Dear Parent or Guardian,

**Protecting your child against measles**

You may have heard about an increase in the number of measles cases in England and similar outbreaks in other countries in Europe. Although we currently do not have a measles outbreak in Northern Ireland, measles is highly infectious and we can’t be too careful. This letter is to advise you how to protect your child and others.

**Measles can cause very serious illness**

Measles usually causes a runny nose, red eyes, cough, high temperature and rash. But it can also cause complications including ear infections, diarrhoea, pneumonia and convulsions. Very serious complications, such as inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) and subacute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE) are rare, but can be fatal**.**

**Measles spreads very easily**

Measles is one of the most infectious diseases known. You can catch measles if you spend 15 minutes in the same room with someone who has the disease, or even less time if you are in direct contact. The measles virus is spread through the air and in tiny droplets that come out of the nose and mouth of an infected person.

**MMR vaccine provides safe and effective protection against measles, mumps and rubella**

The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine has been shown across the world to be a safe and effective way of preventing measles. It can protect your child and others against measles infection and its serious consequences.

**What you can do now**

We are writing to you because your child’s records suggest that they have not had any MMRvaccinations. **In light of the continuing measles activity, we strongly recommend that you arrange for your child to have the first dose of MMR vaccine now and make arrangements for their second dose. Two doses of MMR vaccine offer the best way to protect your child against measles, mumps and rubella.**

To make an appointment for your child to have the vaccine please follow the link in the text.

If our records are mistaken and your child has had the MMR vaccine, please contact the practice via email so we can amend their records accordingly or have any MMR queries. Email address is reception.z00440@hscni.net.

We do hope you will take this opportunity to ensure your child is fully protected.

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| For more information, please visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/mmr](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/mmr) or scan the QR code to access the Public Health Agency leaflet on MMR vaccination. |  |