

27 February 2024

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## **Measles and MMR Vaccination**

Dear Parents and Carers

Measles cases are on the rise nationally and we want to make sure we protect as many people as we can living in Wakefield.

There have been recent measles outbreaks in London and the West Midlands which have been widely reported in the news. The number of confirmed measles cases in other parts of England has also been increasing, including in West Yorkshire.

Measles spreads very easily among those who are unvaccinated, especially in schools. For some people it can cause serious health problems and they may need care in hospital.

It's important to get vaccinated as it's the best protection against getting measles and being unwell. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is one of the routine childhood vaccinations, so most children are already vaccinated against measles.

We are calling on all our parents and guardians to make sure their children are up to date with their 2 MMR doses. To see if your child is up to date with their MMR vaccines, check your child's personal child health record (PCHR), known as the Red Book or contact your GP practice.

Normally the 1st MMR is given at 12 months and the 2nd MMR around 3 years 4 months old.

It is never too late to catch up. The MMR vaccine is free on the NHS, whatever your age. If anyone has missed one or both doses of the MMR vaccine, contact your GP practice to book an appointment.

### **What are the symptoms of measles?**

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth. You can find out more on the NHS West Yorkshire Healthier Together website ([wyhealthiertogether.nhs.uk](http://wyhealthiertogether.nhs.uk))

### **What should you do if you think your child has measles?**

Measles is a virus which spreads very easily from person to person, so anyone with symptoms is advised to stay at home and phone their GP or NHS 111 for advice, rather than visiting the surgery or A&E, to prevent the illness spreading further.

Don't go to the GP or any other healthcare setting without calling ahead first.

**If your child has received both doses of the MMR vaccine, they are unlikely to have the virus.**

If your child has been diagnosed with measles by a doctor, they should stay off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears.

They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.

### **Is the MMR vaccine safe?**

The MMR vaccine is very safe. Many studies have taken place to look at the safety and effectiveness of the MMR vaccine and it has been used safely across the world for at least 36 years. Before vaccines can be used, they must be thoroughly tested for safety.

Most side effects are mild and do not last long. It's important to remember that the possible complications of infectious conditions, such as measles, mumps and rubella, are much more serious.

For more information on the MMR vaccine, please visit the NHS website ([www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine)).

Yours sincerely



Lisa Binks  
Chief Operating Officer