



18 November 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

In the past few weeks there have been a number of college students who have presented symptoms indicative of the viral infection mumps. In accordance with official guidelines, we registered this information with the Public Health East Midlands (PHE) Protection Team on Friday 15 November 2019.

The PHE team have provided a letter of advice that we have included in this document.

Further guidance is also available on the NHS website at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mumps/>

As indicated by Public Health England, mumps is spread in the same way as colds and flu and we would be grateful if parents could remind their children to regularly wash their hands and use disposable tissues for coughs and sneezes.

We will of course continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if required.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Paley
Head of School



Protecting and improving the nation's health

IMPORTANT: MUMPS INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Public Health England (PHE) have been notified of an increase in cases of suspected mumps within the school. This letter is to give you some information about the disease and how it can be prevented.

What is mumps?

Mumps is a contagious viral infection caused by a paramyxovirus. Swelling of the parotid glands is the most common symptom of mumps. The parotid glands are a pair of glands responsible for producing saliva. They're located in either side of the face, just below the ears.

More general symptoms often develop a few days before the parotid glands swell. These can include:

- headache
- joint pain
- feeling sick
- dry mouth
- mild abdominal pain
- feeling tired
- loss of appetite
- a high temperature (fever) of 38°C (100.4°F), or above

In about 1 in 3 cases, mumps doesn't cause any noticeable symptoms

Complications are rare but include swelling of the ovaries (oophoritis), swelling of the testes (orchitis), aseptic meningitis and deafness.

How the disease spreads

Mumps 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

A person is most contagious a few days before the symptoms develop and for a few days afterwards.

If your child has mumps, you can help them prevent it spreading by:

- regularly washing of their hands with soap and water
- using and disposing of tissues after sneezing
- avoiding school for at least 5 days after the onset of swelling

When to see your GP

It's important to contact your GP if you suspect your child has mumps so a diagnosis can be made. While mumps isn't usually serious, the condition has similar symptoms to more serious types of infection, such as glandular fever and tonsillitis.

Let your GP know in advance if you're taking your child to the surgery, so they can take any necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Diagnosing mumps

Mumps can be confirmed in the laboratory by testing a sample of oral fluid from your child's mouth. Once your GP notifies PHE that your child has suspected mumps, a test kit will be sent to you in the post from PHE.

It is important to confirm the diagnosis, so we would encourage you to use the test kit and return it to PHE using the freepost envelope provided. The test is very easy to do, and the kit comes with instructions. Test results will be sent to your GP Surgery

Protecting against mumps

You can protect child/children against mumps by making sure they have received two doses of the combined **MMR** vaccine (for mumps, measles and rubella).

If your child/children have not had two doses of MMR vaccine, please make an appointment with your GP to get them vaccinated. We still recommend two doses of MMR even if they have previously had single vaccines.

MMR vaccine is freely available on the NHS and is the best protection against mumps. Some people may still get mumps after they have received two doses of MMR but they get a much milder illness and are less likely to suffer from any complications.

Further information on mumps is available from:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mumps/>

You can also contact your local PHE team on **0344 225 4524 Option 1** if you have specific questions about your child or the test.