



St Peter's CE Primary Academy
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Tuesday 13th December 2022

Dear Parents,

Re: School response to increased incidence of scarlet fever in the community

Many of you will be aware that there is an increased incidence of scarlet fever, caused by Streptococcus pyogenes (Group A streptococcus (GAS)). Scarlet fever is a common childhood infection which is not usually serious, but should be treated with antibiotics to reduce the risk of complications and to limit the spread to others. This increased prevalence has received a significant amount of media attention due to the rare possibility of developing invasive GAS (iGAS) which can be extremely serious.

All parents were sent a letter from the UKHSA (UK Health Security Agency) regarding the increase in scarlet fever last week for information and, as to be expected, there are now a small number of suspected or confirmed cases of scarlet fever within the school community. Parents of children in year groups with cases have been notified separately of these cases but all parents are asked to be mindful of the symptoms of scarlet fever in their children so that medical assistance can be sought at the earliest possible occasion. Full details of the symptoms of scarlet fever, the treatment required and the isolation period from school until antibiotics treatment has been active for 24 hours are also available on this document and on our website at <https://www.stpeters-keys.com/scarlet-fever-information>

School Discos – postponed

As a direct result of UKHSA advice for outbreaks, school leaders and the Friends of St. Peter's have taken the decision to postpone the discos. This is to avoid close, unstructured contact between pupil groups with shared use of school facilities. By postponing this event, it is hoped that we can limit social contact (especially between classes where there are confirmed cases) and therefore act to keep our families safe from unnecessary exposure just before the Christmas break. We understand that this decision may be disappointing for our children but their safety is our primary concern. A rearranged date for the discos will be released in January.

Year 3 and 4 Christmas Concerts – Wednesday 14th December – going ahead as planned

Based on the current number of cases and their occurrence in the school, the planned concerts for Year 3 and Year 4 will still go ahead, with parents still invited to attend, if they wish. The audience members will sit separately to the pupils and the event will follow a clear structure involving pupils who interact with each other as part of their daily experience in school. Based on our in-school protocols, these events have been risk-assessed as permissible to go ahead with. We hope that our families enjoy the opportunity to support their children in some seasonal festivities this week.

Year 4 concert: 9.15am on Wednesday 14th December

Year 3 concert: 2.30am on Wednesday 14th December

Christmas Dinner Day – Wednesday 14th December – going ahead as planned

All pupils who have pre-booked their Christmas Dinner will enjoy this event as part of school tomorrow. St. Peter's continues to run dual-year group timetables to limit the number of pupils in the hall and to control social mixing.

Arrangements for Christmas Dinners and for meals for the rest of the week remain as normal, with enhanced cleaning and ventilation between sittings for pupil safety.

Carols and Christingle – Friday 16th December – going ahead but in a different format

This in-school event for all pupils and staff will now take place virtually with a live stream into each class. Whilst it will be disappointing not to be able to get all our pupils and staff together in person for a festive event at the end of term, the obvious risk of having the whole school community together before families break up for Christmas is one that is best avoided in the current situation. We will, however, go the extra mile to make sure that the children are filled with seasonal cheer before the end of term in any way we possibly can.

School Routines

The academy leaders have completed the UKHSA scarlet fever risk assessment for the current situation and reviewed the guidelines for cleaning protocols. Many of the cleaning protocols recommended (including touch points, types of cleaning products, pupil groupings for use of shared facilities and the use of PPE) remain in place from the pandemic and are therefore in place to limit the transmission of scarlet fever also. All timetabled events run in dual-year groups within school and so the possibility of transmission is again greatly reduced. Where further recommendations or guidance is released to schools, we will of course take this on board to amend our in-school practices.

Attendance

Whilst the current situation may be of concern to parents, the Department for Education continues to make attendance at schools mandatory. If a child is poorly and not well-enough to attend school please contact the academy office using contact@stpetersprimary.academy or 01543 227205. Where a child does not have a sufficient reason to be absent from school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence on the registers.

Administration of Medication

Children who have been prescribed antibiotics for suspected or actual cases of scarlet fever may require these to be administered up to four times a day. Where this is the case, school is able to administer one dose of the prescribed antibiotics during the school day (and a further dose if the child is attending Keystones). Parents requiring this to be administered will need to complete the 'Administration of Medication Form' available from the academy office and bring in the medicine to be handed over to a member of staff at reception.

May I take this opportunity to thank parents for their support and understanding in yet another disrupted period during your child's education. It is of utmost importance that we continue to work together to do the best we can for all our families and to keep our community safe so that we can all enjoy the end of term and a well-deserved Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely,



Mr W Stevens
Headteacher

