

2nd March 2026

Dear Parent / Guardian

Re: Chicken Pox

We have been informed that a number of children who attend our school have been diagnosed with Chicken Pox.

We have sought advice from UK Health Security Agency North West Health Protection Team. They have advised that although chicken pox is usually a mild illness, it is extremely contagious. Therefore, if you suspect your child may have chicken pox, national guidance is that your child must be excluded from school until 5 days after spots appear. Whilst exclusion is usually 5 days, all lesions must be crusted over before they return to school.

There is no specific treatment for chicken pox but if you have any concerns, we would advise you to discuss them with a clinician.

Chicken pox is spread by respiratory droplets or by direct contact with fluid from blisters. It has a sudden onset with fever, runny nose, cough and a generalised rash. The rash starts with blisters which then scab over. Several 'crops' of blisters occur so that at any one time there will be scabs in various stages of development.

The rash tends to be more noticeable on the trunk than on exposed parts of the body and may also appear inside the mouth and on the scalp. Some infections can be mild or without symptoms.

If you/your child has an underlying condition which affects the immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

Please refer to [Chickenpox - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk) for further information.

Potential complications:

Children who have had **chickenpox** recently are more likely to develop more serious infection during an outbreak of scarlet fever and so parents/guardians 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. **All children with chickenpox should remain off school / nursery until at least 5 days after the start of their rash AND until all their spots have crusted over.**

Symptoms of scarlet fever:

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.
- Ask your GP to take a throat swab to confirm if this is scarlet fever.
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- Stay at home and away from nursery, school or work for **at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment**, to avoid spreading the infection.

Infection control advice:

The Health Protection Team have advised us on hygiene measures to help prevent spread within our school / nursery. Parents/Guardians can help by reminding children the importance of coughing/sneezing into a tissue and putting it in the bin and regular handwashing with soap and water.

If your child has chicken pox or scarlet fever please inform school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy Webley
Headteacher