



Protecting and improving the nation's health

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To: Parents/Carers of pupils at Croydon Schools

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Measles in Croydon – January 2020
Check your children are protected
Get them vaccinated as soon as possible at their GP

Measles is currently circulating in South London mainly in school age children. There have been several cases reported in Croydon recently.

MMR vaccination is the best way to protect your children. Measles can be prevented by having the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. It's safe and effective. Children are given their first dose at one year and their second dose from age 3 years 4 months (pre-school).

Check your child's red book now and ensure you child has had two doses of the MMR vaccine. If they have not had **2 doses of the MMR vaccine** or you are unsure, speak to your GP or practice nurse. Please do this **as soon as possible** to ensure they are vaccinated.

What is measles?

- It is a viral infection that anyone can catch; it is one of the most infectious diseases we know
- It spreads easily between people through coughing and sneezing
- It usually starts with a runny nose, red eyes, cough and temperature. A rash follows, usually about four days after the other symptoms, and lasts for up to seven days
- Complications are common including severe cough and breathing difficulties, ear, eye and lung infections. On rare occasions, measles can lead to serious and potentially life-threatening complications

- It can be more serious for children and adults with poor immune systems, pregnant women and infants under 1 year old. If you think your child may have measles keep them away from babies, pregnant women and those with poor immune systems e.g. those on large doses of steroids or cancer treatment
- A person with measles is infectious for about 8 days (from 4 days BEFORE the rash appears to 4 days afterwards) so any child with suspected measles should be kept off school for 4 full days after the rash starts
- If one of your children has measles then brothers and sisters who have not had MMR are very likely to get it. They may need to be excluded from school for 21 days (the incubation period) to protect the rest of the school from measles

Further Information

Further information about measles and MMR vaccination is on the NHS website:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Measles/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Yours faithfully,

Miranda Mindlin

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