

December 2022

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Emmaus schools have been diagnosed with Scarlet Fever or Strep A.

Group A Streptococcal infections (including Scarlet Fever) are caused by Streptococcal bacteria. The bacteria usually cause a mild infection with symptoms including sore throat, high temperature, headache, nausea and vomiting, or scarlet fever.

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 and in some cases, this may be accompanied by red tongue (called "strawberry tongue").

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.

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

Invasive Group A Strep (IGAS)

The same bacteria which cause Scarlet Fever can also cause a range of other types of infection such as skin infections (impetigo) and sore throat. In very rare cases, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (IGAS). Whilst still uncommon, there has been an increase in IGAS cases this year, particularly in children under 10 years old. It is very rare for children with scarlet fever to develop IGAS infection.

Children who have had chickenpox recently may 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.

Parents are advised to trust their judgement when their child is unwell; if your child shows any of the above symptoms and seriously deteriorates, you should seek medical help from your GP or call 111 for advice. If your child is unresponsive, please call 999 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.

The measures that we continue to take in school and would encourage you to take are:

- Continue to encourage effective hand hygiene across the setting, with children, young people and staff, having access to liquid soap, warm water and paper towels
- Alcohol hand gel can be used if hands are not visibly dirty
- Continue to encourage good respiratory hygiene across the setting
- Continue to regularly clean surfaces that people touch frequently

You can find more information in the guidance [Scarlet fever: symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, Scarlet fever - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) & <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>

Please refer to your local authority for local infection control guidance.

Yours Sincerely

Suzanne Horan

Catholic Senior Executive Leader (CEO)

Registered Office
Hagley Catholic High School
Brake Lane, Hagley
Worcs, DY8 2XL

Tel: 01384 210 542
www.emmausmac.com
info@emmausmac.com

Our journey with Christ

