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THE
MALLING
SCHOOL

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18th March 2026

KDa/KTr

Dear Parents and Carers

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding cases of meningococcal disease affecting young people in Kent. We are writing to share the latest guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and to provide reassurance alongside clear, accurate information.

Firstly, we want to reassure you that there is **no cause for concern within our school at this time**. We have not been contacted by UKHSA in relation to this outbreak and students should continue to attend school as normal.

Current situation

UKHSA is investigating a small number of cases in the Canterbury area. While this is understandably worrying, outbreaks of this size are rare and meningococcal infection does **not spread easily**. It usually requires prolonged close contact, such as living together, prolonged kissing, or sharing items like vapes.

There are two simple and sensible steps families can take:

- Be aware of the signs and symptoms
- Follow advice about preventative antibiotics if specifically advised

Signs and symptoms to look out for

Meningococcal disease can develop quickly, but early treatment is very effective. Please seek urgent medical advice if your child develops:

- A rash that does not fade when pressed
- Sudden high fever
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Sensitivity to light
- Unusual drowsiness or difficulty waking
- Cold hands and feet
- Confusion or seizures



It is important to remember that these symptoms are **rare** and most illnesses in children and young people will be far less serious.

Preventative antibiotics

UKHSA has advised that anyone who attended *Club Chemistry in Canterbury between 5 and 7 March* should come forward for precautionary antibiotics. If this does not apply to your child, no action is needed.

If you have **not been contacted directly by UKHSA**, the risk to your child remains **very low**.

Vaccination information

The current outbreak involves a strain (MenB) that is not covered by the routine teenage MenACWY vaccine. UKHSA continues to monitor the situation closely and we will share any further updates if guidance changes.

Further information and support

For clear and reliable guidance, please visit the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/meningitis/>

Additional support is available from:

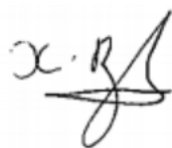
- Meningitis Research Foundation (www.meningitis.org | Helpline: 080 8800 3344)
- Meningitis Now (www.meningitisnow.org | Helpline: 0808 80 10 388)

We understand that this news may feel concerning but please be reassured that public health teams are responding carefully and appropriately. The overall risk to our school community remains low.

If you have any concerns about your child's health, please seek advice from your GP, NHS 111, or another healthcare professional.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards



Karen Davey
Senior Deputy Headteacher

