

Heaton Park Primary and Nursery School

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1st April 2022

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We have been informed that a small number of children in early years have been diagnosed with scarlet fever. We have received advice from the Health Protection Team in Bury. They have advised 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 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, have 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, away from nursery, school or work **for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection.**

Complications:

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.

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.

Infection control advice:

The following hygiene measures are advised to prevent the spread of Scarlet Fever within school. It is important that hands are washed regularly and thoroughly. Children should be encouraged to use a tissue when coughing or sneezing and putting it in the bin. Any cuts should be covered with a waterproof plaster or bandage before they arrive at school.

Further information:

You can find more information on:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>

Frequently asked questions on Scarlet Fever:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>

Yours sincerely,

P J Lord