

Colin Cox  
Director of Public Health  
Cumbria County Council  
Cumbria House  
107-117 Botchergate  
Carlisle  
CA1 1RZ

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**To all Head Teachers, Colleges, Nursery Managers and Childminders**

Dear Colleague,

**Measles Outbreaks**

Since the beginning of 2018 there have been over 400 confirmed cases of measles in England, and two recently confirmed cases in Cumbria. The cases are associated with importation from Europe that has led to some spread in local populations, particularly young people and adults.

I am writing to you to provide some information that you may find useful and to ask for your support in sharing the messages overleaf with parents and guardians of children in your care.

Measles is highly infectious and you should exclude any child with suspected measles for five days after onset of rash.

Staff members can get the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine from their GP if they require it. MMR can be given to adults of any age.

Posters are available to display if required and can be found on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak>

There are also currently several large measles outbreaks across Europe, meaning a continuous risk of imported cases. This is particularly important for families travelling to these areas over the holiday period, or schools who have arranged trips to these areas. Please follow the link below to access a factsheet for further information relating to school trips:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-and-school-trips-travel-advice-for-schools>

If you have any queries regarding local immunisation arrangements please contact your local screening and immunisation team: [england.lancashiresit@nhs.net](mailto:england.lancashiresit@nhs.net) (Lancashire & South Cumbria), [england.cane.screeningimms@nhs.net](mailto:england.cane.screeningimms@nhs.net) (North Cumbria).

If you would like more information about measles, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>.

Thank you in anticipation for your support.

Yours faithfully



Colin Cox  
Director of Public Health

## Message for Parents/Carers and Guardians

There are currently outbreaks of measles in several areas of the UK affecting unimmunised children and young adults, including two recent cases in Cumbria. There are also large outbreaks in several countries across Europe, including holiday destinations. Measles is highly infectious. It can cause serious illness and can sometimes be fatal. Vaccination with two doses of MMR is the safest way to protect children and young people.

The first MMR vaccine is given to toddlers at the age of 13 months and the second vaccine at around 3 years and 4 months before your child goes to school. MMR can be given to older children, teenagers and young adults if they missed their injections when they were younger. Many of you will still have your Personal Child Health Record (Red Book) which should have a record of your child's MMR vaccines. Contact your GP practice if you or your child needs an MMR vaccine. The vaccine is free. If you are not sure if you or your child needs an MMR vaccine, you can contact the GP practice to ask.

Measles is not just an illness that can affect young children. Teenagers, young adults and anyone who has missed their MMR vaccination can get measles. The first signs of measles are fever, cough, runny nose and red sore eyes. After a few days, a spotty rash will appear. It starts on the face and neck before spreading to the rest of the body.

If you think you or your child has measles:

- Ring your GP practice for advice
- Please don't turn up to the surgery, walk in centre or to accident and emergency without calling ahead. The doctor will make special arrangements to see your child so that if your child has got measles they won't pass it on to others.
- Keep people with symptoms of measles away from others to avoid spreading measles, and stay away from school, nursery or work for 5 days after the onset of rash.

If you would like more information, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>