

Dear Parent/ Carer

Please check your child is up to date with their routine vaccinations before they start school in September 2018.

Before your child begins school it is really important that they are up to date with their vaccinations to protect themselves from several contagious and potentially serious diseases.

At school, children will be mixing with large numbers of other children in a confined environment, which increases the risk of germs (virus and bacteria alike) spreading. Vaccination builds children's immunity to protect against these illnesses. For a number of diseases it also helps stop germs being spread, thus protecting the very vulnerable children who may not have, or may not be able to develop, immunity.

In some parts of Berkshire and the country more widely, and amongst some age groups, vaccination rates in children are lower than needed. This puts unvaccinated children at greater risk and increases the likelihood of an outbreak in the wider population. There have been recent outbreaks of measles in the UK along with large outbreaks across Europe. Measles is a highly infectious viral illness that can be very unpleasant and sometimes lead to serious complications.

The best protection against measles is to ensure your child has had two doses of the mumps, measles and rubella (MMR) vaccination. Therefore, before your child begins school please check with his/her GP that they have had their routine vaccinations scheduled for 3 years and 4 months of age. These vaccinations include: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio (DTaP/ IPV) and the second dose of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR).

Please also check that they are up to date with all the other vaccinations that they would have been invited for as a baby and at 12 months old.

If you are not sure if your child has had all their routine vaccinations, check their personal health record (Red Book) or contact your GP surgery. For a checklist of the vaccines and the ages at which they should ideally be given visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations

Yours faithfully,



Jo Jefferies
Consultant in Public Health
Public Health Services for Berkshire



Dr Rachel Mearkle
Consultant in Communicable Disease Control
Public Health England South East