**Upper Beeding Primary School**

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**Head Teacher: Mrs R Linford**

Friday 10th June 2016

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have been informed that a couple of children who attend our School have been diagnosed with suspected scarlet fever. We have taken advice from Public Health England who has informed us on this and also that chickenpox is circulating in the community at present. We would like to give you some more information about these infections, and signs to look out for.

**Scarlet fever**

Scarlet fever is a mild childhood illness which it requires antibiotic treatment. Symptoms include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting, 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. As the rash fades the skin on the fingertips, toes and groin area can peel.

If you think you, or your child, have scarlet fever:

• See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible

• 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

**Chickenpox**

Chickenpox is a mild and common childhood illness that most children catch at some point. It causes a rash of red, itchy spots that turn into fluid-filled blisters. They then crust over to form scabs, which eventually drop off. To prevent spreading the infection, keep children off nursery or school until all the spots have crusted over.

For most children, chickenpox is a mild illness that gets better on its own. But some children can become more seriously ill and need to see a doctor. Contact your GP straight away if your child develops any abnormal symptoms, for example:

• if the blisters on their skin become infected

• if your child has a pain in their chest or has difficulty breathing

**Complications**

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

If your child has an underlying condition which affects their immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

You can find more information on the attached factsheet and on NHS choices: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Becky Linford

Head Teacher