

Public Health team
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Dear Parent / Carer

You may have seen in the media that the UK Health Security Agency have declared a national Measles incident following an extensive outbreak in London and the Midlands. Further cases of infection have now been reported across the country, including in Greater Manchester.

Measles is extremely infectious and easily spreads to people who have no immunity. The illness can be serious. The best way to prevent measles is through vaccination (2 doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine).

What is measles?

Measles is a disease which spreads very easily. People with measles can get a cough, runny nose, rash, and fever. Measles can be serious, particularly for people whose immune system is not working normally, as well as unvaccinated infants and pregnant women. In some people it can cause complications including ear infections, chest infections, and pneumonia. In very rare cases, some people who get measles can develop serious complications, which can be fatal.

How do you catch measles?

The measles virus lives in the nose and throat of infected people. A person with measles can infect other people from 4 days before their rash appears until four days after the rash appeared.

Most older children and adults are immune to measles – either because they had measles as a child or because they have been vaccinated – and so are unlikely to catch measles.

How do you prevent measles?

Measles can be prevented by 2 doses of a safe and highly effective vaccine.

All children and adults born after 1970 should receive **2 doses** of the MMR vaccination. This is part of the UK routine immunisation schedule (dose 1 typically given at 13 months of age; dose 2 at 40 months of age, before the child starts school).

The MMR vaccine can also be given to older children, teenagers, and adults if they have missed out on vaccination. **If you / your child have not had 2 doses of MMR, contact your doctor to discuss vaccination.**

What if you become unwell?

If you or your child become unwell and think it could be measles:

- Seek medical advice – **call** your GP / NHS walk in centre / NHS 111 for advice
- **It is important to inform the GP / walk-in centre before attending so that you can be seen in a separate area to prevent spread to other patients.**

- Do not go to school, nursery or work for the four days after the rash first appeared
- Limit your contact with other people and avoid those who:
 - are pregnant
 - are under 12 months old or have not had the MMR vaccine
 - have a weakened immune system
- Inform your school or employer

Further information can be found on the NHS website at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

Kind regards



Rebecca Fletcher
Director of Public Health



Matt Bulmer
**Director of Education,
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