



North Westminster Federation

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Dear Parents and Staff,

Re: Recent Cases of Measles in Northwest London

In the last few weeks there has been an increase in the number of measles cases in North West London. I want to make sure you are aware of the signs and symptoms to look out for and what action to take should you or your child become unwell.

Measles is highly infectious. Spending just 15 minutes with someone infected with measles is enough to catch it. It can cause severe disease in some people, particularly pregnant women, unvaccinated children and people with weakened immune systems.

Symptoms of measles

- high fever
- sore, red, watery eyes
- coughing
- aching and feeling generally unwell
- a blotchy red brown rash, which usually appears after the initial symptoms
- small white spots in the mouth

The rash usually appears a few days after the cold-like symptoms.



The rash starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body.

The spots of the measles rash are sometimes raised and join together to form blotchy patches. They're not usually itchy. The rash looks brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

It's very unlikely to be measles if the child has had both doses of the MMR vaccine or they have had had measles before.

What to do if you think you or your child has measles

If you think you or your child has measles:

- Stay away from school, nursery or group activities with others.
- Telephone your GP or call NHS 111. To prevent further spread of infection please do not visit the GP surgery or A&E in person unless advised to do so.
- People who have symptoms should also especially try to stay away from vulnerable people such as babies, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems.
- People who have not been fully vaccinated with MMR vaccine and have been in close contact with a measles case may be asked to stay away from work or school for **up to 21 days** to prevent the further spread of infection.

Preventing measles

You can protect yourself or your child against measles by having 2 doses of the combined [MMR vaccine](#) for mumps, measles and rubella. The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective.

Children are usually offered the first dose of MMR when they are about 13 months old and a second dose at 3 years and 4 months. It's not too late to catch up if you or your child have not yet had the MMR vaccine. Contact your GP practice to check and arrange a vaccination appointment.

There are two different MMR vaccines - Vaxpro and Priorix. Vaxpro contains gelatine but Priorix does not. Most healthcare providers in London will be using Priorix but you can ask your health care provider to confirm. The school immunisation team only use Priorix.

Where can I find more information?

The following NHS websites have useful information on measles, MMR vaccines and vaccines in general:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/

Or you can call the NHS Northwest London School Immunisations team on: 0203 317 5076

One of our local GPs has also recorded a short [YouTube video on measles](#) and the MMR vaccine which you can watch by scanning the QR code:



Once again, I encourage you to check in your child's "Red Book" (Personal Child Health Record), or with your GP, to see that you and your children are up to date with your two MMR vaccinations.

Yours faithfully,
Aaron Sumner
Executive Headteacher