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Dear Head Teacher

Important messaging to parents ahead of summer holidays

As we approach the end of the term, I wanted to thank you for all your efforts in helping to manage outbreaks of infectious diseases in your settings and for your support in raising awareness among your school community of the importance of vaccination and of good hygiene measures to reduce the spread of illness.

Unfortunately, the number of children in Hertfordshire infected with measles has recently increased, and almost all of these children are ones who are not fully vaccinated. The Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine is effective, safe and free on the NHS. Uptake of the MMR vaccine is lower than is needed to prevent further cases and outbreaks. As the summer holidays approach many families will enjoy this time to mix with others and to travel abroad further increasing the risk of measles and other illnesses spreading. As such I would value you sending the following message to all your parents and carers ahead of the end of term to encourage parents to ensure their children's vaccinations are up to date before they come back to school in September.

"Ahead of the summer break we would like to share an important message from our Director of Public Health Sarah Perman.

Dear Parent, Carer

The number of children with measles has increased since the start of the year, with most cases in unvaccinated children aged 10 years and under. Measles is a very infectious illness which can make children very unwell and sometimes leads to serious complications. Sadly, two children in England have died from measles in 2026.

In Hertfordshire we have had outbreaks of measles in some of our schools and cases of measles are increasing. I am therefore asking that parents take the following actions:

- Check your child's red book or the NHS App to make sure your child is up to date with their vaccinations.
- If your child has missed one or both doses of MMR, please contact your GP practice to arrange an appointment.
- You can also contact your local Community & School Aged Immunisation Service who run vaccination sessions for all ages. Details can be found here: <https://www.hct.nhs.uk/service-details/service/hertfordshire-and-east-anglia-community-and-school-age-immunisations-35/>
- If your child is ill and you are worried it might be measles, check symptoms of measles here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles>. If you need help, please phone your GP or 111 and follow their advice.

An alternative vaccine is available for those who want to avoid pork products. You can find out about this when booking an appointment. The MMR vaccination is safe and free in the NHS and highly effective in protecting children from three serious diseases, Measles, Mumps and Rubella.”

Yours faithfully



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