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**December Events**

**Christmas Dinner – Thursday 8th December**

**All children leave school at 1pm.**



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**Remember to wear your Christmas Jumper!**

**Open Day – Thursday 15th December**

**1.30pm – 4pm**

Please encourage all those you know, with children due to begin Primary One in September 2022, to come to see our school and enjoy the activities.

Children should be in full school uniform and finish at normal time.

**Christmas Shows – Wednesday 21st December**

**£3.00 per person. Pay at the door.**

P1-P4 – 9.30am P5 – P7 – 10.45am

Please enter via Assembly Hall Doors at the back of the school.

**Children go home directly after their show.** P1-P4 children with siblings in KS2 will be supervised until after KS2 show.

**Santa’s Visit – Friday 16th December**

Santa is visiting our school and we encourage all children to wear their Christmas jumper, visit Santa and have a photo taken with him.



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**£3.00 per child; £5.00 per family**

**School finishes for all pupils – Thursday 22nd December @ 11am**

**School reopens for all pupils – Friday 6th January 2023**

**Pupil of the Month**

December focus – **Responsibility**

**Awards for November focus –Caring**

Primary One – Catherine; Primary Two – Irisha; Primary Three – Martin; Primary Four – Ruby; Primary Five – Ava; Primary Six – Jessica; Primary Seven – Lyla:

Congratulations!

**Sacrament of Confirmation**

Thursday 26th January @ 12 noon in St MacNissi’s Church.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

On behalf of the Board of Governors, Staff and Pupils, I want to take this opportunity thank all our families for the continued trust and support you have shown to the school. We really appreciate it and look forward to continued, positive engagement with you all throughout 2023.





**Scarlet Fever / Strep A**

**There has been a lot of information, in the media, regarding Scarlet Fever / Strep A. We encourage all parents to be extremely vigilant and have your child seen by a medical professional, as soon as possible, should your child display the symptoms.**

**Q: What is Group A Streptococcus?**

A: It is a common bacteria which is found in the throat and skin and doesn’t always result in illness.

However, it can cause a number of infections, which vary in severity, but the majority are minor and can be easily treated with antibiotics.

Symptoms of a Strep A infection include sore throat, fever and lethargy, and can be difficult to distinguish from other viral infections circulating in the community.

It is spread by close contact with an infected person and can be passed on through coughs and sneezes or from a wound.

**Q: What is the link between a Strep A infection and scarlet fever?**

A: A Strep A infection can develop into scarlet fever, which mainly affects children under the age of 10.

In the early stages, symptoms include a sore throat, headache, swollen neck glands, and fever, while a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel appears 12 to 48-hours later.

On darker skin, the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel. Scarlet fever usually clears up after about a week.

**Q: What about more serious infections?**

A: The most serious infections linked to a Strep A infection come from invasive group A Strep, known as iGAS.  
This happens in very rare circumstances when the bacteria gets into the bloodstream and causes serious illness which can sometimes be fatal.

Nine children in the UK have now died with a Strep A infection this year, compared to four in 2019.

It is possible for a child to develop iGAS with or without experiencing scarlet fever beforehand.

Children with pre-existing health conditions are more prone to becoming seriously unwell but this can also happen in children who are otherwise healthy.

**How can we avoid getting Strep A?**

The PHA advise that in order to limit the spread of scarlet fever, it is important to practise good hygiene by washing hands with warm water and soap, not sharing drinking glasses or utensils, and covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

**People should also stay away from nursery, school or work for 24 hours after taking the first dose of antibiotics.**

They PHA have also stressed parents and guardians “don’t put off seeking help” if your child continues to get worse with symptoms even if they have started treatment.

"There can be a range of causes of sore throats, colds and coughs. These should resolve without medical intervention. However, children can on occasion develop an infection and that can make them more unwell,” the PHA added.

**Q: At what point should I take my child to hospital?**

A: Parents should use their own judgement but Dr Stout has recommended they seek emergency medical help if their child begins to experience difficulty breathing or becomes extremely lethargic and difficult to rouse, or if they have a persistent fever which does not come down with paracetamol.

In some cases, the child’s colour may change to very pale or a blue appearance.

**Q: What should I do if I think my child may have a Strep A infection?**

A: The Public Health Agency is keen that efforts are made to reduce the spread of infection and have asked parents to use judgement on whether they should keep their child off school and at home away from others.

They have asked that anyone who is concerned seek advice from their GP.

In addition, the organisation has urged parents to seek help if their child is very unwell or seems to be getting worse — even if they have started treatment.

They should contact their GP if they feel their child’s condition is deteriorating, their child is feeding or eating much less than normal, their child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or is showing other signs of dehydration.

They should also contact the GP if their baby is under three-months-old and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than three months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher, if their baby feels hotter than usual when they touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty, or their child is very tired or irritable.

Dr Alan Stout, chair of the British Medical Association’s GP committee in Northern Ireland, said family doctors are prioritising children experiencing Strep A symptoms and has advised parents should make their concerns clear when contacting their surgery.