



**KING EDWARD VI
SHELDON HEATH
ACADEMY**

Educational excellence for our City

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**KING EDWARD VI
FOUNDATION
BIRMINGHAM**

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Ref: Public health management of scarlet fever in schools.

07.12.22

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Re: Increase in scarlet fever cases

We are writing to inform you of a recent national increase in notifications of scarlet fever to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), above seasonal expected levels.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the signs, symptoms and the actions to be taken if you become aware of an outbreak.

Signs and symptoms of scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is a common childhood infection caused by *Streptococcus pyogenes*, or group A *Streptococcus* (GAS). The early symptoms of scarlet fever include sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. After 12 to 48 hours the characteristic red, pinhead rash develops, typically first appearing on the chest and stomach, then rapidly spreading to other parts of the body, and giving the skin a sandpaper-like texture. The scarlet rash may be harder to spot on darker skin, although the 'sandpaper' feel should be present. Patients typically have flushed cheeks and pallor around the mouth. This may be accompanied by a 'strawberry tongue'. As the child improves peeling of the skin can occur.

Infection control advice

In schools it is recognised that infections can be spread through direct physical contact between children and staff and through shared contact with surfaces such as table tops, taps, toys and handles. During periods of high incidence of scarlet fever there may also be an increase in outbreaks in schools and our cleaning regime will ensure it meets Covid expectations including encouraging hand sanitising of all students and staff.

As per national 'Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Child Care Settings', children and adults with suspected scarlet fever should be excluded from nursery / school / work for 24 hours after the commencement of appropriate antibiotic treatment. Good hygiene practice such as hand washing remains the most important step in preventing and controlling spread of infection.

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

Principal: Ms R. Elcocks



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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 on scarlet fever on www.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R Elcocks'.

Ms R Elcocks
Principal