



15th May, 2012.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please be aware that we are in the midst of an outbreak of Impetigo or what is more commonly known as school sores. Impetigo is a contagious skin infection. Impetigo occurs most commonly in children and babies. Because impetigo primarily affects school-aged children, it's often called school sores. Most cases of impetigo occur during warmer weather.



What causes impetigo?

Impetigo is caused by [Staphylococcus](#) or [Streptococcus bacteria](#) which sometimes live on the skin. When a child has a cut or sore, the bacteria can get down into the deeper layers of skin and cause an infection. Impetigo is highly contagious.

Is impetigo serious?

Impetigo is generally not serious and clears up on its own in two to three weeks. But, if large areas of skin become infected, impetigo can become severe. Severe impetigo can cause the sores to abscess.

Can I prevent impetigo?

Impetigo is best prevented through thorough and [frequent hand washing](#). If your child has impetigo, you can help prevent the spread to other children by keeping her/him away from others until she/he is no longer contagious - about a day or two after she/he begins antibiotic treatment. Keep her/his sores clean and covered. Your child can get impetigo from other children or from sharing toys with infected children.

How do I know if my child has impetigo?

The incubation period for impetigo is about four days. In addition to a general feeling of being unwell, your child may have the following symptoms:

- Itchy, red patches on the skin
- Blisters around the nose and mouth
- More serious infections may cause fever and swollen glands
- Once the blisters form, they pop and discharge a sticky, yellow fluid. Once the blisters crust over and dry out the skin will heal completely in a few days.

How do I treat impetigo?

Cover the sores with a waterproof dressing. Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic cream or ointment for you to use. Use paracetamol for fever.

Should I call the doctor?

Yes, contact your doctor if your child shows signs of impetigo. Because of reduced immunity, infections may be difficult to control and may need to be treated. You should also call the doctor if your child does not appear to be getting better or if the impetigo spreads or is getting worse even with antibiotic treatment.

If your child has contracted Impetigo they are excluded from school until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing. It is vitally important that these procedures are followed to ensure that the School Sores don't spread throughout our school. Children who present with uncovered sores will be referred to parents or carers who will be asked to ensure that sores are covered with a watertight dressing. Your support will ensure the welfare of all staff and students in our school.

Ian Latham,
PRINCIPAL.