



Eastway Primary School
Rossall Road
Moreton
Wirral
CH46 8TA

Headteacher: Mrs Emily Morris

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22nd May 2024

Scarlet Fever Confirmed Outbreak

Dear Eastway Families,

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Eastway Primary School have been diagnosed with scarlet fever and we have two confirmed cases within 10 days in our nursery class so this is now classed as an outbreak.

We have sought advice from Wirral Infection Prevention and Control and UK Health Security Agency North West Health Protection Team. They have advised that 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.

We do not want to cause alarm but want to make sure that all our families have the most up to date and clear information and action that we have taken.

Symptoms of scarlet fever:

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.

If you think you or your child have scarlet fever:

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible.
- Ask your GP to take a throat swab to confirm if this is scarlet fever.
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- Stay at home and away from nursery, school or work for **at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment**, to avoid spreading the infection.



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If you/your child has an underlying condition which affects the immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

Potential complications:

Children who have had **chickenpox** recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents/guardians 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. **All children with chickenpox should remain off school / nursery until at least 5 days after the start of their rash AND until all their spots have crusted over.**

Infection control advice:

The Health Protection Team have advised us on hygiene measures to help prevent spread within our school. Parents/guardians can also help with this by reminding children of the importance of coughing / sneezing into tissues and placing these in the bin, washing hands regularly and ensuring any breaks to the skin are covered with a waterproof plaster/dressing before attending school / nursery.

We have taken advice and have informed and updated all staff, put in enhanced extra cleaning and strict infection control measures. I can reassure you that these are the things that we normally do to keep everyone safe and well in school but we have enhanced this since the first reported case.

Further information:

You can find more information at:

- NHS Choices <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>
- UKHSA Scarlet Fever Frequently Asked Questions <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>

If you have any further questions, please contact the school on 0151 677 1235.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Morris - Headteacher