



13th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

STREP A: JOHNSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

This letter is to inform you that a number of children who attend Johnstone High School have been diagnosed with suspected or confirmed Group A streptococcal infection including scarlet fever. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Public Health Protection Unit has been made aware and is providing us with advice, including the following:

Group A streptococcal infections can cause a wide range of symptoms, **including respiratory and skin infections such as scarlet fever, strep throat, tonsillitis and impetigo**. Although Group A Strep infections and scarlet fever are usually mild illnesses, they 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 your child has a Group A Strep infection or scarlet fever:

- **Your child should see his or her GP (or you should contact NHS 111) as soon as possible.**
- **Make sure that your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.**
- **Your child should stay at home (and away from school) for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection.**

Young people who are well (have no symptoms) can continue to attend school.

As long as they have no symptoms, contacts of a case do not need to isolate or stay away from nursery, school or work. Contacts of cases do not need to be treated with antibiotics. However, if they develop symptoms, they should also follow the advice listed above.

In order to minimise the spread of scarlet fever and other infections, the following measures are recommended for everyone:

- a. Good hand hygiene including handwashing with soap and water at the start of the school day, after using the toilet, after play, before and after eating, and at the end of the school day.
- b. Children and adults should be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough and sneeze and to wash hands after using or disposing of tissues.
- c. All scrapes or wounds should be thoroughly cleaned and covered while at school.

Potential complications

Chicken pox and flu are also circulating in the community. Young people who have chickenpox or flu are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever. **Parents should be vigilant for symptoms such as a persistent high fever, signs that the skin may be becoming infected (e.g. the skin around the chickenpox blisters is hot, painful and red), severe muscle pain, and arthritis (joint pain and swelling).** Please avoid giving children who have chicken pox pain/fever reducing products that contain ibuprofen. 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 their GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

You can find more information here:

www.nhsinform.scot

- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/streptococcus-a-strep-a/>
- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/scarlet-fever>
- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/chickenpox>

Thank you for your ongoing support of the school,

Yours sincerely,

Lynne Hollywood

Lynne Hollywood
Head Teacher