5 December 2022

**To: H&F children’s settings**

Dear colleagues in Hammersmith and Fulham,

**Group A streptococcal infection**

You may have seen in the news that nationally there have been deaths in children from invasive Group A Streptococcal infection since September UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).  We’re sharing information on Group A Streptococcal infections, and what to do if a child develops these.

**The most common infections caused by Group A streptococcus are mild**:

* sore throats (strep throat)
* fever
* scarlet fever
* minor skin infections.

**Further information** is available at NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/) or [Scarlet fever - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/). These infections will be treated by antibiotics.

There is guidance for parents on what to look for if children are unwell

‘As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

* your child is getting worse
* your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
* your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other [signs of dehydration](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dehydration/)
* your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
* your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
* your child is very tired or irritable

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

* your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
* there are pauses when your child breathes
* your child’s [skin, tongue or lips are blue](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/blue-skin-or-lips-cyanosis/)
* your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake’

UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Good infection control is essential - at home, in schools, and in healthcare: wash hands, cover faces with coughs and sneezes; for Group A strep infections it is recommended that people stay at home until 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

If you have queries about scarlet fever or Group A strep infections in your setting please contact North West London health protection unit at [phe.nwl@nhs.net](mailto:phe.nwl@nhs.net) or 0203 326 1658 [Contacts: UKHSA health protection teams - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contacts-phe-health-protection-teams#north-west-london-hpt)

Yours sincerely,

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