



# Midsomer Norton Primary School

*An inclusive, community school in the heart of Midsomer Norton.*

High Street  
Midsomer Norton  
Radstock  
BA3 2DR  
Telephone: 01761412289  
Email: [office@midsomernortonprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@midsomernortonprimary.co.uk)  
Website: [www.midsomernortonprimary.com](http://www.midsomernortonprimary.com)  
Head of School: Ms Sarah Biss  
Executive Headteacher: Mr Alun Randell  
**'Part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership'**

Tuesday 24th June 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

This letter is to inform you that we have had multiple reported cases of chickenpox within the school in recent days. We understand that this may cause concern, and we want to provide you with important information regarding symptoms, treatment, and when your child can safely return to school.

Chickenpox is a common and usually mild childhood illness caused by a virus. It is highly contagious.

## **Symptoms of Chickenpox:**

The main symptom is an itchy, spotty rash. This rash can appear anywhere on the body. The spots typically go through three stages:

1. **Raised bumps:** These red or pink bumps appear over a few days.
2. **Small fluid-filled blisters:** The bumps fill with fluid and become very itchy. They may burst.
3. **Crusts and scabs:** The blisters dry out and form scabs, which eventually fall off.

It is common to see bumps, blisters, and scabs all at the same time as new spots continue to appear for several days.

Other symptoms that may appear before or alongside the rash include:

- A high temperature (fever)
- Aches and pains
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling generally unwell and tired

## **What to do if your child develops Chickenpox:**

If you suspect your child has chickenpox, please keep them at home and contact your GP for advice. It is important to inform the school as soon as possible so we can monitor the situation.

While there is no specific cure for chickenpox, you can help manage your child's symptoms and make them more comfortable:

- **Relieve itching:**
  - Apply calamine lotion or cooling gels from a pharmacy.
  - Speak to a pharmacist about antihistamine medicine to help with itching.
  - Give cool baths with added baking soda, uncooked oatmeal, or colloidal oatmeal. Pat the skin dry afterwards, do not rub.
- **Manage fever and discomfort:**
  - Give paracetamol for children (ensure you follow the dosage instructions on the packaging).



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- **Do NOT give aspirin to children under 16, as it can lead to a serious condition called Reye's syndrome.**
  - **Avoid ibuprofen unless advised by a doctor, as it may be associated with serious skin infections in chickenpox cases.**
- **Prevent scratching:**
  - Keep your child's fingernails trimmed short.
  - Consider putting socks or mittens on their hands at night to prevent scratching, which can lead to scarring and infection.
- **Stay hydrated:**
  - Ensure your child drinks plenty of fluids. Ice lollies can be a good way to encourage fluid intake if they are reluctant to drink.
- **Dress comfortably:**
  - Dress your child in loose, cotton clothing.

## **When can your child return to school?**

Your child must be kept off school for at least 5 days after the onset of the rash and until **all** the chickenpox spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared. It is crucial to adhere to this exclusion period to prevent further spread of the virus within the school community.

## **Important Considerations:**

- Chickenpox can be more serious for certain individuals, including newborn babies, pregnant women who haven't had chickenpox before, and people with weakened immune systems. If anyone in your household falls into these categories and has been exposed, please seek immediate medical advice from your GP or NHS 111.
- If you are unsure if your child has chickenpox, or if you are concerned about their symptoms (e.g., fever lasting more than 4 days or rising above 38.9°C, rash spreading to the eyes, signs of skin infection like increased redness or pus, difficulty breathing, or unusual drowsiness), please seek medical attention.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us manage this situation and keep our school community healthy. By following these guidelines, we can minimise the spread of chickenpox and ensure a safe environment for all our pupils.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Ms Sarah Biss