

8th December 2022

Dear Parent / Guardian

Winter Infections

This message is to give you information about how to protect your child from common winter infections. It also includes advice from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) in relation to when you should seek medical attention.

Preventing the spread of infections

DO

- ✓ wash hands properly with soap and water (for 20 seconds)
- ✓ use tissues to trap germs from coughs or sneezes
- ✓ bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- ✓ clean and cover cuts and scrapes to prevent infections getting into the body

DON'T

- ✗ do not share cutlery, cups, towels, clothes, bedding or baths

Directors of Public Health are encouraging all parents to make sure their child gets the flu vaccination as flu can make children poorly and more likely to get other infections.

Scarlet Fever and Group A Strep

You may have heard on the news that some children are becoming poorly with bacteria called Group A Strep. These infections are usually mild and may cause a strep throat or scarlet fever which can be treated easily with antibiotics. There is more scarlet fever than usual at the moment – but most sore throats are not scarlet fever.

What are the symptoms of scarlet fever?

Watch out for the signs of scarlet fever. This is when children get a combination of

- a sore throat
- a headache
- a fever and
- a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel (*on darker skin the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel*)

What you should do if your child becomes unwell (advice from UKHSA)

If your child becomes unwell with a combination of these symptoms, you are advised to contact your GP practice or contact NHS 111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice.

If your child has scarlet fever, they should stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others (it spreads very easily through coughing and sneezing).

If your child seems seriously unwell 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 or using their neck muscles to breathe
- there are long pauses (more than 10 seconds) when your child breathes
- your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- your child feels very cold or clammy to touch
- your child is difficult to wake up or keep awake
- your child has severe pains in their arms, legs neck or back
- your child has a painful, red area of skin, especially if it is getting bigger quickly

LDST Schools

Our schools are very familiar with implementing infection control measures and follow appropriate LDST policies and procedures including, but not limited to, our Pandemic and Infection Control Policy and Managing Respiratory Infections Risk Assessment.

Further Advice

There is further help and advice from the UKHSA : [Scarlet Fever Fact Sheet](#).

Yours sincerely



LAURIE KWISSA

Chief Executive Officer