



School logo here

4th December 2009

Dear parents and teachers,

We are writing to inform you that a pupil who attends Oaks Park High School was admitted to hospital with suspected meningococcal disease and we are very sorry to have to inform you that the pupil has since sadly died. Our thoughts remain with the family at this very distressing time.

Meningococcal disease is a rare but potentially serious bacterial infection which can cause meningitis and/or septicaemia. The majority of cases occur sporadically and we'd like to reassure you that it is rare to get a second case connected with the initial patient.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents to be vigilant to the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease as detailed below. Spotting the symptoms early is very important in treating the illness.

Not all of the symptoms need to be present and they can occur in any order. Children with meningococcal disease can become seriously ill very quickly. Get medical help immediately if you are worried about someone who is ill.

Meningitis

Septicaemia



Severe headache



Stiff neck



Dislike of bright lights



Fever/vomiting



Drowsy and less responsive/vacant



Rash (develops anywhere on body)



Rash (develops anywhere on body)



Fever/vomiting



Cold hands and feet/shivering



Rapid breathing (or unusual breathing)



Stomach/joint/muscle pain



Drowsy and less responsive/vacant

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If you would like further information, or simply need to ask a question about the disease, you can contact one of the following 24 hours a day:

NHS Direct - 0845 4647, Meningitis Research Foundation freephone - 0808 800 3344
(www.meningitis.org), National Meningitis Trust - 0800 028 18 28 (www.meningitis-trust.org).

Further advice can also be obtained from the Health Protection Unit on 020 7759 2860.

Yours faithfully

Health Protection Unit
North East & North Central London