

Date 07/12/2022

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We have been informed that a small number of children who attend **Cregagh Primary school** have been diagnosed with scarlet fever. Although scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, it is commonly treated with antibiotics to minimise the risk of complications and reduce the spread to others.

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:

- contact your GP for further advice
- 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**

Complications

Children who have had **chickenpox** recently are more likely to develop more serious infection with scarlet fever and so parents should remain vigilant for symptoms such as a persistent high fever, cellulitis (skin infection) or arthritis (joint pain and swelling). **If you are concerned for any reason please seek medical assistance immediately.**

You can find more information at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever> and further advice can also be obtained from the PHA Health Protection Team on **0300 555 0119** during office hours.

Yours sincerely,

Consultant in Health Protection