

# **Please help us to get the little ones protected!!**

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Over the last few years, we have talked a lot about vaccinations and boosters for both covid and flu, however there is an area we must not forget!!

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Around this time last year, I did a blog talking about childhood immunisations, an area which remains strangely low on uptake, both locally and nationally, for reasons that we still don't understand!

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Most people are aware that children are invited for a range of vaccinations against various infectious diseases, that can make our children quite sick, so why are people not coming forward?

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There has in fact been a shocking rise in measles cases across the uk in the past few months.  
Gov.uk has shared some information about this, which I will quote at the end with a link for more for those interested...

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-urged-to-check-children-s-mmr-vaccine-records-following-rise-in-measles-cases>

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There is an immunisation schedule for all children, showing what is recommended at what age.  
It has changed at various intervals over the years, but the nuts and bolts are the same!

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I'll attach a link to the latest version at the end...  
It is a vitally important way of protecting our children from illness such as measles, diphtheria, meningitis c and whooping cough, to name a few.

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We're not quite sure why the uptake is lower than it was a couple of years ago.

We have set clinics each week, and will always try to offer alternative times and perhaps rearrange some clinics to improve access and convenience.

We would always be happy to chat to you if you have questions that need answering. Or you can always speak to the health visitor team.

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If you have not yet booked in for any reason, or if you think your child may have missed a vaccination, or if you would just like to discuss it, please do get in touch and one of our lovely nursing team will hopefully be able to address any concerns you may have.

I will remind you of the important tips about vaccines from [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)....

Vaccines do:

- protect you and your child from many serious and potentially deadly diseases
- protect other people in your community – by helping to stop diseases spreading to people who cannot have vaccines
- undergo rigorous safety testing before being introduced – they're also constantly monitored for side effects after being introduced
- sometimes cause mild side effects that will not last long – some children may feel a bit unwell and have a sore arm for 2 or 3 days
- reduce or even get rid of some diseases – if enough people are vaccinated

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Vaccines DO NOT:

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- do not cause autism – studies have found no evidence of a link between the MMR vaccine and autism
- do not overload or weaken the immune system – it's safe to give children several vaccines at a time and this reduces the amount of injections they need
- do not cause allergies or any other conditions – all the current evidence tells us that vaccinating is safer than not vaccinating
- do not contain mercury (thiomersal)
- do not contain any ingredients that cause harm in such small amounts – but speak to your doctor if you have any known allergies such as eggs or gelatine

So parents, carers, please get in touch, and help us to help you protect your children!

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

From gov.uk:

Between 1 January and 20 April this year, there have been 49 cases of measles compared to 54 cases in the whole of 2022. Most of the cases have been in London, although there have been cases picked up across the country and some are linked to travel abroad.

Measles is a highly infectious disease that can lead to serious problems such as pneumonia, meningitis, and on rare occasions, long-term disability or death. Symptoms include a high fever, sore red watery eyes and a blotchy red-brown rash, and it is particularly easy to catch in environments when in close contact with others.

In recent years, the number of children vaccinated against measles has fallen. Uptake for the first dose of the MMR vaccine – which protects against measles, mumps and rubella – in children aged 2 years in England is 89% and uptake of 2 MMR doses in children aged 5 years is 85%. This is well below the 95% target

set by the World Health Organization (WHO), which is necessary to achieve and maintain elimination.

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, uptake for routine childhood immunisations has fallen globally, leaving many children unprotected from serious infections and countries at increased risk of outbreaks. Measles is now circulating in many countries around the world and WHO has warned that Europe is likely to see a resurgence unless countries catch-up children who missed out.

Children are offered the first dose of the MMR vaccine when aged one year and the second dose aged 3 years 4 months. UKHSA is urging parents of young children, teenagers and adults to check they are up to date with their MMR vaccines, particularly before they travel this summer and before attending summer festivals where measles can spread more easily.

Healthcare professionals have been alerted to the recent rise in cases and asked to be vigilant to further cases whilst also working with communities to increase vaccination uptake.