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Dear Parents and Carers

Chickenpox

Chickenpox is a mild and common childhood illness that most children catch at some point. It causes a rash of red, itchy spots that turn into fluid-filled blisters. They then crust over to form scabs, which eventually drop off.

Some children have only a few spots, but in others they can cover the entire body. The spots are most likely to appear on the face, ears and scalp, under the arms, on the chest and belly and on the arms and legs, but they can be anywhere on the body, even inside the ears and mouth, on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet. However, even before the rash appears your child may have some mild flu-like symptoms including:

- Feeling sick
- A high temperature (fever) of 38°C (100.4°F) or over
- Aching, painful muscles
- Headache
- Generally feeling unwell
- Loss of appetite

There is no cure for chickenpox, and the virus usually clears up by itself without any treatment. However, there are ways of easing the itch and discomfort, and there are important steps you can take to stop chickenpox spreading. If your child is in pain or has a high temperature (fever), you can give them a mild painkiller, such as paracetamol. It is important for children (and adults) with chickenpox to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Chickenpox can be incredibly itchy, but it's important for children (and adults) to not scratch the spots so as to avoid future scarring.

One way of stopping scratching is to keep fingernails clean and short. You can also put socks over your child's hands at night to stop them scratching the rash as they sleep. If your child's skin is very itchy or sore, try using calamine lotion or cooling gels. If your child catches chickenpox, the guidance advises that they should stay away from school until they are no longer infectious, which is until the last blister has burst and crusted over. This usually takes five or six days after the rash begins.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Skinner
Headteacher

Respect

Teamwork

Empathy

Self-Belief

Honesty

