

Improving MMR vaccination in school aged children in Leeds to reduce the potential impact of measles outbreaks.

A project in collaboration with Leeds Public Health and the School Aged Immunisation Service



Background

Measles is one of the most contagious vaccine preventable diseases. It can lead to serious problems such as pneumonia, meningitis, and on rare occasions, long-term disability or death.

The only prevention from measles is the Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination offered as part of the childhood vaccination schedule

In January 2024 the UK Health Security Agency declared a national incident as measles cases increased across the country

NHS England launched a national MMR catch up campaign in response to the rise in number of confirmed cases of measles. The targeted age group was 6-11-year-olds

Outcomes

- 208 more children have partial or complete protection against MMR
- 182 children's records were checked for vaccination status
- 91 conversations were had about overseas vaccination schedules
- Over 100 positive vaccine conversations were had with guardians.
- Community champions, trusted professionals in uniform and translators improved guardian engagement
- The main reason for non vaccination was a lack of awareness of the UK schedule and poor knowledge of measles.

Aim



To address inequalities and improve MMR vaccination rates in Leeds amongst 6-11 year olds in primary schools with the lowest uptake.

Data from the School Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS) was used to identify the target schools. Twenty Leeds primary schools with the highest number of outstanding MMR vaccinations were chosen to take part in the project

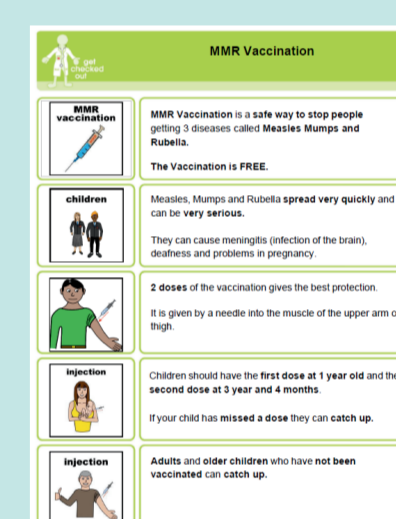
Intervention

Families with children outstanding one or both doses of MMR were targeted by the SAIS. Schools issued comms and displayed posters in the setting to engage parents.

An easy read leaflet was provided to families including images to provide information about the vaccinations being offered & possible side effects

SAIS, community champions and health protection invested time with schools and families to build trust and raise awareness of the importance of vaccination

GP record checks and vaccination were offered opportunistically on the day. Nurses were available throughout the school day including pick up and drop off



"Being able to check if you needed it or not was good, I cant remember that long ago" – Guardian

"If we knew how poor the uptake was here we could have done more to promote today and immunisations in general" – Headteacher

"It was just so easy being able to turn up at school" – Guardian

Future considerations

1. Translators and easy read resources are key to engaging guardians where English is not first language
2. Awareness is required on the difference between vaccination schedules from different countries and opportunities need to be available for guardians to check and understand this.
3. Educating schools on their pupil vaccination coverage is important to improve engagement
4. Building on community champion approaches to Make Every Contact Count
5. Future sessions need to engage Primary Care Networks to vaccinate siblings outside of the school cohort.

