

13<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**The Bicester School**

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Headteacher:

A M Rushworth BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

Dear Parent or Guardian,

One of our Year 7 pupils has been admitted to hospital with probable meningococcal infection/meningitis.

We have been in contact with the Wessex Public Health England Centre, who have advised that no special measures are necessary at the present time. There is no reason to make any change in the school routine and no reason for children to be kept at home.

Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat of about one in ten people at any one time, but only very rarely cause illness. Most people who carry the bacteria become immune to them. The bacteria do not spread easily and only those who have had prolonged, close contact with the person are at a slightly greater risk of becoming ill.

**People who have not had prolonged, close contact, i.e. classmates, friends, social acquaintances, visitors to the house etc, are NOT at any greater risk than the rest of the population and do not need antibiotics. Those who have shared drinks with the case but have not had prolonged close contact also have no increased risks.**

Although illness with these bacteria only occurs rarely, it is sensible to be aware of the signs and symptoms, which are detailed overleaf. If you suspect that a member of your family is suffering from these symptoms, you should contact your doctor immediately.

Further information is available from NHS 111 or the meningitis charities which run 24 hour information lines for general information about meningitis or for requesting a leaflet.

NHS 111	111	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk/111/">www.nhs.uk/111/</a>
Meningitis Now	0808 80 10 388	<a href="http://www.meningitisnow.org/meningitis-info/">http://www.meningitisnow.org/meningitis-info/</a>
Meningitis Research Foundation	0808 800 3344	<a href="http://www.meningitis.org">http://www.meningitis.org</a>

Yours faithfully



**Matt Wootton**  
Head of Year 7



**Tony Rushworth**  
Head Teacher

## How to recognise meningitis and septicaemia

**In babies, look out for one or more of these symptoms:**

- Fever, cold hands and feet
- Drowsy, difficult to wake
- Refusing food or vomiting
- Pale or blotchy skin
- A high-pitched, moaning cry
- Red or purple bruise-like spots that do not fade under pressure  
(See the Glass Test below)

**In older children and adults, look out for one or more of these symptoms:**

- Fever, cold hands and feet
- Stiffness in the neck - can the child kiss his or her knee?
- Drowsiness or confusion
- A severe headache
- A dislike of bright light
- Vomiting, stomach cramps and diarrhoea
- Red or purple bruise-like spots that do not fade under pressure  
(See the Glass Test below)

**The disease can develop very quickly – sometimes in a matter of hours. Symptoms may appear in any order and some may not appear at all.**

### **How to do the Glass Test**

This test is very simple. If you press a clear glass firmly against the bruise-like rash, you can see if the rash fades. If the rash doesn't, **contact your doctor immediately.**

**Leaflets can be obtained from Meningitis Now at the link below.**

<http://www.meningitisnow.org/how-we-help/resources/>