



Thursday 8th December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we move towards the final school week of this term and this calendar year, a few updates for your information:

Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Christmas Jumper Day	Pupils who would like to wear a Christmas Jumper instead of their school jumper or PE hoodie can do so for a donation of 50p or a contribution to the Foodbank Appeal (see details below).
	Christmas Lunch	A range of festive options will be available (with chips!).
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Berlin Trip returns	
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Year 9 and Year 11 ice skating trips	Pupils who are not involved in the skating trips are expected to attend school as normal.
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	School finishes for the Christmas holiday.	Pupils will <b>finish at 12:00pm</b> on this day. All pupils are expected to wear full school uniform.
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	School reopens after the holiday.	Normal times.

## Events earlier this half term

Assemblies with the theme of REACH OUT where delivered by the Student Leadership Team for Anti Bullying Week. Every student was able join in by writing an anti-bullying message on one link of a paper chain to become part of our Chain of Positivity.



**POSITIVE**  
energy



### Children in Need

The World Cup pales into insignificance with the news that the staff team's long-standing record of being unbeaten in their matches against Year 11 has been rocked as they were defeated 4-2 by students. What a match! The event was well supported by students of all years and along with our bake sale almost £360 was raised. Well done to all concerned!



### Art trip

GCSE art students enjoyed a trip to Liverpool to soak up the artwork in the Walker Gallery as well as use the World Museum as the perfect place to take photos of dinosaur bones for their current Natural Form unit of coursework.

### Flu vaccinations for Years 7 to 9

We have been informed that Year 7 to 9 are to be offered their **flu vaccination** in school so please could all parents of students in these year groups ensure the online consent form is completed. This needs to be done even if you do not wish your child to have the vaccination. The form will close for completion on 11th January at 11.59pm after which the immunisation team will contact individuals who have not responded.

<https://www.nhs.uk/FLU/information?id=106268&Type=FLU>

### Winter Concert

Earlier this month we were delighted to host our annual Winter Concert and what a lovely event it was. We have so many talented musicians and it was a privilege to see and hear them perform. Many thanks to our brilliant music team for making this happen and to all the families who came to support the event.



### Group A streptococcus infection and iGAS – information from Tameside's Director of Population Health

Regionally and nationally, we continue to see high rates of scarlet fever, higher than would be expected for this time of year. The increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

The bacteria that causes scarlet fever is called group A streptococcus (group A strep or GAS), which is a common bacteria. Lots of us carry it in our throats and on our skin and it doesn't always result in illness. However, GAS does cause a number of infections, including scarlet fever, impetigo and strep throat.

The most serious infections linked to GAS come from invasive group A strep, known as iGAS, caused by the bacteria getting into parts of the body where it is not normally found, such as the lungs or bloodstream. iGAS is a far less common infection caused by the same bacteria, but can lead to more serious illness. Whilst iGAS infections are still uncommon, there has been an increase in cases this year, particularly in children under 10 and sadly, a small number of deaths.

There are lots of viruses that cause sore throats, colds and coughs circulating. These should resolve without medical intervention. However, children can on occasion develop a bacterial infection on top of a virus and that can make them more unwell.

Please see the accompanying letter below with more information about this.

With the cold weather due to continue next week, please do encourage your child to wear a coat to school. Please note that PE hoodies may only be worn in school on PE days.

A busy last week ahead – thank you for your ongoing support.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ARadcliffe .". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Andrea Radcliffe  
Headteacher

**Debbie Watson**  
**Director of Population Health**

PO BOX 317  
Ashton under Lyne, OL6 0GS

Direct Line 0161 342 5500

[www.tameside.gov.uk](http://www.tameside.gov.uk)  
e-mail : [Debbie.watson@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.watson@tameside.gov.uk)

Ask for Debbie Watson  
Date 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Across the country and in Greater Manchester we have seen a recent increase in the number of cases of scarlet fever. Scarlet fever is a highly contagious bacterial infection commonly seen in young children. The bacteria that causes it is called group A streptococcus (group A strep or GAS) and it is a common bacteria. Lots of us carry it in our throats and on our skin and it doesn't always result in illness. However, GAS does cause a number of infections, including scarlet fever, impetigo and strep throat.

Group A strep is spread by aerosol - coughing, sneezing, singing and talking - as well as coming into direct contact with an infected person or things they may have touched.

There are lots of viruses that cause sore throats, colds and coughs circulating. These should get better without medical treatment. However, sometimes children can develop a bacterial infection on top of a virus and that can make them more unwell.

We are seeing a higher number of cases of scarlet fever / GAS infections this year than we usually would. The infections are usually mild and easily treated with antibiotics. Very rarely, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream or lungs and cause serious illness – called invasive Group A strep (iGAS). Whilst iGAS infections are still uncommon, there has been an increase in cases this year, particularly in children under 10.

Please be vigilant for these symptoms of [scarlet fever](#) in your child:

- The first signs of scarlet fever can be flu-like symptoms, including a high temperature, headache and a sore throat.
- A rash appears 12 to 48 hours later. On white skin it looks like small, red or pink raised bumps and starts on the chest and tummy, then spreads. The rash can be harder to see on darker skin but it will feel rough, like sandpaper.
- Sometimes a white coating also appears on the tongue. This peels, leaving the tongue red, swollen and covered in little bumps bright red tongue called a 'strawberry tongue'.
- Flushed cheeks and with a pale area around the mouth.

If you notice any of these symptoms, please keep your child at home and speak to your GP or call 111 to see if treatment is necessary. Please also let your child's school or nursery know. The vast majority of children will go on to make a full recovery and will return to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

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](#)
- 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](#)
- your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

There are some simple steps that we can all take to help reduce the onward transmission of any infectious disease:

- Frequent and effective handwashing - teach your child how to wash their hands properly for 20 seconds with soap and water and make sure all the family are washing their hands regularly.
- Good respiratory hygiene - catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue and put used tissues straight in the bin. Stay away from others when you are unwell.
- Maintain good ventilation - open windows or doors whenever possible, this helps to carry away the infectious droplets that may have been coughed, sneezed or breathed out. If it's cold outside, you can open windows for just a few minutes every hour.
- Making sure your child is fully vaccinated - whilst there is no vaccine against group A strep, vaccination is one of the most important things we can do to protect ourselves and our children against ill health.

Stay vigilant for symptoms, more information on childhood illness can be found on [Health A to Z](#) - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)).

Yours faithfully,



**Debbie Watson**  
**Director of Population Health**