



Mill Road • Okehampton
Devon • EX20 1PW



admin@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk
www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk
@OkehamptonCollege
@OkehamptonCC



+44 (0)1837 650910

Tuesday 14 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing on the advice of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to inform you that one of our students have regrettably been admitted to hospital with septicaemia, probably caused by the meningococcal bacteria. We have been in touch with the student's family, and both they and the UKHSA have informed us that the student is responding well to treatment. We of course send our very best wishes to the student for a full and speedy recovery.

Let me reassure you that there is no reason to make any changes to our normal routines, and our students can and should continue to attend school as normal. We write simply to ensure that you are aware, and to share with you some information provided by the UKHSA, which follows.

Understanding the risk of developing meningococcal disease

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 getting ill. These people have been identified by the UKHSA South West Health Protection Team and offered antibiotics to reduce the chances of the bacteria spreading. Others who attend the college are not at increased risk of developing meningococcal disease and no further wider action is necessary at the present time. Whilst the risk of another case in the College is very small, it is sensible to be aware of the signs and symptoms which are detailed below and overleaf.

Signs and symptoms of meningitis



Fever/vomiting



Severe headache



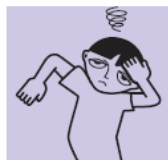
Stiff neck



Dislike of
bright lights



Very sleepy/vacant/
difficult to wake



Confused/
delirious

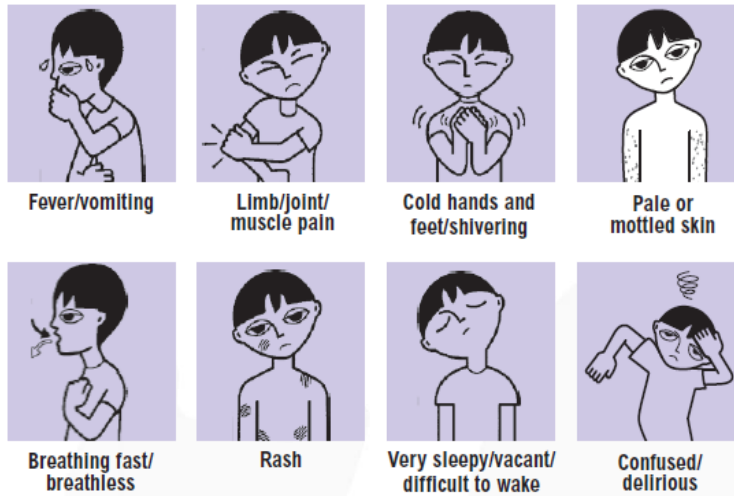


Rash



Seizures

Signs and symptoms of septicaemia



Reproduced with kind permission of Meningitis Research Foundation © Meningitis Research Foundation

Not all these signs and symptoms may show at once, but someone with this illness will become very ill. The illness may progress over one or two days, but it can develop very rapidly, sometimes in a matter of hours. Very young infants may also refuse feeds and have a high-pitched cry. They may also appear floppy and have a tense and bulging spot on the head. Diagnosis in the early stages can be difficult. The early signs can be like bad 'flu' symptoms but be **WATCHFUL** and use your instincts. If you or someone you know becomes ill with some of these signs or symptoms, contact the doctor urgently and ask for advice; out of hours call NHS 111. The UKHSA also recommends that you are up to date with your routine immunisations/vaccinations, including those which offer protection against some strains of the meningococcal bacteria; your GP or practice nurse can advise if you're not sure.

Further information:

Meningitis Now • www.meningitisnow.org • 0808 80 10 388

The Meningitis Research Foundation • www.meningitis.org • 0808 800 3344



Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to call the Health Protection Team on 0300 303 8162.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Griffiths".

Craig Griffiths
(Associate Principal).