



North East London

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Rising measles cases and catch up vaccinations this summer

Measles cases are rising in London. There is no cure and vaccination is the only protection against becoming seriously unwell. The virus infects the mouth, nose, throat and lungs, then spreads throughout the body, causing severe disease, which can result in complications and even death.

Measles is one of the world's most contagious diseases, spread by close or direct contact with an infected person via coughing or sneezing. One person infected by measles can infect nine out of 10 of their unvaccinated close contacts.

The good news is, if you are vaccinated you are protected. The measles vaccine has been in use for about 60 years, is safe and effective and has reduced cases by 99.9% in the UK. It is usually incorporated with rubella and mumps vaccines in the MMR vaccination.

Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against ill health. Most children in north east London (77%) have had both doses of the MMR vaccine by the age of 5, and three doses of the polio vaccine by age 5 (children get an additional polio dose at age 14). We want to get even closer to the 95% World Health Organisation target so we can stop infectious diseases like measles from spreading and protect as many children as possible.

Staying up to date with your child's vaccines

You can search 'NHS child vaccines' online or visit [nhs.uk/child-vaccines](https://www.nhs.uk/child-vaccines) to see which vaccinations are given when. If you think your child might be behind on their MMR, polio or any other vaccination you can check your child's health record (red book) or contact your GP to see if they are up to date.

Your GP can quickly arrange for you to catch up with vaccinations. If your child had their first vaccinations abroad it is important that they still have routine vaccinations here, and your GP can help arrange that. If you're not registered with a GP, you can register online at <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp> (anyone can register and you don't need ID or proof of address).

Finally, parents of children aged 4 to 11, whose vaccination record says they are behind on polio and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccinations, will be contacted by an organisation called Vaccination UK. They have been employed by the NHS to arrange catch up doses at a local clinic.

Alternatively, you can book one directly by calling 0208 017 4292 or visit here for more information on local catch up clinics: <https://northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/mmr-and-polio-catch-up-vaccinations/> or contact your GP any time.

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