



A Place to Grow

As part of Perry Hall Multi-Academy Trust
Company Number - 08566185

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Dear parent / guardian,

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Perry Hall Primary School have been diagnosed with confirmed 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 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
- 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** 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 in the attached Frequently Asked Questions and further advice can also be obtained from the Health Protection Team on **03442253560- option 2** during office hours.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Kohli
Head Teacher



Further Information

More information about the Public Health England and about scarlet fever is available on our website www.phe.gov.uk

If you have concerns about your health contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647/11 or visit the website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk, or see your family doctor.

If you have any further questions, please contact our office (details below) between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays

Public Health England

West Midlands East

6th Floor

St Philips Place

Central

Birmingham

B3 2PW

Tel 0344 225 3560(option 2/1)

Fax 0121 200 1579

Scarlet fever

What is scarlet fever?

Scarlet fever, sometimes called Scarlatina, is an infection caused by bacteria (Group A streptococci) which affect the throat. These bacteria make a number of toxins (poisons) which cause a rash to appear on the body.

Who gets scarlet fever?

Scarlet fever is most common in children and young adults.

How do you get scarlet fever?

The bacteria are carried in saliva in the mouth and mucus from a runny nose. Scarlet fever is spread by touching the mucus or saliva of an infected person, or drinking glasses, plates or utensils they have used, and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes. You can also get the disease by inhaling infected airborne droplets produced by a person with scarlet fever coughing or sneezing in the air near you.

How do you avoid getting scarlet fever?

Wash your hands often and don't share eating utensils. All handkerchiefs and tissues contaminated with mucus from someone with scarlet fever should be washed or disposed of immediately.

What are the symptoms of scarlet fever, how long do they take to appear and how long do they last?

The first symptoms often include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea, and vomiting. Between 12 to 48 hours after this, the rash develops: a fine, red rash, like sandpaper to touch, which first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. You can get peeling skin on the finger tips, toes, and groin area as the rash fades

Other symptoms can include:

- Fever
- White coating on the tongue, which peels a few days later leaving the tongue looking red and swollen (known as 'strawberry tongue')
- Swollen glands in the neck
- Feeling tired and unwell
- Flushed red face, but pale around the mouth

It usually takes from 1 to 4 days for the symptoms to appear after you come in contact with the bacteria. Scarlet fever usually clears up after a week.

What is the treatment for scarlet fever?

A short course of antibiotics will cure the illness and reduce the risk of complications.

If you have a high temperature, drink plenty of fluids and keep cool, but not cold. Paracetamol can be taken to relieve discomfort and bring down temperatures

Are there any complications?

The vast majority of cases of scarlet fever have no complications at all.

If you have had scarlet fever you are unlikely to get it again.

Should you stay off work or school?

You should stay away from school or work for 24 hours from the beginning of antibiotic treatment.