

26<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Dear Parents / Guardians,

We have been informed that a number of children attending Brentfield Primary School have been diagnosed with **scarlet fever**. We have received advice from our Local Health Protection team.

### **Scarlet fever, Group A Strep Infection**

Scarlet fever is also a mild childhood illness but unlike chickenpox, it requires antibiotic treatment. Symptoms include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting, 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. As the rash fades the skin on the fingertips, toes and groin area can peel.

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. 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.

Further information on scarlet fever and Strep A is also available on the NHS website:

[Scarlet fever - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Strep A - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Sam Matthews  
Family Support Manager  
Brentfield Primary School

### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NEXT

**1. If you think your child has a Group A Strep infection**

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible. It is also preferable that a throat swab is taken to confirm the diagnosis.
- Make sure that your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor/healthcare professional.
- Anyone with symptoms suggestive of scarlet fever should stay at home, away from nursery, school, childcare setting or work for at least **24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment**, to avoid spreading the infection. If it is impetigo, they will need to remain away from setting for 48 hours.

**2. If your child has had chickenpox or influenza (flu) infection recently**

Children who have had chickenpox or flu recently are more likely to develop more serious illness during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so you should remain vigilant for additional symptoms such as a persistent high fever, skin infections and swollen, painful joints. **If you are concerned, then please seek medical assistance immediately**

**3. 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

**4. Be aware of invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS) infection**

Please read the enclosed Group A Streptococcus (GAS) and Scarlet Fever factsheet which includes information about iGAS

**As a parent, you should trust your own judgement.**