

Date: July 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

## Protect your children from Measles and Polio

### Measles

Recently, there has been a steady increase in measles cases across London in children and young people who are not fully vaccinated. The UK Health Security Agency now estimate the likelihood of a measles outbreak in London to be high.

Measles is a highly infectious disease that spreads very easily from person to person and can cause serious health problems, such as ear and chest infections, fits, diarrhoea, damage to the brain and death. A child with measles will infect almost all unprotected children they come in contact with.

Two doses of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine (which are usually administered by the age of 5) offers 99% life-long protection and helps to reduce further spread of the infection in the community through herd immunity. Measles is not just a problem posed to young children, it's particularly important that teenagers and adults are also fully protected by vaccinations.

### Polio

Polio is a serious disease which can cause severe illness and paralysis in children. Following recent detection of polio virus in the sewage in London, it is important that children who are not fully protected are vaccinated as soon as possible to reduce their risk of getting the disease.

The best way to prevent polio is to check your child is up to date with vaccinations. Children need to have had 5 vaccinations to be fully protected, and vaccinations are usually given from 8 weeks to 14 years old.

### These vaccines are safe and effective

These vaccinations have been administered for decades and are considered safe and effective at preventing illness. Many studies have taken place to look at the safety and effectiveness of the MMR vaccine. The evidence is clear that there is no link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

### How to check if your child is up to date and/or get your child vaccinated

It's vital that all children and young people catch up on any missed vaccinations. Please check your child is up to date with their MMR and Polio vaccinations before the school holidays. It is important to ensure your child is protected from these diseases as we enter

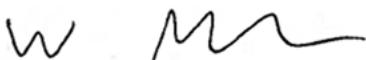
the school holiday period where children and families are likely to mix more regularly or may be travelling to other countries overseas.

- Check your child's red book or you can contact your GP surgery to check if your child is up to date for vaccinations against these two diseases. If your child is not fully protected, schedule to have the vaccination as soon as possible.
- If your child is in Primary or Secondary school, you can book into a clinic online with the school-aged immunisations provider Vaccination UK:  
<https://www.schoolvaccination.uk/catch-up-clinics/polio-mmr-catch-up-clinics>  
Alternatively, you can book an appointment by calling 0208 017 4292.

### Other useful information

- Washing your/your children's hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser regularly throughout the also helps you avoid catching and spreading viruses.
- As a parent/adult, if you are unsure/not protected against Polio & Measles, check with your GP. **It's never too late to get vaccinated!**
- For further information about the Polio and Measles infections, please check out the information below:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/polio/>
- For further information about the vaccines schedule:  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them)

Kind regards,



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