

Who this pack is for

This pack provides instructions on the actions required when managing a possible or confirmed measles infection in education and childcare settings. It outlines the key information that should be gathered, and the control measures needed to limit spread of the infection.

Key Information

Measles is a serious infection that can spread very easily and quickly, especially in education and childcare settings. It is more likely to spread where there are people who have not had two doses of the MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) vaccination.

While most people will recover within a few days, some will develop a more serious illness. People most at risk of severe infection are **infants under 12 months, unvaccinated pregnant women, and individuals who are immunosuppressed.**

The **MMR vaccination** is safe and effective. It is the only way to provide maximum protection against the measles infection.

1. Contact the West Midlands Health Protection Team (HPT) 0344 225 3560 option 2 if:

- you are made aware of **any likely or confirmed cases of measles among people who have attended your setting, who have been diagnosed by a doctor or another healthcare professional**
- **a child or staff member has been told they have been in contact with someone with measles but do not have symptoms themselves**

The HPT is your primary point of contact and can provide guidance on risk assessment, exclusion and vaccination.

When you call the HPT, please try to provide the following information which will help them to provide the most appropriate guidance:

- State clearly if you are calling about a **person with symptoms** or a person without symptoms but has **been in contact with someone with measles.**
- For people who have been in contact with someone with measles, provide details on the nature of their exposure (e.g., date, time, location, and the name of the infected person they were in contact with).
- For people with symptoms, please provide information on any people who have had contact with them in your setting, and are considered high-risk, including:
 - People who are **immunosuppressed** (either staff or students).
 - Unvaccinated **pregnant** women (staff members).
 - **Infants** younger than 12 months
- For all individuals concerned, please provide the following information:
 - Name
 - Date of Birth
 - Contact details (telephone)
 - Staff or student
 - Class(es) and year group
 - The date they last attended the setting

- Please provide additional information on the type of setting (nursery, primary school, secondary school) and approximate size (total number of students/staff).

2 Exclusion

- Confirmed and likely cases should be excluded from the education or childcare setting while they are likely to be infectious, 4 days before they develop a rash to 4 full days after they develop the rash (onset date of rash is day 0) and they are fully recovered).
- If a child or member of staff has not been fully vaccinated against measles and is a close contact of a measles case, for instance a sibling, the HPT may advise that the child not come to school for a number of days to reduce the spread of measles. The number of days can vary depending on the circumstances. They will only do this in certain situations, following an individual risk assessment, and will work with the school to agree the best course of action.

3. Communication

Education and childcare settings can proactively communicate public health messages to limit the spread of infections. This includes reinforcing basic infection control measures, particularly good **hand hygiene** (frequent hand washing with soap and water) and encouraging uptake of the MMR vaccine to provide the best protection against measles.

Following a discussion with the HPT, schools may additionally be asked to send communications to parents of children who require exclusion. UKHSA may be able to provide template letters for communication with staff, parents and children where exclusion is recommended.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Schools are Expected To...

- Follow guidance from the HPT regarding control measures and exclusions
- Inform the HPT of suspected or confirmed measles infections
- Provide accurate and timely information, including contact lists and details of any vulnerable individuals for risk assessment
- Manage communications with staff, parents and students. In some instances, the HPT may be able to provide template letters.
- Promote key control measures, including hygiene and vaccination

Schools are NOT Expected To...

- **Provide clinical or medical advice.** Please refer all clinical questions on the symptoms and treatment of measles to the individual's GP or NHS111.
- **Diagnose or confirm cases.** The setting should not confirm a diagnosis or infection, this is the responsibility of the NHS and confirmed by the HPT.
- **Decide long-term exclusion,** or exclusion of people who have had contact with someone with measles without consultation with the HPT. Immediate exclusion of people with measles symptoms is the only exception.

