



North Yorkshire & the Humber
Health Protection Unit

Yorkshire and the Humber

Humber Office
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East Yorkshire
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Tel 01482 638636
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Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you that a child attending Tollbar Business Enterprise and Humanities College has been diagnosed as having probable meningococcal infection (meningitis/septicaemia).

Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat of about one in ten people at any one time but only rarely cause illness. Most people who carry the bacteria become immune to them. The bacteria do not spread easily. However those who have had prolonged close contact with a person with the illness are at slightly greater risk of getting ill. These contacts of the child have been identified and given antibiotics. At the present time no further action is necessary and there is no need for your child to have antibiotics or vaccine.

I would like to reassure you that there is no *additional* risk to any other child or staff member because of this child's illness. Children should continue to attend Tollbar Business Enterprise and Humanities College as usual.

However, because meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia can be serious diseases, it is important to know what symptoms to look out for. The most common symptoms are fever, severe headache, vomiting, neck stiffness and a dislike of bright lights. Sometimes the illness is accompanied by a rash of red or purple spots. This is different to usual childhood rashes in that it does not fade or 'blanch' when you press on it. This can be tested by using a glass tumbler to press on the rash. Not all these signs and symptoms may show at once. The illness may progress over one or two days but it can develop very rapidly, sometimes in a matter of hours.

Diagnosis in the early stages can be difficult. The early signs can be similar to bad flu symptoms so be watchful and use your instincts.

If your child develops such symptoms, please seek medical advice urgently.

If you have any concerns about your own child please talk to your GP.

Further information on meningococcal disease and meningitis is available from:

NHS Direct

0845 46 47

The National Meningitis Trust www.meningitis-trust.org

0800 028 18 28 (24 hours)

The Meningitis Research Foundation www.meningitis.org

0808 800 3344 (24 hours)

Humber Health Protection Unit

01482 638636 (Mon-Fri 9.00-5.00pm)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T K Matthews".

DR T K MATTHEWS

Consultant in Communicable Disease Control