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To: Parent or Guardian

Direct Line: 01253 476367

Email: arif.rajpura@blackpool.gov.uk

Dear Parent or Guardian

You may be aware through social media or the news that there has been a recent increase in measles cases in England. This letter advises you on how to protect your child and others.

Measles can cause very serious illness.

Measles usually causes a runny nose, red eyes, cough, high temperature and rash. It can also cause complications, including ear infections, diarrhoea, pneumonia and convulsions. It is more likely to be serious in pregnant women, people whose immunity is not working properly and babies under a year of age. Very serious complications, such as inflammation of the brain (encephalitis), are rare but can be fatal¹.

Measles spreads very easily.

Measles is one of the most infectious diseases known. You can catch measles if you spend 15 minutes with someone with the disease. The measles virus is spread through the air and in tiny droplets that come out of the nose and mouth of an infected person.

Vaccination can protect your child.

MMR vaccine provides safe and effective protection against measles, mumps and rubella

MMR vaccine has been shown worldwide to be a safe and effective way of preventing measles. It can protect your child and others against measles infection and its serious consequences.

What you can do now

There are some simple checks and actions for you to take:

1. Check your red book to see if your child has had their vaccination, the first of which would have been soon after their 1st birthday and a second dose at around 3 years and 4 months of MMR vaccination.
2. If your child has had both of their doses of MMR, that is brilliant; thank you for helping protect your child from measles.
3. If you check your record and they have not had either dose, we strongly recommend that you arrange for your child to have their MMR as soon as possible. Please be reassured that our GPs across Blackpool know about the rise in measles cases and will find an appointment for you.
4. If you check your record and find your child has only had their first dose, again call your GP, and they will find an appointment for you as two doses of MMR vaccine offer the best way to protect your child against measles, mumps and rubella.

Thank you in advance for taking these simple actions to help us protect all of our children across Blackpool.

¹ Further information on measles can be found at [Measles - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely



Dr Arif Rajpura
Director of Public Health for Blackpool



Directorate of Public Health

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health, PO Box 4, Blackpool FY1 1NA

Contact

T: 01253 476367
www.blackpool.gov.uk