



Health Protection Specialist & Unit Director

Cathy Mallaghan

CCDCs

Philip Monk
Nachi Arunachalam
Sophie Haroon

**Senior Health Protection Specialist
Health Protection Specialist**

Lindsey Abbott
Janice Bright
Susanne Howes
Lesley McFarlane
Chloe Leggat

Health Protection Agency
East Midlands South
2 Smith Way
Grove Park
Leicester
LE19 1SX
Tel +44 (0)116 263 1400
Fax +44 (0)116 263 0435

Health Protection Practitioner

**Unit Manager
Information Officer
Admin & Surveillance administrators**

David Resoii
Natlaue Vinnyey
Sim Bajwa
Neil Bray
Mary Clarke

Admin Assistant

Secretary

Andrea Cooper

Ref: SHa/ac/348

Date: 28.6.2010

Dear Parent

We write to inform you that a student who attends Caroline Chisholm School Sixth Form is in hospital and is suspected to have meningococcal disease. The students at the school are not thought to be at risk and there is no need for action, however, you need to be aware of the situation. Below is information about meningitis.

There are two diseases described as meningitis:-

- Meningitis:** *which means inflammation of the meninges, the membrane covering the brain.*
- Septicaemia:** *which means blood poisoning.*

The germs that cause MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS OR SEPTICAEMIA are very common and live naturally in the back of the nose and throat (nasopharynx). They spread between people in droplets from the mouth and nose. Outside the human body they do not survive for very long and so cannot be picked up from buildings or factories, water supplies, toilets or swimming pools. People of any age can carry these germs for days, weeks or months without becoming at all unwell. In fact, being a carrier helps boost natural immunity. Only on rare occasions do the bacteria overcome the body's defences and cause illness. It can take between two and seven days after being exposed for someone to develop the disease.

The signs and symptoms of the illness are:-

Meningitis

- *Fever*
- *Vomiting*
- *Severe Headache*
- *Stiff Neck*
- *Dislike of bright light*

Septicaemia

- *Fever*
- *Vomiting*
- *Bruising Rash*
- *Rapid Breathing*
- *Cold Hands and Feet*
- *Joint/Muscle Pain*

NOT ALL OF 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.

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 SOMEONE BECOMES ILL WITH SOME OF THESE SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS, CONTACT THE DOCTOR URGENTLY** and ask for advice.

You can get further information from:-

The Meningitis Research Foundation
The National Meningitis Trust
NHS Direct

www.meningitis.org
www.meningitis-trust.org.uk
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

0808 800 3344 (24hrs)
0845 6000 800 (24hrs)
0845 46 47

Yours faithfully

Sophie Haroon
CCDC