

16th December 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

### **Invasive Group A Streptococcus (GAS)**

You may have seen in the news recently that cases of Invasive Group A Streptococcus (GAS) infections (Strep A) and Scarlet Fever are currently on the rise. The invasive condition is caused by a bacteria called Group A Streptococci, which usually causes mild illnesses such as strep throat and Scarlet Fever.

I can confirm that we have been notified today of three confirmed cases of Strep A in Year 7. Although none of the students has been in school for the last couple of days I would ask parents/guardians to remain vigilant. We have sought advice from Public Health England and the symptoms of scarlet fever include sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. This is followed by a fine red skin 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.
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- It is also preferable that the patient has a throat swab to confirm the diagnosis.
- Stay at home, away from nursery, school or work for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection.

### **Possible complications**

Children who have had chickenpox recently are more likely to develop a more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever. Parents of children who have recently had chickenpox should remain vigilant for symptoms such as a persistent high fever, skin infections and swollen, painful joints. 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. You can find more information in the attached FAQ sheet and further advice can also be obtained from the Health Protection Team on **020 3326 1658**. Also, a useful blog article on ways to protect your young ones this winter can be found [here](#).

I would like to reassure everyone that the students affected have mild symptoms and are responding well to antibiotics.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies  
Headteacher