



23 March 2018

Dear Parent / Guardian

We have been informed that a number of children who attend the School have been diagnosed with suspected / confirmed slapped cheek.

Slapped Cheek

Slapped cheek syndrome (also called fifth disease or parvovirus B19) is a viral infection that's most common in children, although it can affect people of any age. It usually causes a bright red rash on the cheeks. Although the rash can look alarming, slapped cheek syndrome is normally a mild infection that clears up by itself in one to three weeks. Once you've had the infection, you're usually immune to it for life.

You don't usually need to see your GP if you think you or your child has slapped cheek syndrome, as the condition normally gets better on its own. However, you should contact your GP, call NHS 111 or contact your local out-of-hours service if you have been exposed to anyone with slapped cheek or you have symptoms of the infection and:

- You're pregnant – infection in pregnancy, particularly early pregnancy, carries a risk of causing miscarriage, stillbirth or other complications; however, this risk is small and most pregnant women will already be immune
- You have a blood disorder, such as sickle cell anaemia or thalassaemia, or a weakened immune system – the infection can cause severe anaemia that may need to be treated in hospital
- You have symptoms of severe anaemia, such as very pale skin, severe shortness of breath, extreme tiredness or fainting

Unless your child is feeling unwell, there's no need to stay away from school or work once the rash has developed, as the infection is no longer contagious by this point.

Further advice can also be obtained from the **Health Protection Team** on 0300 303 8162 during office hours.

Yours faithfully

Georgina Fox
Health Protection Practitioner