



# Birches First School

**Believe, Grow, Succeed ...**  
**...to be the best 'me' I can be.**

Dear Parents,

30<sup>th</sup> December 2021

We have been informed by a parent that their children have had threadworm during the holidays.

This letter is to give guidance in what to look out for and to reassure you that this infection is not serious but, medical guidance should be sought if you suspect that your child is suffering from them as it is very contagious.

[Please click here to access the page on Threadworm.](#)

As this advice tells us, simple hygiene steps are needed to keep this at bay and it is not a reason for pupils to stay off school.

**Threadworms are a very common problem, particularly in children.** It is estimated that half of all children below the age of 10 get threadworm at some time, but not all will have the 'itching' symptoms

## **What are threadworms?**

Threadworms live in the bowel and around the bottom. They are tiny white worms about half an inch long that look like threads of cotton.

## **Are threadworms harmful?**

Threadworms are generally harmless. They can cause irritation around the bottom, which can be distressing. Threadworms are easily treated.

## **What are the signs of threadworms?**

The most common sign is scratching around the bottom, particularly at night. This may be associated with disturbed sleep and irritability. The threadworms may be seen in the stools and around the bottom. Some children show no symptoms at all.

## **How do you get threadworms?**

Threadworm eggs may be found in house dust, they stick to clothing, carpets, towels and bed linen; they can also be picked up in garden soil, on unwashed vegetables and salads or from contact with someone who already has worms. Because the eggs are small and so widespread it is easy for them to be swallowed.

When swallowed the eggs pass into the bowel where they hatch into worms. The female threadworm lays her eggs at night around the bottom which causes the itching. Bottom scratching means eggs stick under the fingernails which can then be transferred to the mouth by nail biting. Eggs can be spread to other members of the family by direct contact or via food, towels and bed linen.

## **What should I do if I suspect threadworms?**

There is no reason to keep a child off school or nursery as long as the child is treated and the general hygiene measures outlined below are followed. Effective treatment is available from the pharmacist. It is important to treat the whole family if one person develops symptoms.

**How can I prevent threadworm?**

Keep children's nails short

Remind children not to bite nails or suck fingers

Ensure your child wears pyjamas or underpants in bed to prevent scratching

Bathe daily (shower), preferably in the morning, washing thoroughly around the bottom, and keep separate towels for each family member

Change clothes and bed linen regularly

Make sure **everyone** in the family is treated at the same time

Wash hands after each visit to the toilet, before eating and before handling food

Clean the toilet seat, toilet handle and door handle regularly

Vacuum and dust bedrooms thoroughly

Hopefully we may break the cycle before coming back to school.

Remember threadworms are very common and easily treated. If you would like any further information, please contact us.

Best wishes

S Varricchione  
Headteacher