



Date: 29th January 2024

Think MEASLES

Dear Parent or Carer,

As you may have seen in the news recently, the number of measles cases is increasing across the country. Measles is a serious illness, with one in five children who get the disease having to be admitted to hospital for treatment, so if you or your child have not had your MMR jab, it is vital you come forward.

A new national NHS measles catch up campaign is being launched to contact all parents of children aged from six to 11 years contacted encouraging them to make an appointment with their child's GP practice for their missed MMR vaccine.

Having both measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccinations is the best way of protecting your child, family and community from measles. MMR vaccination is given at one year of age, and at 3 years 4 months by your GP. **If you are unsure if your child has had both vaccinations, please call your GP to confirm or to book an appointment. Older children and adults who have not had two doses of MMR can also ask their GP surgery for a vaccination appointment.**

The initial symptoms of measles:

- Resemble a cold with runny nose, cough and a slight fever
- Eyes become red and sensitive to light

As the illness progresses, children may develop:

- A high fever
- A raised red rash that usually begins on the face and spreads downwards to the neck, trunk, arms, legs and feet
- Small white spots inside the cheeks and lips

For some people, measles can be very serious if it spreads to other parts of the body, such as the lungs and the brain. Problems can include pneumonia, meningitis and seizures (fits).

If you think your child may have measles:

- Call your GP or NHS111 – **do not attend your GP practice or any other healthcare setting (e.g. A&E) unless told to do so as measles spreads very easily.**
- Avoid close contact with babies, pregnant women and anyone with a weakened immune system. These people are at increased risk of severe disease from measles.
- Stay off nursery, school or college for at least 4 days from when the rash appears.

For more information about measles, please visit
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Abdul Razaq - Director of Public Health

