



LA Education leads  
Head Teachers  
Managers of community child care settings

09 June 2019

Dear Colleague,

### **Measles in South London**

I am writing to update you about measles in South London and current resources available to you.

Since the 1<sup>st</sup> April this year we have had 45 laboratory confirmed cases of measles reported to the South London Health Protection team. Confirmed cases have been across all ages from under 1 year to over 50 years of age, with 21% in school age children, 18 years or under. A proportion of confirmed cases are linked to (mostly European) travel. There has been one recent outbreak reported in a primary school in Southwark and cases linked to a college in both Lewisham and Lambeth.

Measles is a very infectious viral illness that spreads by coughs and sneezes. The symptoms include fever, sore red eyes and rash. It can be a serious infection for some people. Measles can spread easily between pupils and staff if someone comes into school whilst they are infectious. People with measles are infectious from four days before, until four full days after the rash so they can pass measles on BEFORE they get the rash.

We would be grateful if you would consider the following:

#### **1. Minimise spread to children and their families**

- Please raise awareness of measles amongst your team
- Place posters about measles around your nursery/school
- Request parents seek advice from their family doctor should their child develop a rash illness; to telephone ahead before attending general practice, Urgent Care Centres or the Emergency Department and to report to reception on arrival
- If measles is suspected to advise exclusion from school or workplace for 4 full days post onset of rash.

## 2. Urgent notification

Please contact us in the Health Protection team as soon as you become aware of a suspected case. We can help with the risk assessment of vulnerable contacts in the school/nursery (infants, pregnant women and immunocompromised patients).

## 3. Staff safety

Protection of staff is especially important because of their ability to transmit measles to vulnerable children and staff. Evidence of protection includes documentation of having received 2 doses of MMR or a positive antibody test for measles.

## 4. Reduce the number of susceptible people in your school/nursery population

MMR remains the most effective way to protect against measles. Please ensure you encourage your parents/children have make sure they have completed the 2-dose course:

- MMR1 is given at 12 months of age and MMR 2 from 18 months or pre-school from 3 years and four months of age.
- Children and adults over 3 years, 4 months who do not have 2 recorded doses of MMR vaccine remain eligible to receive 2 doses.
- There is no upper age limit to offering MMR vaccine.

The vaccinations for children and staff are available at their GP practices.

## 5. Public exams

**Measles can be very disruptive for pupils during exam periods and special arrangements will be needed when there are measles cases in the school for both cases and close contacts who are non-immune.** Please contact us if you have any queries or concerns.

## 6. Resources:

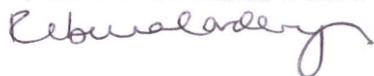
There are a host of materials free to order and suitable for school and nursery settings:

- Posters and leaflets for use by health professionals and community engagement groups (translated into English, Romanian, Arabic, Spanish and Czech)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak>
- MMR for all leaflets in English, Polish, Romanian and Somali available at  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mmr-for-all-general-leaflet>
- Department of Health measles resources, free to order / download available at  
[www.orderline.dh.gov.uk](http://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk)

2901027	Measles: don't let your child catch it flyer (for schools)
2900430	Measles: don't let you child catch it poster
3205760	Think measles: patient leaflet for young people

You may wish to direct your staff and parents to further information on the NHS Choices website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>



*Sent by email*

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