Lothian NHS Board

Public Health & Health Protection
Waverley Gate
2-4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3EG
Telephone 0131 536 9000
www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Parents/Guardians

Date
Your Ref
Our Ref HPT

Enquiries to Health Protection
Direct Line 0300 790 6264
Email health.protection@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE: Group A Streptococcal Infections

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend Ratho Primary school/nursery have been diagnosed with suspected/confirmed Group A Streptococcal infections (also known as Group A Strep or GAS)

Group A Strep can cause a number of different types of illness including Strep throat (throat infection), impetigo and scarlet fever. Occasionally, it can cause more severe illness. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the signs and symptoms of Group A Strep infections and what to do if your child becomes unwell.

Strep Throat
The most common Group A Strep infection is a sore throat. In general, this infection is mild, but it can be very painful. The symptoms of Strep throat include:

- Sore throat that can start very quickly
- Pain when swallowing
- Fever
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
- Spots on the soft or hard palate (tiny, red spots on the roof of the mouth)
- Swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck

Other symptoms may include a headache, stomach pain, nausea, or vomiting — especially in children.

Impetigo
Impetigo is a common and highly contagious skin infection that causes sores and blisters. Impetigo is the most common skin infection in young children in the UK, but it can affect people of all ages

Our Values Into Action
disability confident EMPLOYER
CARER POSITIVE Employer in Scotland EXEMPLARY
We are a Living Wage Employer

Scarlet Fever

Scarlet fever is less common but it is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms so that early treatment can be given. Signs and symptoms of scarlet fever include:

- Rough textured rash
- Sore throat
- Headache
- High temperature
- Flushed cheeks
- Swollen tongue, known as strawberry tongue

Further Information
You can find trusted information on Group A Strep infections on the NHS inform: https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/streptococcus-a-strep-a/

What to do if my child develops symptoms:

- You should contact your GP or if your GP is closed phone NHS 24 on 111. They can assess whether antibiotics are required for your child
- Inform your GP that there has been an outbreak of Group A Strep infections in the nursery/school and tell them you have this letter
- Children should stay off nursery or school until they have recovered. If they have been started on antibiotics talk to their healthcare provider about when they should return to school

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.

Antibiotics help can prevent someone with Group A Strep infection from spreading the bacteria to others. Not everyone needs antibiotics, your GP or a Doctor will assess if this is required.

Complications
You should remain vigilant for more severe symptoms such as a persistent high fever, severe muscle aches, skin looking hot and red, joint pain and swelling. If you are concerned for any reason, please seek medical assistance immediately. Children recently infected with chickenpox or flu can be more likely to develop severe symptoms.

Household members or contacts

Siblings, household members or contacts who do not have any symptoms can go to school or work as usual. If they develop symptoms, they should stay at home and request a GP or NHS 24 assessment. There are no additional precautions required for pregnant contacts.

The best way to help stop the spread of Group A Strep is to wash your hands often with soap and water. This is especially important after coughing or sneezing and before preparing foods or eating.

Yours sincerely

Health Protection Team
NHS Lothian