Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CH0231
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8DE

Tel: **01438 845901**
               01992 556872
Email: publichealth@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 13 May 2013

Dear Parent/Carer,

Measles

You will be aware from national news that there are outbreaks of measles in areas of Wales and parts of England. We are beginning to see an increase in measles cases in Hertfordshire and are writing to let you know what course of action you can take to protect your children.

Measles is **not** a mild illness. It is a highly infectious disease, which can lead to serious complications and even deaths. The good news is that it can be prevented with two doses of the Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Experts believe that the current outbreaks are related to those children who missed out on vaccinations in the late 1990s and early 2000 when there were concerns in the media about the safety of the MMR vaccine. This has put all unvaccinated children at risk. We now know those concerns were unfounded; in depth research completely discredited the concerns and expert medical advice tells us that vaccination with MMR is safe and effective.

As part of a national campaign, we urge you to make sure that your children have been **fully vaccinated** with two doses of MMR. This is the best protection you can provide for your children. If you or your children have not been vaccinated, or if you are unsure about their vaccination status, we recommend that you make an appointment with your GP surgery as soon as possible.

Measles begins with cold-like symptoms, runny nose; red eyes and a fever followed a few days later by a rash starting on the face, head and neck. If your child develops these symptoms they will be infectious to others and should be kept at home. It is important that you contact your GP for advice.

Please remember, measles can be prevented with two doses of the MMR vaccine.

Yours faithfully

Jim McManus
Director of Public Health

Justin Donovan
Director of Education and Early Intervention