



Cherry Hill Public Schools

Bret Harte Elementary School



1909 Queen Anne Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Dr. Neil Burti, *Principal*
nburti@chclc.org

Phone: 856.795.0515
Fax: 856.795.7090

December 12, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We have identified a suspected case of breakthrough varicella (chicken pox) in our school.

Varicella is a highly contagious disease that is spread through the air by a cough or a sneeze. It also can be spread by touching a person with varicella lesions and/or touching items that come into contact with a skin rash or discharge from the varicella blisters. A person with varicella is contagious from 1-2 days before rash onset until the lesions have crusted. It takes from 10-21 days after exposure to the virus for someone to develop varicella.

Symptoms of varicella include a mild fever and feelings of achiness, fatigue and a sore throat 1 or 2 days before the rash appears, especially in adults. In children, the rash is often the first sign of the disease. The rash is itchy and usually appears first on the head, chest and back, and then spreads to the rest of the body. It may even spread into the mouth or other areas inside of the body. The rash will dry and begin to scab in 4-5 days.

Children and adults who have been vaccinated against varicella still may contract the disease. Cases among people who have been vaccinated tend to be mild, with shorter illness compared to unvaccinated people who get varicella. People who have been vaccinated against varicella usually develop no fever, or a very low one, and develop fewer than 50 lesions.

If your child has been around someone with varicella, he/she might become sick with the disease. This is especially true if your child has not been vaccinated against varicella. Even if your child has been vaccinated, he/she might still get varicella.

If believe your child may have varicella, please do not send him/her to school. Instead, take him/her to the doctor. Your doctor will recommend a course of treatment and will determine when it is appropriate to send your child back to school.

As a precautionary measure, our classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned. We continue to monitor the situation at school; if additional actions to control the spread of varicella among pupils become necessary, we will notify parents.

If you have general concerns or questions about varicella, please contact your local health department. If you have specific concerns or questions about your child's health, contact your health care provider.

Sincerely,

Neil Burti
Principal, Bret Harte Elementary School