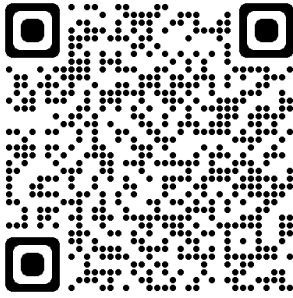
Further Information

For more detailed, trusted information about measles and the MMR vaccine, please refer to the following NHS resources:

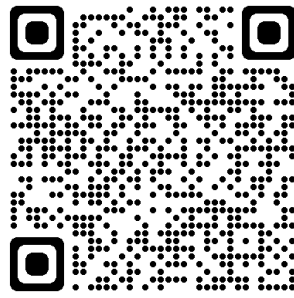
Measles:
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles>

MMR:
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles>

Or scan the QR code:



Or scan the QR code:



Measles factsheet

What measles is

Measles infection is caused by a virus, and spreads between people very easily. Once symptoms start, people can become unwell quickly. You can get measles at any age, but it is often young children who catch it.

How measles spreads

You can catch measles through close contact with someone who has measles. This could be from the air when they cough or sneeze, or by touching things that someone with measles has coughed or sneezed on. Measles spreads very easily in households and in other places where people mix closely together.

You can be protected from catching measles if you have had 2 doses of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine, or if you have had the infection before.

A person with measles can spread the infection in the 4 days before they get the rash until 4 days after they develop their rash.

Symptoms of measles

Symptoms of measles usually start between 10 and 12 days after catching the infection. Sometimes it can take up to 21 days for any symptoms to appear.

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms. The first symptoms of measles include:

- a high temperature
- a runny or blocked nose
- sneezing
- a cough
- red, sore, watery eyes

Small white spots may appear inside the cheeks and on the back of the lips a few days later. These spots usually last a few days.

A rash usually appears 2 to 4 days after the cold-like symptoms started. The rash starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body.

The spots of the measles rash can sometimes be raised. They may join to form blotchy patches. They are not usually itchy.

The rash looks brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

How serious is measles?

Around 1 in 15 people with measles can become seriously unwell. Younger children, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to become seriously unwell.

The more serious complications of measles can include:

- ear infections

- lung infection (pneumonia)
- diarrhoea
- dehydration
- fits (which are less common)

Measles infection during pregnancy can result in the loss or early birth of the baby.

Preventing measles

Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent measles.

The vaccine is usually given to children in two doses. The first dose is given to children aged 12 months old, and the second dose is given after they are 3 years and 4 months old.

If your child is identified as a close contact of someone with measles, sometimes your doctor may recommend the MMR vaccine is given earlier than these scheduled doses. If a dose is given to an infant aged under 12 months then the usual 2 doses of MMR still need to be given at the usual times (with a minimum of 1 month gap between any doses).

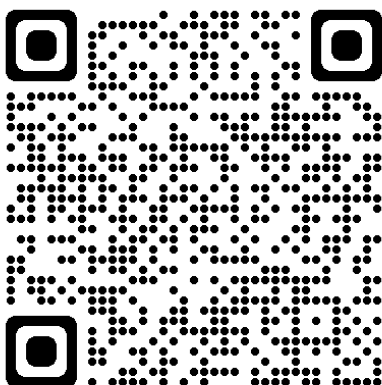
If someone has missed a dose or are unsure if they have had any vaccinations, the vaccine can be given at any age. Parents and guardians can check their child's red book for their vaccination records.

Pregnant women or people with weakened immune systems should not have the vaccine. If they think they have had contact with someone with measles they should speak to their GP or midwife for further advice.

For more information on MMR vaccinations visit:

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

Or scan the QR code:



Staying away from other people if you are unwell with measles

A person with measles can spread the infection in the 4 days before they get the rash. Once a person has the rash, they can still spread the infection for another 4 days.

If you have been told by a healthcare professional that you might have measles, you should stay away from childcare, school or work for at least 4 days from when your rash first appeared. You can return to your normal activities after 4 days if you feel well and you no longer have a temperature.

Treatments for people with measles

Measles usually starts to get better in about a week.

It can help to rest and drink plenty of fluids, such as water, to avoid dehydration.

