



December 2022

Dear Parent / Carer,

As a school, we are of course aware of reports in the news about Strep A and scarlet fever and while there are increased cases around the country in comparison to recent years, it remains very rare for people to get extremely sick from these. Whilst we are waiting for official Department for Education guidance, we are reinstating some of the basic hygiene measures that were so familiar during COVID in order to help reduce the general spread of germs throughout the school at this time of year.

My colleagues are reminding pupils of the following measures in school and we would welcome you reinforcing these measures at home.

Respiratory and cough hygiene.

The old saying of "coughs and sneezes spread diseases" is a reminder of the importance of the following aspects:

- cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, dispose of used tissue in a waste bin, and clean hands
- cough or sneeze into the inner elbow (upper sleeve) if no tissues are available, rather than into the hand
- keep hands away from your eyes, mouth and nose after sneezing or coughing.

Hand hygiene

- Wash hands more frequently with warm water and soap, as well as after using the bathroom and before eating.
- Use hand sanitizer gel if it is difficult to wash with soap and water.

As a school, we will be increasing the frequency of cleaning around common touch points, such as table tops, handles and taps.

Symptoms and what to look for

The official guidance for Strep A is developing but the information on scarlet fever can be found on the NHS and UK Health & Security Agency websites, 'Scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, but it is highly infectious. Therefore, look out for symptoms in your child, which include a sore throat, headache, and fever, along with 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.

If your child has scarlet fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others'. Early treatment of scarlet fever with antibiotics is important to reduce the risk of complications.

Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

- your child is getting worse.
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal.

Langtree School, Woodcote, Reading, Berkshire RG8 0RA

Tel: 01491 680514 Fax: 01491 682411 Email: office@langtreeschool.com www.langtreeschool.com Twitter : @Head4094

Headteacher: Mr S Bamford Deputy Headteacher: Ms S Burman

- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher.
- your child is showing signs of dehydration or where relevant has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more.
- 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.
- Severe muscle aches, pain in one area of the body.
- A spreading redness on the skin.

Complications to be aware of

Children who have had chickenpox recently are more likely to develop a 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

In line with the current official guidance, we request that any children who are confirmed to have Strep A stay at home until 24-hours after antibiotic treatment has started and please inform the school ASAP. Otherwise, your child would be expected to attend school as normal and follow our sickness and absence policy.

Please refer to the school sickness and absence policy that you can find on our website.

We will send more information as we receive it but in the meantime, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the school reception as normal.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Bamford
Headteacher