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Dear Parent and Carer

Strep A and Scarlet fever

You will be aware of headlines in recent days about the rise in cases of Strep A and Scarlet fever.

Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called Group A Streptococci (Strep A). The bacteria usually cause a mild infection that can be easily treated with antibiotics.

In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A Strep (iGAS). There is no evidence according to the UK Health Security Agency that a new strain is circulating and the increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

We have been asked as schools to monitor the number of confirmed cases and in the event of two connected cases within 10 days to seek the advice of Public Health.

I have been made aware this morning that we have a second confirmed case of Strep A identified within the student body and, upon investigation, a link has been identified.

To prevent the spread of Strep A the UK Health Security Agency advises children, young people and staff to maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene practices. Please remind your child of the importance of using hand sanitisers and hand washing. We will be reinforcing this message at the school and employing the same cleaning system that was employed at the height of the COVID pandemic to reduce the risk of transmission.

Strep A infections can cause a range of symptoms that parents and carers should be aware of, including:

- Sore throat, possibly accompanied by a bright red 'strawberry' tongue
- Headache
- Fever
- Flu-like symptoms
- 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 becomes unwell with any of these symptoms, please contact your GP practice or contact NHS 111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice.

If a child has Scarlet fever, the NHS advice is that the child remains at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others. If antibiotics are not taken, your child must stay away until the complete resolution of all symptoms.

We have been in contact with Public Health England and are acting on their recommendations which include enhanced cleaning.

Please find attached their communications on the matter.

Yours faithfully



Mr Scott Yalden
Headteacher

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