Dear Head Teacher/Principal

I am writing to you on behalf of NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough ask for your support in communicating information to parents and carers about the importance of childhood vaccinations this summer.

We know that currently in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough there are around 4,900 children under five (around 10%) who have not had their MMR vaccine, and around 8,800 children under five (around 18%) who have not had their 4-in-1 pre-school booster vaccine. By having all their childhood vaccinations children are protected from many serious and potentially deadly diseases, as well as providing protection for those who cannot have vaccines, such as babies too young to be vaccinated and those who are too ill to be vaccinated

We want to really encourage parents whose children are eligible, but have not had these vaccines, to have them over the summer holidays before school begins in September. In particular we are hoping you can help us reach parents/carers who already have a child at your school and have another child who is starting Reception class in 2025. To support this please could you include the article below in any communications to parents, such as school newsletters or websites. We have a toolkit of other materials you can use to support these messages online which include suggested social media posts and images <https://www.cpics.org.uk/mmr-vaccines-toolkit>

**Suggested newsletter text**

Help your child start primary school fully vaccinated

The local NHS are urging parents and carers of children starting primary school this autumn and children under five to ensure their children are fully vaccinated before the autumn term begins.

Before starting primary school, it’s recommended that children have their measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and 4-in-1 pre-school booster vaccine, which protects against diphtheria, polio, tetanus and whooping cough. Many of these diseases have self-isolating periods of at least a week, which means not only will the child miss school, but parents/carers will have to stay off work too until the self-isolation period ends.

Cali Makewell, Integrated Vaccination Service Lead at NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, said, “Starting school is an exciting part of a child’s life, and it’s inevitable that at times they will catch childhood illnesses whilst at school. But it’s so important they get the best start for their education having all their childhood vaccinations which help protect them from serious illnesses.

“Vaccinations are not only important for your child’s health, but they can help protect those around them too, such as babies too young to be vaccinated and those who are too ill to be vaccinated.”

Parents and carers are urged to contact their GP practice directly to book vaccinations, or they can contact Herts Community Trust who can help arrange any missed vaccinations for them by calling 0300 555 5055 option 4.

**Cali Makewell**

**Integrated Vaccine Lead for NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough**