



The Merton Primary School
To be the best we can be.

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Dear Parents/Carers

Public Health management of scarlet fever/Strep A in schools.

As you will be aware from media reports there are an increasing number of cases of young people with a Strep A infection across the country. As we have a number of pupils currently off school with sore throats and colds, we felt it is appropriate to let you know to be vigilant.

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. 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 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. You can find more information in the guidance

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

We would be grateful if you keep school informed should your child receive a confirmed diagnosis. As this is a changing situation nationally, if we receive any further information then we will obviously update you.

Your sincerely,

Matthew Lee
Headteacher

