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## LEIGHSWOOD SCHOOL

26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear parents/carers

A child who attends our school became ill during the half-term break from infection with the meningococcal bacteria, otherwise known as the “meningitis bug”. The child is recovering at home and is responding well to treatment.

I have spoken with Public Health England this morning and they have suggested that parents be given some information about this infection.

The meningococcal bug is commonly carried in the nose and throat, particularly by older children and young adults, without usually causing harm. Sometimes however it can cause illness in children. The vast majority of cases that occur are sporadic i.e. not related clearly to any other cases.

For the bug to be passed to others usually needs close contact for long periods of time. In the majority of cases evidence for any increased risk only applies to regular contacts in a "household" setting, particularly the family, and such contacts may be offered a short course of antibiotics.

There is no reason for any child to stay away from the school, to have any medicine or vaccination or to see their family doctor unless, of course, your child is unwell.

It is always important for all parents be aware of the signs and symptoms that may indicate meningococcal disease.

Other useful information on meningitis is available from the expert charity Meningitis NOW – see link - <https://www.meningitisnow.org/meningitis-explained/> They also have a helpline 0808 8010388 for further general information.

Mrs. M. O'Dwyer

Head of School