

13th December 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may have seen recent press coverage regarding **Strep A infections** in children, so I am writing to make you aware of the symptoms of Strep A, and what to do should your child become unwell.

Group A streptococcus (GAS) is a common bacteria. Lots of us carry it in our throats and on our skin, and it doesn't always result in illness. However, GAS does cause a number of infections, some mild, like **scarlet fever**, and some more serious.

The most serious infections linked to GAS come from invasive group A strep, known as iGAS. These infections are caused by the bacteria getting into parts of the body where it is not normally found, such as the lungs or bloodstream. In rare cases, an iGAS infection can be fatal. Whilst iGAS infections are still uncommon, there has been an increase in cases this year, particularly in children under 10, and sadly, a small number of deaths across the UK.

As parents, you should monitor your child for any GAS/scarlet fever symptoms, and take action to get treatment as soon as possible. Symptoms 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. **It should be treated as soon as possible, with antibiotics, to minimise the risk of complications, and reduce the spread to others.**

If you think you or your child may have GAS/scarlet fever:

- See your GP, or contact NHS 111, as soon as possible
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor
- Stay at home and away from school for at least 48 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection
- Notify the academy that your child has a suspected or confirmed case

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

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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 shows signs of dehydration
- 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 in 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 is available from the following links:

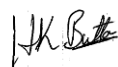
- [UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep](#)
- [Fact sheet covering what scarlet fever is, and other frequently asked questions](#)
- [Scarlet fever guidance on symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment](#)

GAS/scarlet fever is spread by close contact with an infected person, and can be passed on through coughs and sneezes, or from a wound. It is therefore important to maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene to stop the spread.

Please continue to encourage your child to regularly wash their hands properly, with soap, for 20 seconds, and remind them to always use a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. If there are confirmed cases we will notify parents, and in the event of an outbreak (i.e. more than one case), we will also notify the local Health Protection Team.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. H. Buttar

Principal