

**Important information from the Director of Public Health**  
Dr Will Maimaris

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**Date: June 2024**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are currently seeing increasing cases of Measles and Whooping cough in Haringey. It is important your child is protected against these highly infectious vaccine-preventable diseases leading up to the school holidays where both regional and international travel, as well as increased social mixing through summer activities, increase the risk of spread.

**I am therefore writing to encourage all parents and guardians to check their children are up to date with their pre-school immunisations (also known as vaccinations) which will help protect your child against Measles and Whooping cough.**

**Current Situation: Measles**

We are continuing to see an increase in Measles circulating in Haringey and London. Your child is up to date with their MMR vaccinations when they have had two vaccinations; one dose of the vaccine when they are 1 year old and another when they're between 3 years and 4 months and 5 years old.

A child with measles will infect almost all unprotected people they come into contact with for 15 minutes or more. Measles can lead to complications such as ear and chest infections, fits, diarrhoea, damage to the brain, long term disability or death. It's vital that missed vaccinations are caught up. Measles is not just a problem for young children, anyone whose immunity is weakened, and pregnant women are at increased risk of severe disease if unprotected by vaccination.

Anyone with symptoms that could be measles is advised to stay at home (from work or school and other social activities) and phone their GP or NHS 111 for advice, rather than visiting their GP practice or A&E. This is because measles spreads very quickly and easily and so it is important to try and prevent the illness spreading further.

**Current situation: Whooping cough**

We are also seeing a rise in Whooping cough cases both locally and nationally, particularly in young babies, but also in those in preschool (1-4 years old) and school-aged (5 years and over).

Whooping cough is a bacterial infection of the lungs and breathing tubes. It spreads very easily and can sometimes cause serious problems, and it is important that babies and children are vaccinated against it.

The whooping cough vaccine is routinely given as part of the 6-in-1 vaccine at 8, 12 and 16 weeks. It is also given in their 4-in-1 preschool booster for children aged 3 years and 4 months. Pregnant women should also be vaccinated between 16 and 32 weeks.

#### **These vaccines are safe and effective**

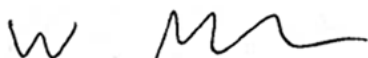
These vaccines have been delivered for decades and many studies demonstrate that they are both safe and effective. The evidence is clear that there is no link between the MMR vaccine and autism. The vaccinations not only protect your children but also help to reduce further spread of the infections in our community.

#### **Please check your child is up to date**

It is important that your child is up to date with all their vaccinations and now is a good time to check before the summer break and their return to school. You can check your child is up to date with all their vaccinations before the summer break by looking at their personal health record (Red Book) or by asking your GP practice. If your child is not up to date, make an appointment for your child to have any missed vaccinations as soon as possible (see details on how to make an appointment below). For many of the vaccines, it is never too late to catch up!

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish your children and you a happy, healthy, Summer and return to school in the Autumn.

Yours Sincerely,



**Dr Will Maimaris,  
Director of Public Health**

## Frequently Asked Questions, Other Advice & Useful Information

### **My child is pre-school aged, how do I get them vaccinated?**

Please call your GP to book an appointment.

### **My child is school-aged, how do I get them vaccinated?**

If your child is in Primary or Secondary school in Haringey, 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>

or <https://www.schoolvaccination.uk/catch-up-clinics>

Alternatively, you can book an appointment by calling 0208 017 4292.

### **Other useful advice & 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. Teach your child to wash hands properly for 20 seconds, use tissues for coughs and sneezes, and stay away from others when sick. Letting in fresh air can also reduce the spread of airborne viruses. The [e-bug resources](#) for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits – and why they are important - to your child or teenager.
- For further information about Measles infections (including symptoms and vaccine information), please check out the information below:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>
- For further information about Whooping cough infections (including symptoms and vaccine information, please check out the information below:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/whooping-cough/>
- For further information about child and school-aged vaccines and 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)