

## Communication lines to help you with conversations with parents

### **1. What can parents of under-1s do to reduce the chances of their child catching measles?**

- The first dose of the MMRV vaccine is offered to children routinely on or shortly after their first birthday. Babies under the age of 1 are not offered the MMRV vaccine routinely because at this age, many of them will not respond to the vaccine. They rely on the rest of us getting the vaccine to protect them.
- This means that to protect your young infant you need to make sure their siblings and family members coming into contact with them are fully vaccinated, with two doses of a measles containing vaccine. Two doses of a measles containing vaccine such as MMR or MMRV, provides excellent lifelong protection against measles.
- When there is a measles outbreak in a nursery the UKHSA Health Protection Team will conduct a risk assessment and may advise for the first dose of the MMRV vaccine to be brought forward on a case-by-case basis. Any MMR or MMRV doses given before the age of 1 year are discounted i.e. the child will still require the two routine doses of the MMRV vaccine when they are due.

### **2. The second dose of the MMRV vaccine is now routinely offered at 18 months – why does my child still have to wait for their second dose of MMR at 3 years and 4 months?**

- From 1 January 2026, children born on or after 1 July 2024 have been (or will be) offered their second dose of measles containing vaccine (now Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella vaccine (MMRV)), at their 18-month vaccination appointment.
- Children born before 1 July 2024 who are still due their second dose of measles containing vaccine, will receive MMRV vaccine at their pre-school appointment at 3 years and 4 months.
- Both schedules provide excellent protection against serious diseases.
- The second dose of measles containing vaccine is being brought forward for children born after 1 July 2024, to improve uptake (by providing an earlier routine opportunity to catch-up children who missed on their first dose at 12 months) and should help us achieve the World Health Organization 95% uptake target needed to prevent outbreaks in the community.
- If you are unsure about which vaccines your child is due, please check their Red Book and speak to your GP practice or health visitor who can provide personalised advice about your child's immunisations. If your child is not up to date with their vaccines then they should be caught up the earliest opportunity.

**Key to remember but not for direct public facing sharing with parents:** A single dose of measles-containing vaccine (MMR/MMRV) is around 95% effective in preventing clinical measles. A second dose of measles containing vaccine protects those who do not respond to the first dose. (Ref Green Book: [Green Book Chapter on measles](#)).