

11 July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Prevent the spread of acute respiratory infections and other childhood illnesses. This advice has been sent to the school from Merton Public Health.

As there continues to be an increase in acute respiratory illnesses (including COVID), measles, mumps, rubella, and pertussis (whooping cough) cases in London, we want to take this opportunity to remind you to ensure that your children are up to date with all their childhood vaccinations. Children who are unwell should stay at home and return to school as soon as they are symptom free.

Respiratory infections, measles, mumps, rubella, and pertussis are infections that spread very easily, and they can occur suddenly, and people can become unwell quickly. If your child has flulike symptoms and a high temperature, they should stay at home. Your child can come back to school when they no longer have a high temperature and are well enough to resume normal activities. As we continue to learn to live safely with COVID-19, and other respiratory illnesses there are actions that we can take to reduce the spread of infections.

Remind your children to:

- wash their hands regularly using soap and water.
- cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, dispose of used tissue in a waste bin, and clean hands.
- cough or sneeze into their inner elbow (upper sleeve) if no tissues are available, rather than into the hands.
- keep contaminated hands away from their eyes, mouth, and nose.
- clean hands after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects and materials.

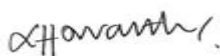
You can find more information on how to live safely with respiratory infections including COVID [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19) [Reducing household transmission - English \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-household-transmission-of-covid-19) [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19)

If you are unsure if you or your children have had two doses of the MMR vaccine, which will protect against measles, mumps and rubella, or the pertussis vaccine (which is part of the routine childhood vaccinations) contact your GP to arrange vaccination. If you have missed a dose, you can still be vaccinated at any age.

If you are pregnant and think you may have missed a dose of the MMR vaccine or are unsure if you have had the MMR or Pertussis vaccine, please contact your doctor or midwife. You can find further information about measles, mumps, and rubella and the MMR and Pertussis vaccine at the following <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>; [https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mumps/Rubella \(german measles\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mumps/rubella/) <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/whooping-cough>

As we come to the end of the school year, please help us encourage the children to always keep good hygiene practices at home and in school to help reduce the spread of infectious disease.

Yours sincerely



Ms L Howarth
Headteacher