

Strep A and scarlet fever Information for Parent/Carers

As many of you will know, there has been a major increase in strep A and scarlet fever infections affecting children. While the infection is more serious in under-15s and older adults, colleges can easily become places where the disease circulates just as schools can. It is important to be aware of the symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fever
- A fine, pink or red body rash with a sandpapery feel; this is harder to see on darker skin but can still be felt to the touch

If a student has these symptoms, advise parents to contact their GP or NHS 111. If scarlet fever is confirmed, students must stay home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment. If there are two or more cases within 10 days of each other and the affected students/staff have a link like being in the same class or tutor group, contact your [UKHSA health protection team](#) for further guidance. Encourage parents to trust their own judgement, and if their child seems seriously unwell, to call 999 or go to A&E if a young person:

- is having difficulty breathing – e.g. grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- pauses between breaths
- has blue skin, tongue, or lips
- is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake.

To help prevent the spread of Strep A, UKHSA advises young people and staff to implement good [hand and respiratory hygiene](#) practices. For more information visit the UKHSA [website](#) or the [Education Hub](#).