



Edenfield C E Primary School

12th December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, UKHSA is reporting an increased number of cases of Group A streptococcus (Strep A) compared to normal at this time of year. There is no evidence that a new strain is circulating and the increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

What are scarlet fever and Strep A?

Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called Group A streptococci (Strep A). The bacteria usually cause a mild infection that can be easily treated with antibiotics. In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (iGAS).

What are the symptoms of Strep A/scarlet fever?

Strep A infections can cause a range of symptoms that parents should be aware of, including:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- 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
- Patients typically have flushed cheeks and pallor around the mouth. This may be accompanied by a 'strawberry tongue'
- As the child improves peeling of the skin can occur

If your child becomes unwell with these symptoms, please contact your GP practice or contact NHS 111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice.

If your child has scarlet fever, you must keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others. Whilst scarlet fever is circulating it is especially important that any children and adults with chickenpox do stay off nursery or school until all their blisters have dried over, which is at least 5 days after they first appeared. As a parent, you should trust your own judgement but if your child appears seriously unwell call 999, or go to A&E if:

- a child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when a child breathes
- a child's skin, tongue or lips are blue

- a child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake.

Here in school, the following strategies are in place to minimise the spread of infection:

- Maintaining high levels of environmental cleaning on surfaces such as table tops, taps, toys, electronic devices and handles;
- Regular and increased hand washing;
- Effective respiratory hygiene;
- Ensuring staff and children who are unwell remaining away from the setting;
- Effective ventilation where possible;
- Ensure any cuts or scrapes are thoroughly cleaned and covered with waterproof dressings to help prevent invasive infection.

More information about scarlet fever can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>
- <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/12/05/group-a-strep-what-you-need-to-know/>

If you have any further questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Yours faithfully,



C. L. Garner