**Measles Action Card: Suspected Measles – Nurseries & Early Years Settings**

**What is measles?**

Measles is a very infectious virus, which spreads quickly if people have not had the MMR vaccine. Two doses of MMR are needed for maximum protection. The first dose of MMR is given soon after the first birthday. A second dose is normally given at 3 years and 4 months. **Priorix** is the version of MMR which does NOT contain pork ingredients.

Measles can cause severe illness, especially in certain at-risk groups including babies and small children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. Complications from measles could include hospitalisation, permanent disability, and in rare cases, it can even cause death. The best protection against measles for children and adults is 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) immunisation.

**To get your child vaccinated, you should call your GP practice who will be able to book in vaccination appointments.**

**What are the symptoms of measles?**

* cold-like symptoms such as runny or blocked nose, sneezing and cough
* red, sore watery eyes
* high temperature (fever) which may reach around 40OC / 104OF (high temperatures can lead to febrile seizures)
* a non-itchy, red-brown rash usually appears 3-5 days after symptoms begin (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.

A person's arm with a rash on their arm

Description automatically generatedA close-up of a baby's back

Description automatically generatedA close-up of a person's back

Description automatically generated**Image 1: Examples of measles rash on children with darker skin tone.**

**What do I do if a child has suspected measles?**

Please advise parents/guardians they should not bring their children into the setting if they have symptoms of measles.

**Children being absent due to illness will not be penalised on absenteeism from records by adhering to Measles guidance.**

Please advise parents NOT to go to their GP practice or any other healthcare provider – instead, they should phone for advice and say it could be measles.

If you start to experience symptoms of measles, you should stay at home for a full 4 days after the rash begins. If you need health care (from a hospital, GP practice, pharmacy, walk-in centre, or similar), call ahead and say that measles is suspected. This is so that steps can be taken by the setting to reduce the risk of measles spreading to other people, especially other people who may have more severe complications. Further information is available by calling NHS 111, or by going to the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/)

If you are not fully protected against measles (two doses of MMR), you can have the MMR immunisation at any age. Contact your GP surgery to arrange immunisation. If you are unsure on your immunisation history, you can still be vaccinated. It is never too late to get immunised or catch-up doses, and this is especially important when measles is circulating.

Suspected measles may cause concern. Advice is available for staff on the [UKHSA website](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-dont-let-your-child-catch-it-flyer-for-schools/measles-information-for-schools-and-healthcare-centres#further-information) and for parents and staff on the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/), from NHS 111, the person’s GP and other healthcare services. (remember to call rather than visit in-person).

**Preventing and controlling infections**

Please follow UKHSA guidance. **USE THIS QR CODE or go to** [**national measles guidelines**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-measles-guidelines) **and go to page 36, and take note of the following:**

* If **pupils or staff** have or are suspected to have measles, they should be off school/ setting for a full **4 days** after the rash begins. Given the high risk of secondary infection following measles, it is advisable to return only after full recovery. Immunosuppressed individuals may be infectious for longer and may not display typical symptoms, and so timings should be adjusted as appropriate in consultation with clinicians managing the case’s immunosuppression.
* If a child is unvaccinated and is a close contact of a measles case, for instance a sibling, we may advise that the child should not come to an early years setting for a number of days to prevent the spread of measles. The number of days can vary depending on the circumstances. This is only done in certain situations, following an individual risk assessment, and it is the setting’s decision on whether to implement our advice. UKHSA will support in the risk assessment and advise on actions that need to be taken.
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**Measles is a notifiable disease – by law it is required to be reported to public health authorities.**

If in doubt, follow the [**‘Think Measles guidance’**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62b9b283e90e0721cfbe63a3/UKHSA-12330-measles-leaflet-2022.pdf) and ensure that you report a suspected case to the **UKHSA West Midlands Health Protection Team:**

**Call:** 0344 225 3560 (option 2) **Email:** Westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk

If your setting needs any further support, UKHSA will work in partnership with Solihull Council’s Public Health team and with the local NHS.

**Contact Information:**

* To book the vaccine, please phone your GP clinic to make an appointment.
* If you suspect you or your child has measles, please phone your GP surgery advice. If you cannot contact your GP, please contact NHS 111. **Do not go to a healthcare setting without calling.**
* If you require healthcare from a hospital, GP practice, pharmacy, walk-in centre, or similar, **call ahead.**
* To report a case of measles to public health authorities, Call: 0344 225 3560 (option 2) or Email: [Westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:Westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk)
* For further information on measles, call 111 or use the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/).

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