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Dear Parent / Carer

We have 2 confirmed Group A strep infection within school and nursery.

It's important to be aware that this is different to invasive Group A Strep (iGAS). iGAS is a more severe illness, which in rare cases can develop from a Group A Strep infection.

Information is provided below on the common illnesses associated with Group A strep.

Scarlet Fever

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.

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 and in some cases, this may be accompanied by red tongue (called "strawberry tongue").

More information (with pictures) is available here: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/

Strep Throat

The most common symptoms of strep throat include a sore throat that can start very quickly, pain when swallowing, fever, red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus, tiny, red spots on the roof of the mouth, swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck. Other symptoms may include a headache, stomach pain, nausea, or vomiting — especially in children.

Impetigo

This is a skin infection which starts with red sores or blisters, which burst and leave crusty, golden-brown patches. More information (with pictures) is available here: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/impetigo/

If you think you, or your child, have any of these illnesses:

- 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 (48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment for impetigo).

- Encourage your child to wash their hands properly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and use a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes. Keep them away from others when feeling unwell. This will help to reduce the risk of picking up, or spreading, infections.
- Keep any cuts, sores or bites thoroughly cleaned and covered.
- Keep your child's school or nursery informed and updated on any diagnosis your child is given.

Children who have had chickenpox or flu recently may develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever or other GAS infection 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.

What to do 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

Thank you for your continued support

Mrs Weichlbauer