

# ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God

19 March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

## **RE: Meningitis and Measles**

You may be aware of the recent measles outbreak in the London area and, more recently, the meningitis outbreak in Kent. While the risk remains very low for most families, it is a prudent reminder of the importance of hygiene and vigilance for symptoms, and therefore, we are issuing general information for parents ahead of the Easter holidays. It is also advisable that parents ensure that children are fully vaccinated.

Meningitis is uncommon; however, early recognition is important in managing meningitis. It is important to note that the symptoms can develop quickly and may include:

- Fever / high temperature
- Severe Headache
- Vomiting
- Sensitivity to light
- Neck stiffness
- Unusual muscle aches or limb pain
- Unusually cold hands or feet
- Unusual drowsiness, confusion or difficulty waking
- Pale or blotchy skin

The symptoms can initially resemble those of the flu or a viral illness. In some cases, a rash may appear that does not fade when pressed (typically using the side of a glass). However, a rash can be a late sign and may not appear at all. It is also important to note that not all symptoms are always present, or they may occur at different times in individuals. If unsure, please seek medical advice because meningococcal disease can worsen quickly.

Further information is available on the NHS website - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/meningitis/>. Parents/Carers should seek medical advice promptly if they are concerned about their child. You can contact NHS 111, your GP, or attend A&E if symptoms are severe or worsening.

You might also be aware of different meningitis vaccinations. In the UK, the Meningitis B vaccine was added to the routine infant immunisation programme in September 2015. This means that younger children are likely to have been vaccinated, while older children may not have received this vaccine as part of the NHS schedule. Older children and adolescents are routinely offered the MenACWY vaccine, which protects against meningococcal disease. Currently, the low level of risk means that there is no plan to offer MenB vaccinations outside of the routine infant schedule.

It is important to remember that meningitis remains uncommon, and many children are already protected by the existing vaccination programme.

### **Reducing the risk of meningitis**

While the risk of transmission of meningitis is low, good hygiene routines will reduce it further, including:

- Washing of hands thoroughly and regularly
- Covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Not sharing drinks or straws (other items such as vapes, cigarettes should not be used anyway; however, it goes without saying that these should not be shared)
- Not sharing eating utensils.

### **Measles**

Measles is preventable through vaccination; however, as with meningitis, early identification is important. The symptoms of measles typically appear several days after exposure to the virus:

- Fever or high temperature
- Cough
- Cold-like symptoms: runny or blocked nose, cough, fever, sore/red eyes
- Small white spots may appear inside the cheeks and on the back of the lips a few days later
- Tiredness: Children with measles often feel very tired and irritable
- Rash: a few days after initial symptoms, a rash appears, starting on the face and spreading to the body

If you suspect that your child has measles, it is important to consult a healthcare professional for a proper diagnosis.

The health and well-being of all our students remains our priority. If there are any relevant updates, we will ensure that families are informed. As we stated previously, the risk for the London area remains low.

Yours sincerely



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