

# Wheatfield Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers

## **Increase in Scarlet Fever**

You will probably have heard from the media that there has been an increase in the number of reported cases of Scarlet Fever.

Although this is usually a mild illness, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the signs and symptoms of Scarlet Fever, as we have a confirmed diagnosis of it in KS2 and have sent a number of children home with headaches, sickness and temperatures over the past week.

## **Signs and symptoms of Scarlet Fever**

Scarlet fever is a common childhood infection caused by the bacteria *Streptococcus pyogenes*, or group A streptococcus (GAS).

The early symptoms of scarlet fever include sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. After 12 to 48 hours the characteristic red, pinhead rash develops, typically first appearing on the chest and stomach, then rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. The infection can be spread through mucus secretions, aerosols and through shared contact with contaminated surfaces such as table tops, taps, toys and door handles.

If you think your child has Scarlet fever, this needs to be confirmed by a medical practitioner and a course of antibiotics is then required. Children diagnosed with Scarlet Fever, **should not attend school until** they are feeling better and at a minimum 24 hours after starting the course of antibiotics. The antibiotic course for a Scarlet fever infection is 10 days and it is important that the full course of antibiotics is completed, even if the patient has started to feel better.

Good hygiene practice such as hand washing remains the most important step in preventing and controlling the spread of infection. We will obviously be reminding the children of the importance of this and ensuring that extra cleaning of table tops, taps and door handles is undertaken by our cleaning team.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries about the content of this letter and for further information, please see the Public Health England website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england> or the NHS website: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Scarlet-fever/Pages/Introduction.aspx>.

Yours sincerely

Chris Dursley  
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Wheatfield Primary School