**Measles Action Card: Suspected Measles – Schools**

**What is measles?**

Measles is a very infectious virus that spreads quickly if people have not had the MMR immunisations. It can cause severe illness, especially in certain at-risk groups including babies and small children, pregnant women, and people with weak immunity. Complications could mean hospitalisation, permanent disability, and in rare cases, it can even cause death.

**How do you protect against measles?**

The best protection against measles for children and adults is two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) immunisation for maximum protection. The first dose of MMR is given soon after the first birthday. A second dose is normally given at 3 years and 4 months, However, children born on or after 1 July 2024 will move to a new MMR schedule, with the first dose remaining at 12 months, and the second dose moving from 3 years 4 months to 18 months. Details can be found here: [Annexe C: information and resources to support implementation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-routine-childhood-schedule-letter/annexe-c-information-and-resources-to-support-implementation)

A version of the MMR immunisation is available which does NOT contain pork ingredients. It is called Priorix.

**For parents to get their child immunised, they should call their GP practice who will be able to book an immunisation appointments.**

**What are the symptoms of measles?**

* cold-like symptoms such as runny or blocked nose, sneezing and cough
* red, sore watery eyes
* high temperature (fever) which may reach around 40OC / 104OF (high temperatures can lead to febrile seizures)
* a non-itchy, red-brown rash usually appears 3-5 days after symptoms begin (sometimes starts around the ears before spreading to rest of the body), spots may be raised and join to form blotchy patches – which may be harder to see on darker skin tones



**Image 1: Examples of measles rash on children with darker skin tone.**

**What do I do if a child has suspected measles?**

Please advise parents/guardians that they should not bring their children into school if they have symptoms of measles.

Please advise parents NOT to go to their GP practice or any other healthcare provider – instead, they should phone their GP for advice and describe the symptoms and say it could be measles.

If staff or children attenders start to experience symptoms of measles, they should stay at home for a full 4 days after the rash begins.If health care is needed(from a hospital, GP practice, pharmacy, walk-in centre, or similar), call ahead and say that measles is suspected. This is so that the setting can reduce the risk of measles spreading to other people, especially other people who may have more severe complications.

If staff or school attenders are not fully protected against measles (two doses of MMR), the MMR immunisation can be given at any age. Individuals should contact their GP surgery to arrange immunisation. It is never too late to get immunised or top-up doses, and this is especially important when measles is circulating.

Schools can call the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA for advice and guidance (see contact details below). Advice is available for staff on the [UKHSA website](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-dont-let-your-child-catch-it-flyer-for-schools/measles-information-for-schools-and-healthcare-centres#further-information) and for parents and staff on the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/), from NHS 111 and from the person’s GP.



**Preventing and controlling infections**

Please follow UKHSA guidance. Use this QR code or go to [national measles guidelines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-measles-guidelines) and go to page 38.

**Measles is a notifiable disease.**

If in doubt, follow the [**‘**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62b9b283e90e0721cfbe63a3/UKHSA-12330-measles-leaflet-2022.pdf)[Think measles guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-measles-patient-leaflet-for-young-people)[**’**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62b9b283e90e0721cfbe63a3/UKHSA-12330-measles-leaflet-2022.pdf) and ensure that you report a suspected case to the **UKHSA West Midlands Health Protection Team:**

**Call:** 0344 225 3560 (option 2) **Email:** Westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk

If your setting needs any further support, UKHSA will work with Public Health teams in Birmingham City Council’s and Solihul Council and with the local NHS.

**Contact Information:**

* To book the immunisation, please phone your GP clinic to make an appointment.
* If you suspect you or your child has measles, please phone your GP surgery in advance for advice. If you cannot contact your GP, please contact NHS 111. **Do not go to a healthcare setting without calling.**
* If you require healthcare from a hospital, GP practice, pharmacy, walk-in centre, or similar, **call ahead, please do not just turn up.**
* To report a case of measles to public health authorities, Call: 0344 225 3560 (option 2) or Email: Westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk
* For further information on measles, call 111 or use the [NHS website.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/)