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Dear Parent

I am writing to remind you of the symptoms of Slapped Cheek Syndrome. These may include fever, headache, muscle aches, sore throat, runny nose, tiredness and stomach ache. These mild symptoms usually last for two to three days, and during this period children and adults are highly contagious. This is followed by a period of about one week, during which most children are free of symptoms, before the rash appears.

The rash usually occurs in three stages:

* a bright red rash on the cheeks which is most pronounced when the child goes from a cool to a warm environment,
* between one and four days later, a less intense rash on the trunk and limbs (this turns blotchy as it clears, leaving a lacy pattern),
* the third stage may last for a month or more when the intensity of the rash varies and these fluctuations are most marked when the child is hot.

A child can appear to be completely recovered, only to have the rash reappear when bathing. There is no specific treatment but occasionally the rash may itch or joints ache, when you should seek your GPs advice.

Slapped Cheek Syndrome is contagious, with cases following each other by four to fourteen days, but while the rash is present, the child is not contagious. Good personal hygiene is important to stop the spread of the virus - handkerchiefs and regular washing of hands are a must.

It is important that any pregnant woman coming into contact with your child are told and asked to contact their GP. Therefore, **as we currently have a member of staff who is pregnant we would strongly urge you not to send your child school if he/she has any of these symptoms - fever, headache, muscle aches, sore throat, runny nose, tiredness and stomach ache.** Thank you for your co-operation in this important matter.

Yours sincerely

M J Peacock
(Principal)