



Walsall Council

Adult Social Care, Public Health & Hub

Date 07 March 2024
Ref: NI/bo/kk
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Email: kulvinder.kaur@walsall.gov.uk

Dear parents/guardians,

Re: Measles – Walsall situation

We are writing to update parents/guardians on the current local Measles situation. We are continuing to work closely with the UKHSA West Midlands Health Protection Team, the Black Country Integrated Care Board and wider partners to increase the uptake of MMR vaccinations. Whilst we still have a small number of cases of measles in Walsall, it is recognised to spread very easily.

Measles can be a serious disease, which can result in hospitalisation. It can spread very quickly in communities where people have not had their MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccinations, and particularly in settings such as nurseries, schools or healthcare services.

People in certain at-risk groups, including babies and small children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immunity, are at increased risk of serious illness if they catch measles. In a small number of cases, it can also lead to permanent disability including blindness, deafness, and damage to the brain. Anyone, of any age, who has missed their MMR vaccines can get measles.

The **first signs of measles** are:

- High temperature (fever)
- Cold-like symptoms such as runny or blocked nose, coughing, sneezing
- Red, sore, watery eyes
- A non-itchy, blotchy red brown rash. This usually appears a few days after cold-like symptoms (sometimes starts around the ears before spreading to the rest of the body). The rash can be harder to see on darker skin tones.
- Small white spots appearing inside the cheeks and on the back of lips (for a few days)

A measles case is infectious for four days before any rash appears and for at least four days after the start of the rash.

Anyone with measles symptoms is advised to stay at home and phone their GP practice or NHS 111 for advice.

Important: how to protect you and your family

Now is the time to check if you and your family have had **2 doses of the MMR vaccine**.

- Vaccination is the best protection against measles, and you need **TWO doses of MMR** for maximum protection against measles. It also provides protection against mumps and rubella.
- If you are not sure if you/your child/any family member needs an MMR vaccine, check their Red Book or contact your GP practice to check and/or book a vaccination. **The MMR vaccine is safe, effective and free.**
- If you/your family have **not had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine**, you should **contact your GP to arrange vaccination as soon as possible.**
- For people who do not touch any pork products, **there is a version of the MMR vaccine, Priorix, which has no pork ingredients.** You can request Priorix from your GP.

The MMR vaccine is given as part of the routine childhood immunisation programme:

- **1st dose** should be given just after the child's first birthday.
- **2nd dose** at 3 years 4 months and certainly before children start school full time.

However, **you can have the MMR vaccine at any age.**

The following local GP practices are offering MMR clinics for individuals who were born after 1970 and have not received both doses of the MMR vaccine:

- **Pinfold Health Centre, Bloxwich, WS3 3JP** open from 1.00pm to 4.30pm on Sat 9th March.
- **Broadway Medical Centre, WS1 3HD** open from 10.00am to 1.00pm on Sat 9th March.

Available for pupils or parents who are registered with a participating Walsall-based GP practice.

Appointments should be booked by calling 01922 501 999.

- **Darlaston Family Practice, Darlaston Health centre, Pinfold St WS10 8SY** on Sat 9th March 9-1pm

Available for individuals registered with Kingfisher Berkley, New Invention Health Centre, Modality Darlaston, Stroud, Darlaston Health Centre, Pinfold St, Darlaston Family Practice.

Individuals can call their surgeries to book an appointment.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "N. Inglis".

Nadia Inglis
Interim Director of Public Health
Walsall Council