



31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

Dear Parent / Guardian

## **Re: Scarlet Fever**

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Holy Rosary RC primary have been diagnosed with scarlet fever. We have sought advice from UK Health Security Agency North West Health Protection Team. 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.
- Ask your GP to take a throat swab to confirm if this is scarlet fever.
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- Stay at home and away from nursery, school or work for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection.

If you/your child has an underlying condition which affects the immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

### **Potential complications:**

Children who have had chickenpox recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents/guardians 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. All children with chickenpox should remain off school / nursery until at least 5 days after the start of their rash AND until all their spots have crusted over.

### **Infection control advice:**

The Health Protection Team have advised us on hygiene measures to help prevent spread within our school / nursery. Parents/guardians can also help with this by reminding children of the importance of coughing / sneezing into tissues and placing these in the bin, washing hands regularly

and ensuring any breaks to the skin are covered with a waterproof plaster/dressing before attending school / nursery.

**Further information:**

You can find more information at:

- NHS Choices <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>
- UKHSA Scarlet Fever Frequently Asked Questions  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>

If you have any further questions, please contact the school on School Spider.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cavanagh