

7 August 2017

Dear Parents / Caregivers

We have been informed that a member of our school community has contracted Chicken Pox. We have outlined below some general guidelines for your information.

Chicken pox is a viral infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus.

Symptoms include fever and "cold-like" symptoms followed by a rash. The rash appeared blisters which crust to form scabs. The rash is more noticeable on the trunk than on the limbs and may affect the scalp and the inside of the mouth, nose and throat. The rash is usually itchy.

Incubation period (time between becoming infected and developing symptoms) is two - three weeks, commonly thirteen – seventeen days.

Infectious period (time during which an infected person can infect others) is from two days before the rash appears (during coughing, runny nose stage) until 5 days after the appearance of the first blister.

#### Control of spread

- exclude person with chickenpox until fully recovered or for at least five days after the rash first appears. Note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion
- any child with an immune deficiency (eg leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded from contact with a case of chicken pox for their own protection
- wash hands after contact with soiled articles (tissues, etc) dispose of tissues appropriately

#### Treatment

- specific antiviral treatment for chicken pox is available
- medical advice should be sought if:
  - a child or adult with chicken pox has a high fever, cough, shortness of breath or chest pain
  - a pregnant woman has chicken pox.

For all cases, calamine lotion or phenelgan (available from chemists) may be useful for the itch. If treatment to reduce temperature or discomfort is necessary, paracetamol is recommended.

Please advise the school immediately if your child has chicken pox on 8365 0455.

Yours sincerely



Jacqui van Ruiten  
Principal



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