



Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

2nd March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Scarlet Fever

We have recently had one or two cases of Scarlet Fever within school so wanted to remind you of what it is and what to look out for. Scarlet fever is caused by a bacteria called Group A streptococci ('strep'). These bacteria also cause other respiratory and skin infections such as strep throat and impetigo. 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.

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 more darkly-pigmented skin, the scarlet rash may be harder to spot, but it should feel like 'sandpaper'. The face can be flushed red but pale around the mouth.

If you think you, or your child, has scarlet fever:

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible because early treatment with antibiotics is important to reduce the risk of complications such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection;
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor;
- Stay at home, away from nursery, school or work for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection.

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 note, children who have had chickenpox recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents 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.

More information on scarlet fever and Group A strep is available on the government website:

[UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep)

Kind Regards,
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