

Dear Parents/Carers

We have a few children who have been diagnosed with chicken pox virus.

Chickenpox

Chickenpox is caused by a virus. It is a mild but highly infectious disease that most children catch at some time. It takes 10-21 days for the symptoms to show after you have come into contact with the virus.

Chickenpox is most common in children who are between two and eight years old, although it can be developed at any age. Children are infectious from about two days before the rash appears until roughly five days after. Children should stay at home until all of the blisters have fully crusted over and this usually happens five to seven days after the first blister appears.

Symptoms

The most commonly recognised symptom of chickenpox is a red rash covering the body. However, before developing a rash, your child may experience some mild flu-like symptoms including:

- nausea,
- fever,
- aching, painful muscles,
- headache,
- generally feeling unwell, and
- loss of appetite.

Rash

Shortly after the initial symptoms, a rash develops. The rash is usually found:

- behind the **ears**,
- on the **face**,
- over the **scalp**,
- under the **arms**,
- on the **chest and stomach**, and
- on the **arms and legs**.

The rash starts as small, red spots. After approximately 12-14 hours, the spots develop into fluid-filled blisters, which are very itchy. The blisters can also form on the palms of hands and on the soles of feet. After one to four days, the blisters will dry out and begin to crust over. After one to two weeks, the crusting skin will fall off naturally.

Prevention:

Children should be isolated from others if it is thought they may be infected. Anyone who has already had chickenpox is unlikely to catch it again. **To prevent spread, children must be kept away from school, nursery or other children for five days from the onset of the rash or until all of the blisters have fully crusted over.**

Note for pregnant women:

Chickenpox during pregnancy can result in complications. Contact your Midwife or GP without delay.

Further information is available at:-

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox/>