

Parents and guardians of children
& staff at St Joseph's Primary School

Tel: 0300 555 0114
Website: www.publichealth.hscni.net

6 December 2022

Dear Parent/ Guardian

The Public Health Agency is aware of a child who attends St Joseph's Primary School had recently had a sore throat due Group A Streptococcal infection. We understand several other children have also had sore throats needing antibiotics but no one recently is reported as having scarlet fever. However, there is a higher than usual occurrence of these infections in the wider community, so we are asking people to be aware of this and to closely follow the guidance below.

Group A Streptococcus are bacteria that can be found in the throat and on the skin. People may carry Group A Streptococcus and have no symptoms of illness, or they may develop infection.

This letter gives you some information about the disease, including the signs and symptoms to look out for.

The most common Group A Streptococcal infections are mild. They include sore throats (strep throat), fever and skin infections. Scarlet fever is also caused by Group A Streptococcus bacteria. Although scarlet fever and other streptococcal infections are usually mild, some patients may develop more severe illness.

It is still important to **look out for any of the symptoms of Group A Strep** shown below and to take your child to your GP, or out of hours doctor, as soon as possible if they develop these symptoms. In an emergency please dial 999.

If these symptoms occur, prompt treatment with appropriate antibiotics greatly reduces the risk of serious illness or complications.



Invasive Group A Streptococcal infection

In very rare cases, for example, when chickenpox infection is also present, Group A Streptococcal infection can be more serious and cause more severe and even life-threatening diseases known as invasive Group A Streptococcus. It is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of invasive Group A Streptococcal infection, which can include:

Mild Group A Strep can cause

- Sore throats, a white coating can appear on the tongue



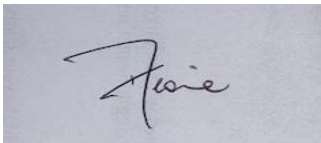
- Fever
- Skin infections
- Scarlet fever – starts with a sore throat, headache, fever and swollen neck glands, usually followed by a rash which sometimes feels like sandpaper, rashes can be harder to see on black or brown skin but you can still feel it



The more severe type of Group A Strep causes -

- High fever
- Severe muscle pain
- Pain, swelling and redness at site of wound
- Diarrhoea and vomiting

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Cromie', on a light blue background.

**Dr David Cromie
Consultant in Public Health (Health Protection)
Public Health Agency**