



Tuesday 27th February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Important - Measles Information

You will have heard on the news about a worrying rise in the number of cases of measles across the country, with the West Midlands (including Sandwell) being one of the worst affected areas.

The increase in cases has been driven by a low uptake of the MMR vaccine, making people more susceptible and vulnerable to catching measles. The vaccine is highly effective:

- ✓ 1st dose = 95% effective, increasing to 99% after booster
- ✓ 2 doses provide lifelong immunity

Symptoms of measles can include:

- cold-like symptoms such as runny or blocked nose, sneezing and cough
- red, sore watery eyes
- high temperature (fever) which may reach around 40°C / 104°F
- a non-itchy, red-brown rash usually appears 3-5 days later (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

If you suspect your child may have measles and they have clear symptoms (this will likely only be unvaccinated children), please do not send them into school. Do not attend your GP practice – instead, phone NHS 111 for advice and inform school immediately.

Measles cases in school:

When we have confirmed cases of measles in school, we will report them to the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and seek their advice on what actions to take. Their advice will include:

- The child with measles must stay off school until at least 4 days after the rash begins
- Contacts of cases at higher risk of developing measles (e.g. unvaccinated siblings) being advised to stay off school for the incubation period (total of 21 days after first contact with a confirmed case of measles – contact tracing will confirm dates for this)

I will write to inform parents of children who may have been in close contact with a confirmed case so that you are aware and can keep your child off school if they are unvaccinated at the time.

Confirmed cases in school

So far, we have had two confirmed cases in school:

- A child in Reception last week, however they were not in school at all during the time they were infectious
- A child in Year 3, confirmed on Monday 26th February. I am currently seeking advice from the HPA – **if you have an unvaccinated child in Year 3, please inform school as a matter of urgency so we can inform you if they are a close contact and are at risk.**

Vaccination Clinic in School for Unvaccinated Children

On Wednesday 13th March, there will be a vaccination clinic in school for unvaccinated children – consent forms are being sent home this week to identified families, and I strongly urge parents to complete and return them so that their children are protected against this serious illness. If you received a consent form with your child's name on, please complete and return the form to the school by 5th March to give consent for your child to receive the MMR vaccination.

Please can I ask for your support and vigilance in helping to keep our school community safe at this time. If you are unsure about what actions to take if your child is unwell or you are concerned, please call school and speak with our attendance team who will be happy to support you as best they can.

Yours faithfully



Mr A Dickinson
Head Teacher

