is circulating.

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](#)
- 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.

Please encourage your child to regularly wash their hands.

We hope you find this guidance useful.

If your child is diagnosed with Scarlet Fever or Strep A, please let us know as soon as possible, as schools have been advised to let Public Health know so they can continue to support and monitor the situation.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Kate Carter
Chief Executive Officer



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