

20 March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Meningitis Awareness and Guidance

We have been asked by Sheffield Public Health to make you aware of the concerns regarding the confirmed cases of invasive meningococcal disease (meningitis) within the Kent area.

We understand that hearing this news can be very worrying for any parent or carer; please be assured that your child's health and wellbeing are our absolute priority, and we are sharing this information to help our families and pupils feel safe and supported.

Meningitis can affect individuals of all ages, including secondary-age children. Because the onset of the illness is often sudden, early diagnosis and immediate treatment with antibiotics are vital.

Signs and Symptoms to Look For

Early symptoms can develop quickly. Please note that these may not all be present at once:

- A rash that does not fade when pressed with a glass (the 'tumbler test')
- Sudden onset of high fever
- Severe and worsening headache
- Stiff neck
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Joint and muscle pain
- Dislike of bright lights
- Very cold hands and feet
- Seizures
- Confusion or delirium
- Extreme sleepiness or difficulty waking
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What to do in an emergency

If you suspect that you, your child, or someone you care for may have meningitis or sepsis, do not wait. Call 999 for an ambulance or go to your nearest A&E



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immediately if you think someone you look after could have meningitis or sepsis. [Your nearest A&E.](#)

Prevention and Further Information

A number of vaccinations are available to help protect against meningitis. We encourage all families to check that immunisations are up to date. You can learn more about these on the [NHS website.](#)

You can also find specific updates regarding the local situation via [GOV.UK: Cases of invasive meningococcal disease notified in Kent.](#)

How we can help protect each other

To help reduce the spread of many common infections, including those that can lead to meningitis, we are encouraging some simple but effective habits at school and at home:

- Hand Hygiene - Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water remains one of our best defences.
- Personal Items - To prevent the exchange of saliva, please remind your children not to share drinks, water bottles, or cutlery.

We recognise that this may cause anxiety, but please be assured that we are regularly updated in order to keep our school community safe. If you have any immediate concerns regarding your child's health, please contact your GP or NHS 111.

Yours sincerely



Ms S Mattock
Headteacher
Handsworth Grange Community Sports College



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