



BOURNEMOUTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

20th January 2014

Dear Parents

I am writing with the very sad news that one of our Year 11 students, Connie Moore, died at the weekend. Connie was a lovely, gentle natured girl with impeccable manners. She was easy to talk to and totally reliable. She was studious and hard-working in class and also a talented singer out of school. Always bright and bubbly she had a wonderful laugh, much appreciated by all her many friends. She was always there for them and could always cheer them up if they were down.

Our thoughts and prayers are very much with Connie's family at this time. We will in the coming days have our own commemoration of Connie's life.

We understand that the cause of Connie's death was a form of meningitis. I appreciate that this may cause anxiety amongst parents and pupils. I have already spoken with Public Health England, the authority responsible for giving advice in such circumstances. I give their advice in full in this letter and do hope that it will be of reassurance. If you have any further concerns please do not hesitate to contact me, or Public Health England, and of course if you have any concerns about your own daughter's well-being please contact your GP immediately.

Wessex Public Health England Centre advises that no special measures are necessary at the present time. There is no reason to make any change in the school routine and no reason for children to be kept at home.

Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat of about one in ten people at any one time, but only very rarely cause illness. Most people who carry the bacteria become immune to them. The bacteria do not spread easily and only those who have had prolonged, close contact with the person are at a slightly greater risk of becoming ill.

People who have not had prolonged, close contact, i.e. classmates, friends, social acquaintances, visitors to the house etc., are NOT at any greater risk than the rest of the population and do not need antibiotics. Those who have shared drinks with the case but have not had prolonged close contact also have no increased risks.

Although illness with these bacteria only occurs rarely, it is sensible to be aware of the signs and symptoms, which are detailed overleaf. If you suspect that a member of your family is suffering from these symptoms, you should contact your doctor immediately.

Further information is available from NHS 111 or the meningitis charities which run 24 hour information lines for general information about meningitis or for requesting a leaflet.

NHS 111	111	www.nhs.uk/111/
Meningitis Now	0808 80 10 388	http://www.meningitisnow.org/meningitis-info/
Meningitis Research Foundation	0808 800 3344	http://www.meningitis.org

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How to recognise meningitis and septicaemia

In babies, look out for one or more of these symptoms:

- Fever, cold hands and feet
- Drowsy, difficult to wake
- Refusing food or vomiting
- Pale or blotchy skin
- A high-pitched, moaning cry
- Red or purple bruise-like spots that do not fade under pressure
(See the Glass Test below)

In older children and adults, look out for one or more of these symptoms:

- Fever, cold hands and feet
- Stiffness in the neck - can the child kiss his or her knee?
- Drowsiness or confusion
- A severe headache
- A dislike of bright light
- Vomiting, stomach cramps and diarrhoea
- Red or purple bruise-like spots that do not fade under pressure
(See the Glass Test below)

**The disease can develop very quickly – sometimes in a matter of hours.
Symptoms may appear in any order and some may not appear at all.**

How to do the Glass Test

This test is very simple. If you press a clear glass firmly against the bruise-like rash, you can see if the rash fades. If the rash doesn't, **contact your doctor immediately.**

Leaflets can be obtained from Meningitis Now at the link below.

<http://www.meningitisnow.org/how-we-help/resources/>

I am sorry to be the bearer of such tragic news. Please be assured that we will do all we can to reassure the girls and support them as necessary in the coming days.

Yours sincerely



Alistair Brien
Headteacher