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Headteacher – Mrs Sarah Kay-Wood

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Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you that we have received confirmation that a small number of children in Foundation Stage 2 have chickenpox and your child may have been exposed. If your child has not had chickenpox before it is quite likely that they will catch it.

I would like to reassure you that our school is very careful to make sure everyone follows the latest government and public health guidance for the management of specific infectious diseases.

What is chickenpox?
Chickenpox is a common childhood illness. Fever and cold symptoms are often the first signs of illness and are followed by the appearance of the typical rash. The rash starts as small pink bumps, often around the neck, ears, back and stomach. They will then blister, before turning yellow and forming scabs. The rash spreads outwards and can reach the lower arms and legs. Some people may have only a few spots or they may be covered with them. In children it is usually a relatively mild illness.

Why should I be concerned about chickenpox?
Chickenpox can be serious in people with a weakened immune system.
In adults, chickenpox can be a much more significant illness than in children and there is a greater risk of complications developing, particularly in pregnancy.

What should I do now?
If your child is normally healthy, chickenpox is likely to be a relatively mild illness and no specific precautions are necessary. Symptoms usually develop 10 to 21 days after exposure. The infected person can spread infection for up to three days before the rash appears and until the last spot has formed a scab.
If your child has a weakened immune system, please contact your child's GP or hospital consultant and let them know that your child may have been exposed.

What should I do if I think my child has chickenpox?
If you suspect chickenpox, do not bring your child into school and inform your GP before attending a surgery with them. Contact your GP if you are concerned or not sure it is chickenpox. Your child can take paracetamol to help with any pain and discomfort but **do not** use aspirin or any ibuprofen products..

Can my child stay in school?
Children with chickenpox should be isolated from school until all spots are dry; this is five to seven days after the appearance of the rash to prevent spreading the infection to others. Children with spots that have all formed scabs can safely attend school as long as they feel well enough.

I am pregnant and have been exposed to a child with chickenpox. What should I do?
Most adults are immune to chickenpox as they have had the illness in childhood. If you have not had chickenpox illness in the past and have had recent contact with chickenpox you should contact your GP, who may wish to do a blood test to check if you are immune. If you get chickenpox when you're pregnant, there's a small risk of your baby being very ill when it's born.

Thank you for giving this your attention. Your GP will be able to answer any further questions that you might have about chickenpox or you can visit https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox/

The health, safety and wellbeing of our children and staff is extremely important to us and we thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

S Kay-Wood

Mrs Kay-Wood
Head teacher