

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We are writing to inform you about the rising cases of measles and pertussis (whooping cough) across London and within our borough, particularly affecting unvaccinated and under-vaccinated communities. It is crucial for the health and safety of our children and communities to be aware of these diseases and take preventive measures.

**Measles** is a highly contagious viral disease that can lead to serious health complications. Common symptoms to watch for include:

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- A rash that usually starts on the face and spreads down the body

**Pertussis**, or whooping cough, is a bacterial infection known for severe coughing fits that can make it hard to breathe. Symptoms to be aware of include:

- Severe coughing fits followed by a "whooping" sound
- Vomiting after coughing
- Exhaustion after coughing fits

You can find more information about [Measles](#) and [Pertussis](#) (whooping cough) and their vaccines on the [NHS Website](#).

If you or your child/children exhibit any of these symptoms, please contact NHS 111 or your GP via telephone for advice. In the event of a medical emergency, dial 999 immediately.

### **MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine**

The MMR vaccine protects against [measles](#), [mumps](#) and [rubella \(german measles\)](#). Two doses of the MMR vaccine gives you long-term protection. The vaccine is recommended for all babies and young children, but older children and adults can have it if they were not vaccinated when they were younger. Babies and young children are given 2 doses of the MMR vaccine as part of the [NHS vaccination schedule](#). They're given a dose at:

- 1 year (12 months) old
- From 18 months old

### **Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine**

The Pertussis (Whooping Cough) vaccine protects babies and children from getting whooping cough. That's why it's important to have all the [routine NHS vaccinations](#).

**Team:** Public Health

Team address: Lambeth Council, Executive Support Hub PO Box 734, Winchester SO23 5DG

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The whooping cough vaccine is routinely given as part of the:

- [6-in-1 vaccine](#) – for babies at 8, 12 and 16 weeks
- [4-in-1 pre-school booster](#) – for children aged 3 years 4 months

If you're pregnant you should also have the whooping cough vaccine – ideally between 16 and 32 weeks. You can speak to your midwife or GP. [Find out more about the whooping cough vaccination in pregnancy.](#)

If your child/children have missed a dose of the measles MMR and/or the pertussis vaccine(s) or are unvaccinated, please book a vaccination appointment with your GP as soon as possible. The [MMR \(measles, mumps, and rubella\)](#) and [Pertussis](#) vaccines are available FREE of charge on the NHS.

We strongly encourage you to take the opportunity to check your and your child/children's vaccination records. You can find these records in your personal child health record, commonly known as the 'Redbook', or by contacting your GP if you are unsure about your vaccination history.

By ensuring vaccinations are up to date, we can protect our children and community from these preventable diseases.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Ruth Hutt  
Director of Public Health  
London Borough of Lambeth



Abrilli Phillip  
Director of Education and Learning  
London Borough of Lambeth

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