

26/02/2024

Arnside National C of E School

Dear Parent / Carer

### Re: Scarlet Fever

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Arnside National C of E School have been diagnosed with scarlet fever.

The current advice is that although scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, it should be treated with antibiotics to minimise the risk of complications and reduce the spread to others.

#### Symptoms of scarlet fever:

The **symptoms** of scarlet fever include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea, and vomiting. This is followed by a fine red rash which typically first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. On white skin the rash looks pink or red. On brown and black skin it might be harder to see a change in colour, but you can still feel the sandpaper-like texture of the rash and see the raised bumps. The face can be flushed red but pale around the mouth.

If you think you or your child have scarlet fever:

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible.
- Ask your GP to take a throat swab to confirm if this is scarlet fever.
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- Stay at home and away from your school or early years setting for **at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment**, to avoid spreading the infection.

If you/your child has an underlying condition which affects the immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

#### Potential complications:

Children who have had **chickenpox** recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents/guardians should remain vigilant for symptoms such as a persistent high fever, cellulitis (skin infection) and arthritis (joint pain and swelling). If you are concerned for any reason, please seek medical assistance immediately. **All children with chickenpox should remain off**

**school or their early years setting until at least 5 days after the start of their rash AND until all their spots have crusted over.**

**Infection control advice:**

We are following national guidance and advice on hygiene measures to help prevent spread within our school or early years setting. Parents and carers can also help with this by:

- Reminding children of the importance of coughing / sneezing into tissues and placing these in the bin and washing hands regularly.
- Ensuring any breaks to the skin are covered with a waterproof plaster / dressing before attending school or the early years setting.
- Keeping your child at home whilst they have a high temperature (38°C or more) or a rash.
- Keeping your child at home if they have had vomiting or diarrhoea within the past 48 hours.
- Thinking about vaccination. Recent infection with flu can increase the risk of serious illness if a person then gets scarlet fever. If you or your child are eligible for the flu vaccine, you are encouraged to get vaccinated.
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**Worried about symptoms of illness in your child?**

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 38C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39C 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

**Further information:**

You can find more information at:

[NHS – Scarlet Fever](#)

[NHS – Strep A](#)

[Scarlet fever: symptoms, diagnosis and treatment](#)

Dr Ranj Singh, in partnership with the NHS has made a video explaining more about Group A Strep and scarlet fever. You can view it here: [Strep A information with Dr Ranj Singh - YouTube](#)

If you have any further questions, please contact the school or early years setting on **01524 761159**

Yours sincerely