



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

Highdown Drive, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 6HL

Tel: 01903 716039 Fax: 01903 722521

Website: www.st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk

Email: office@st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Following recent reports of deaths from Strep A infections, we would like to provide some guidance to help alleviate any concerns you may have.

There has been an increase in cases of Scarlet Fever across the country this year (there have been no reported cases at St Catherine's). Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called group A streptococci. These bacteria also cause other respiratory and skin infections such as strep throat and impetigo.

Scarlet fever is a very infectious bacterial illness that causes a distinctive pink-red rash that starts on the chest and tummy. It requires treatment with antibiotics from the GP, otherwise you can be infectious for two to three weeks.

Symptoms of scarlet fever generally take two to five days to appear after infection, and can start with flu-like symptoms such as a sore throat, headache, fever, and swollen neck before the rash appears a few days later. The rash can look like sunburn and feel like sandpaper. You might also see a white coating appearing on the tongue.

In line with the Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings stipulated by Public Health England, children with scarlet fever will not be able to attend school until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment.

If your child does have symptoms of scarlet fever, we do ask that you let us know immediately so that we can take the necessary steps, including notifying other parents. We also ask that you respect the exclusion period listed above and telephone us the day before you plan to return to school, so we can ensure your child is ready to come back in.

The risk of Scarlet fever is reduced by maintaining good hygiene and regularly washing hands, especially before eating. This is something we have continued to do since the outbreak of COVID.

We encourage parents to seek medical advice for your child if you suspect scarlet fever, as it will likely require a course of antibiotics.

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Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>

Please do contact us if you have any further questions.

Mr Croghan
Headteacher

Worthing Deanery Schools



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