



Flimby Primary School
Rye Hill Road
Flimby
Maryport
Cumbria
CA15 8PJ

Tel: 01900 812264

Email: admin.flimby@westlakesmat.org.uk

Headteacher: Mrs T Peers



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Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to let you know that we are currently seeing individuals in our setting with suspected or confirmed cases of scarlet fever.

Group A Streptococcus (GAS, also known as 'Strep A') causes scarlet fever infections. Lots of us carry GAS bacteria in our throats and on our skin and it doesn't always result in illness. However, GAS can cause a number of mild infections, such as tonsillitis, scarlet fever and impetigo.

While scarlet fever can be unpleasant, it can occasionally cause more serious illness known as invasive Group A Strep (but this is rare). Whilst GAS infections are circulating, it is important to be aware of the symptoms of scarlet fever and what we can do to reduce the spread.

We understand that parents may be worried about scarlet fever. Dr Ranj Singh, in partnership with the NHS has made a video explaining more about Group A Strep and scarlet fever. You can view it here: [Strep A information with Dr Ranj Singh - YouTube](#)

Symptoms of scarlet fever:

Scarlet fever is a common childhood infection caused by 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, and giving the skin a sandpaper-like texture. The scarlet rash may be harder to spot on darker skin, although the 'sandpaper' feel should be present. Patients typically have flushed cheeks and pallor around the mouth. This may be accompanied by a 'strawberry tongue'. As the child improves peeling of the skin can occur.

If you think your child has scarlet fever:

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible.
- **If a doctor prescribes antibiotics, make sure that your child takes the full course.**
- Keep them at home for **at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment**, to avoid spreading the infection.

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.



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Worried about symptoms of illness in your child?

As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

- your child is getting worse
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
- your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration
- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is very tired or irritable.

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when your child breathes
- your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake.

Help to stop the spread:

Good hand and respiratory hygiene are important for stopping the spread of many bugs. By teaching your child how to wash their hands properly with soap for 20 seconds, using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, and keeping away from others when feeling unwell, they will be able to reduce the risk of picking up, or spreading, infections. Any breaks in the skin should also be covered with a waterproof plaster/dressing before attending school.

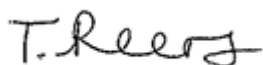
Further information:

You can find more information at:

- NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>
- Healthier Together: <https://www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk/>
- UKHSA [Scarlet Fever Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>
- Is my child too ill for school?: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- Specific guidance for under 5s for this winter can be found at: <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/10/25/5-ways-to-protect-your-under-5s-this-winter/>

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



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