

## 9. SCARLET FEVER

Date:

Dear Parent or Guardian,

There has been a case of scarlet fever within your child's school and your child may have been exposed.

### **What is scarlet fever?**

Scarlet fever is a scattered red rash and high temperature caused by bacteria (Group A streptococci). Occasionally these bacteria can cause kidney or heart complications. Prompt treatment with an antibiotic usually prevents these complications. Treatment will also prevent spread to others.

### **What are the symptoms of scarlet fever?**

A scattered red rash that is often most marked in the creases of the joints and over the stomach. It usually blanches (goes white) when pressed on. The skin may feel rough to the touch, sometimes described as feeling like sandpaper. Someone with scarlet fever will have evidence of a streptococcal infection somewhere, usually in the throat or sometimes in the skin.

### **What should I do if I think my child has it?**

If your child develops any of these symptoms bring him/her to your GP for examination. Tell the doctor that another child in the school has scarlet fever.

### **If my child has scarlet fever what should I do?**

The doctor will prescribe an antibiotic for your child. It is important that your child takes the full course of medicine.

### **Can my child stay in school?**

Your child can return to school when he/she is well and has finished one full day of antibiotic treatment.

### **What can I do to prevent spread of infection at home?**

The bacteria are spread through contact with nose and mouth secretions so:

- Wash hands thoroughly after wiping nose.
- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing food.
- Wash dishes well in hot soapy water.
- Do not share cups, straws, spoons, eating utensils etc.
- Do not share toothbrushes.

Thank you for giving this your attention. Your GP will be able to answer any further questions that you might have concerning scarlet fever.