



**Private and confidential**

21 November 2022

**HPZ Ref 1239683**

Dear Parent/Guardian and/or Staff,

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Our Lady St Joseph Primary School have been diagnosed with 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 will still 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 (please remember to take this letter with you) 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.

**Complications**

Children who have had **chickenpox** or **influenza ('flu')** recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever 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.

You can find more information on influenza and scarlet fever on NHS choices: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
Further advice can also be obtained from the Health Protection Team on 0344 225 3861 or [SE.AcuteResponse@phe.gov.uk](mailto:SE.AcuteResponse@phe.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Mark Pritchard  
The South East Health Protection Team