

Our Ref DH/SGA

24th May 2019

To All Schools, Colleges and Early Years Providers

Dear colleagues

Re: Increase in Cases of Mumps Nationally and Locally

There has been a significant increase in mumps cases and continuing outbreaks of measles in England in the first part of this year. We are aware of outbreaks of mumps linked to schools and universities in the region.

Mumps is a viral illness, which is spread in the same way as colds and flu; through infected droplets of saliva that can be inhaled or picked up from surfaces and transferred into the mouth or nose.

The most common symptoms of mumps are

- Swelling of the parotid glands, situated just below your ears, on either side of your face. Sometimes only one gland is affected. This can cause pain, tenderness and difficulty with swallowing
- A high temperature of 38°C or above
- A dry mouth, loss of appetite, feeling sick
- Mild abdominal pain and feeling tired

However, in about 1 in 3 cases of mumps there are no noticeable symptoms.

Mumps is highly contagious, and symptoms usually develop 14 to 25 days after contact with an infected person. People are most contagious a few days before the symptoms develop and for a few days afterwards.

If you suspect a child or member of staff has mumps, it's important to prevent the infection spreading, by requiring them to stay away from school, college or nursery until 5 days after symptoms develop. Wash your hands regularly, using soap and water. Always use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze, and throw the tissue in a bin immediately afterwards.

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Mumps/>

The most important thing to stop the spread of the infection, is to make sure that unvaccinated children or staff have had the combined MMR vaccine (for mumps, measles and rubella).

The MMR vaccine is part of the routine NHS childhood immunisation schedule, with the first dose given at around 12-13 months and a second booster dose at 3 years and 4 months. However, **it's never too late to get the MMR** and teenagers and adults born after 1970, who are unsure should contact their GP and get vaccinated.

Further information on who should have MMR vaccination is available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543379/9867_MMR_A5leaflet.pdf

Do not hesitate to contact Dudley Council's Health Protection Team on 01384 816246 if you require any further information or support.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Harkins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DEBORAH HARKINS
CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH & WELLBEING
(DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH)