



Registered Address: Canford Heath Infant School, Learoyd Road, Poole, BH17 8PJ
Telephone: 01202 380015
Company Number: 09484306

7th December 2022

Dear parent /carer of Canford Heath Infant School,

We are writing to make you aware that a small number of children who attend our school have been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected Group A Streptococcus (GAS) infection. This can cause a number of different illnesses:

Scarlet Fever - scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, however, 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.

Strep Throat - this is an infection in the throat and tonsils. It is spread by talking, coughing, or sneezing.

Impetigo - this is a skin infection. It will start with red sores or blisters. These will burst quickly and leave crusty, golden-brown patches.

If you think you, or your child, have a GAS infection:

- 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 (48 hours for impetigo or until all lesions have crusted over/healed)**, to avoid spreading the infection.
- Reduce the spread by practising good hand and respiratory hygiene

Complications

Children who have **Flu** or **chickenpox** at the same time as a GAS infection are more likely to develop a serious infection (Invasive GAS), and 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.



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For more information, please visit [Scarlet fever - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

To help mitigate any spread of illness, we are undertaking a number of additional measures in school:

- Refresh our staff and parent noticeboards with information on Strep A-related symptoms – so everyone is aware of what to look out for.
- Sent letters and information via email of what to look out for and what to do if symptoms appear.
- Enhanced cleaning in place, including more frequent cleaning of high-touch areas.
- All pupils will be asked to sanitise hands on entry to school / washing hands. This is to be repeated during the day, e.g. after break times.
- Assembly to be held related to coughing into elbow / hands and then washing hands and catching sneezes in a tissue to remind pupils of good practice.
- In terms of events, they can still go ahead, but we will ask families - in advance - not to attend with any of these symptoms. Visiting parents will also be asked to anti-bac their hands, on entry to the school.

I know it is a worrying time, but it is also reassuring to know from the NHS that the massive majority of cases of Strep A are not serious, so please do not panic. However, it is important we all do our bit to keep infections low and to try and protect our little ones (and each other) from this as much as we can. The best advice is, if you are concerned, please do call 111 or your GP.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Kate Carter
Chief Executive Officer



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