



Park Grove, Bristol, BS9 4LG

Telephone: 0117 377 2444

Email: office@henleazejuniorschool.co.uk

Website: www.henleazejuniorschool.co.uk

Headteacher Mr Adam Barber

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Dear Parents and Carers

I write to inform you that a child in our school has been diagnosed with whooping cough.

Whooping cough, also called pertussis, is a highly contagious bacterial infection of the lungs and airways. It causes repeated coughing bouts that can last for two to three months or more, and can make babies and young children in particular very ill.

Whooping cough is spread in the droplets of the coughs or sneezes of someone with the infection. The first symptoms of whooping cough are similar to those of a cold, such as a runny nose, red and watery eyes, a sore throat, and a slightly raised temperature. Intense coughing bouts start about a week later.

- The bouts usually last a few minutes at a time and tend to be more common at night.
- Coughing usually brings up thick mucus and may be followed by vomiting.
- Between coughs, you or your child may gasp for breath – this may cause a "whoop" sound, although not everyone has this.
- The strain of coughing can cause the face to become very red, and there may be some slight bleeding under the skin or in the eyes.
- Young children can sometimes briefly turn blue (cyanosis) if they have trouble breathing – this often looks worse than it is and their breathing should start again quickly.

To prevent the spread the infection to others:

- Stay away from nursery, school or work until five days from the start of antibiotic treatment or three weeks after the coughing bouts started (whichever is sooner).
- Cover your or your child's mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing.
- Dispose of used tissues immediately.
- Wash your and your child's hands regularly with soap and water.

Further information is available via this link: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Whooping-cough/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Yours faithfully

Adam Barber
Headteacher



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