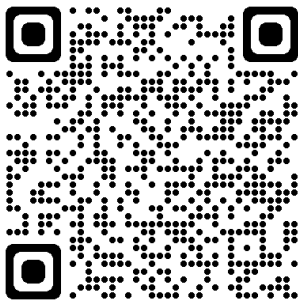
Measles can sometimes cause other illnesses. You may be given antibiotics to treat them.

If you have been told by a healthcare professional that you might have measles and think that you or your child are developing more serious health effects, you should contact your GP.

Further information on measles is available at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles>

Or scan the QR code:



Further information and resources

The following resources will remain up to date and should be used as the point of reference.

Education setting resources

- [Health protection in education and childcare settings](#)
- [A table explaining exclusion period of cases for different childhood infections](#)
- Hand hygiene [resources](#) for education settings
- [Measles - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Measles and rubella elimination UK strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) document with helpful case studies at local authority level that highlight some of the issues and challenges faced by under-vaccinated communities.

Guides on immunisation for children and young people

- Guide to [Immunisations at one year of age - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) in English. Quick guide translated and accessible versions are available to order at [Home - Health Publications](#).
- The MMR is featured in the new version of the [Pre-school vaccinations: guide to vaccinations from 2 to 5 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Paper copies available in English now.
- And also, in the [Immunisations for young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) guide and leaflet. Paper copies available in English now.

Blogs:

[What to do if you think your child has measles and when to keep them off school - The Department for Education \(blog.gov.uk\)](#) (January 2024)

[Ensuring every child gets the best start in life – starting with vaccine protection - UK Health Security Agency \(blog.gov.uk\)](#) (August 2021)

Social media banners:

MMR for all the family social media/WhatsApp friendly banners: [Measles and MMR social media banners](#).

‘Measles is circulating and it is serious’ social media banner: <https://publichealthengland-immunisati.app.box.com/s/xasjm2ipgyhfsjqppdpitut43evjsk2b>

MMR second dose social banner for children and young people who missed their pre-school MMR: <https://publichealthengland-immunisati.app.box.com/s/br6b462d41exi2hhs5fe0xpds3xlgyx1>

Videos on routine MMR vaccination

[Search Publications - Health Publications](#).

Print ready materials

UKHSA have developed the following:

Leaflet on measles (in range of languages)

English versions of the [Measles: information for schools and healthcare centres - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) leaflet and downloadable versions in [Afrikaans](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Cantonese](#), [Chinese](#)

[\(simplified\)](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Hebrew](#), [Hindi](#), [Italian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Polish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Romani](#), [Romanian](#), [Spanish](#), [Swahili](#), [Tagalog](#), [Tamil](#), [Turkish](#), [Ukrainian](#) and [Urdu](#).

MMR Leaflet

'MMR for all' leaflet now available to order in [English](#), [Bengali](#), [Polish](#), [Romanian](#), [Somali](#), [Ukrainian](#) and [Yoruba](#).

Think Measles patient leaflet

[Think Measles! \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Think Measles poster for young people

[Think measles: patient leaflet for young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Think measles: poster about measles in young people - GOV.UK.\(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Measles: protect yourself, protect others - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Resources for education settings

[Immunisations: resources for nurseries and schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), including primary, secondary school and nursery reminder posters and postcards to send to parents and posters paper copies. Available to order now to get prepare.

Measles: Don't let your child catch it poster (for schools)

The 'Measles: don't let your child catch it' poster for schools is available to download in [English](#), as well as [translated versions](#) in Afrikaans, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Chinese, French, Italian, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romani, Romanian, Swahili, Spanish, Turkish, Tagalog, Tamil, Ukrainian and Urdu.

Measles: Don't let your child catch it poster

The 'Measles: don't let your child catch it' poster for any health or education setting is available in [English](#).

Measles outbreak simple text leaflet

Simple text posters and leaflets for use by health professionals and community engagement groups to raise awareness of measles when there is a local outbreak. The leaflet is available in [English](#), [Dari](#), [Farsi](#), [Pashto](#), [Polish](#), [Romanian](#) and [Ukrainian](#).

Measles outbreak simple text poster

The poster is available to download in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Czech](#), [Spanish](#) and [Romanian](#).