

Here to Help - Communications toolkit

MMRV vaccination campaign - Resources to help communicate the introduction of the measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) vaccination

(v4. 23/02/26)



Be wise, immunise!

This campaign toolkit is available for **communications leads to use and adapt to encourage uptake of the new MMRV vaccination** - mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox).

The 'Be wise, immunise' MMRV communications campaign for the North East and North Cumbria encourages parents and carers to take up the offer of the new combined measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) vaccine for their children.

So, how you can help?

Check out our toolkit!

Information and content in this toolkit can be used on websites, social media, or other communication channels you may have.

All campaign assets are available to download on the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) [website](#).

For further help or advice on using the toolkit or if you need support to tailor assets, please contact

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Introduction of the MMRV into the routine childhood vaccination schedule

A chickenpox (varicella) vaccination has been introduced into the NHS routine childhood vaccination programme since 1 January 2026 using a measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV) vaccine.

From 1 January 2026, children have been offered a combined measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV) vaccine instead of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR), as part of the childhood routine 2-dose vaccination schedule.

Dose 1 will be offered at 12 months of age and dose 2 will be brought forward from 3 years 4 months, to the new 18-month appointment.

From 1 November 2026 to 31 March 2028 there will be a single dose selective MMRV catch up programme for older children who have not yet had chickenpox infection or 2 doses of varicella vaccination.

What is chickenpox?

Chickenpox is a very infectious disease caused by the varicella zoster virus. It is very common in young children and causes a fever and an itchy, spotty rash. These spots can be painful and appear all over the body.

Some children have serious complications including chest infection, fits, and encephalitis. It is more severe in adults, especially pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems.

Later in life, the chickenpox virus can re-activate and cause a painful rash. This is called shingles. It is worse in older people and in people with weakened immune systems.

Why combine varicella (chickenpox) with the MMR vaccine?

- The MMRV vaccine has been successfully and safely used in children in other countries for decades, including Germany and Canada, Australia and the United States
- The MMRV vaccine provides protection against all four diseases mumps, measles, rubella and chickenpox.
- The MMRV vaccine has been shown to create long lasting protection against all four diseases.
- Using a combined vaccine for both the first and second dose means fewer injections are needed in a single vaccination visit and children can be protected as soon as possible from serious diseases
- Having fewer injections is preferred among parents, and a recent study among UK parents indicated that a combined varicella vaccine was preferred to separate vaccines.

Who is eligible for the MMRV vaccination?

- The MMRV vaccine is recommended for all young children as part of the [NHS vaccination schedule](#).
- The number of doses children are given depends on when they were born. Some older children will have already had 1 or 2 doses of the MMR vaccine which protects against measles, mumps and rubella, but not chickenpox.

Eligibility of the MMRV vaccine, as part of the routine schedule, is dependent upon date of birth

Date of birth	Age on 31 December 2025	New programme from 1 January 2026	Child's full MMR / MMRV schedule
01/01/2025 or later	Under 1 year	2 doses of MMRV at 12 and 18 months	12 months: MMRV 18 months: MMRV
01/07/2024 to 31/12/2024	1 year to under 18 months	2 doses of MMRV at 18 months and 3 years 4 months	12 months: MMR 18 months: MMRV 3 years 4 months: MMRV
01/09/2022 to 30/06/2024	18 months to under 3 years 4 months	1 dose of MMRV at 3 years 4 months	12 months: MMR 3 years 4 months: MMRV
01/01/2020 to 31/08/2022	3 years 4 months to under 6 years	Selective catch-up from 1 Nov 2026 to 31 Mar 2028	12 months: MMR dose 1 3 years 4 months: MMR dose 2 + MMRV catch up offer
31/12/2019 or before	6 years old and older	Not eligible	12 months: MMR dose 1 3 years 4 months: MMR dose 2

MMRV catch up campaign

A one-dose MMRV selective catch-up programme will be delivered between 1st November 2026 and 31st March 2028 at GP practices for eligible children

- Children eligible for the catch up are those who
 - were born between 1 January 2020 and 31st August 2022
 - have no history of chickenpox or have not had two doses of a varicella vaccination

Key messages MMRV

- From January 2026 a vaccine to protect against chickenpox was introduced into the NHS routine childhood vaccination programme.
- The measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) MMRV vaccine will be offered as part of the routine childhood schedule of immunisations.
- The MMRV vaccine offers the same protection as the MMR vaccine but adds protection against chickenpox.
- Most parents probably consider chickenpox to be a common and mild illness, but for some babies, young children and even adults, chickenpox can be very serious, leading to hospital admission and tragically, while rare, it can be fatal.
- The vaccine will help reduce cases of chickenpox and protect children from serious complications that can cause hospitalisation, such as bacterial infections like strep A, brain and lung inflammation, and stroke.
- The MMRV vaccine has been used for over 10 years in several countries, including Canada, Australia and Germany, and has a good safety record.
- In countries where the MMRV vaccine is already offered, chickenpox cases and related hospital admissions have fallen dramatically.
- Introducing this vaccine will have a positive impact on the health of young children and will also lead to fewer missed nursery and school days.

Key message childhood vaccine

- Childhood vaccines alone prevent between 3.5 and 5 million deaths every year across the globe.
- Vaccination saves lives and protects people's health. It ranks second only to clean water as the most effective public health intervention to prevent disease.
- Vaccination has transformed public health, helping people live longer, healthier lives by protecting against diseases that can cause death or serious harm.
- If you or your child has missed any routine vaccines, contact your GP practice to make an appointment to catch up on any missed doses.
- The childhood vaccine schedule offers protection against serious illnesses. There are now [three routine vaccination appointments](#) before the age of one year old and three after they turn one year old.
- It is important that your child receives their vaccines when they are invited to offer the best timely protection against serious diseases
- It is recommended that everyone received two doses of a measles containing vaccine (MMR or MMRV), and you remain eligible for NHS measles vaccination at any age regardless of the intended vaccine schedule.

Bulletin, newsletter and website copy

Protection against chickenpox for children from January 2026 – short copy

From 1 January 2026, children have been offered the MMRV vaccine as part of the routine childhood immunisation schedule, protecting against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.

While chickenpox is often mild, it can cause serious complications. Children born from January 2025 will receive MMRV at 12 and 18 months. Those born between July and December 2024 get MMRV doses at 18 months and 3 years 4 months.

Children born between September 2022 and June 2024 get one MMRV dose at 3 years 4 months. A catch-up programme runs from November 2026 for eligible children aged under 6.

Your GP will contact you when your child is due. If you have any questions, speak to your GP practice. Find out more - <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

#BeWiseImmunise #HereToHelp

Protecting your child against chickenpox

From 1 January 2026, children have been offered a vaccine that protects against chickenpox, as well as measles, mumps and rubella.

Why this matters

Most parents know chickenpox as a common childhood illness. But for some babies and young children, it can be very serious. This new vaccine will help protect children from these serious complications and reduce hospital admissions alongside continuing to offer protection against measles, mumps and rubella that was previously given by MMR vaccine.

What's changing?

All children will now be offered the MMRV vaccine instead of the MMR vaccine. MMRV offers the same protection as MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) but adds protection against chickenpox – that's protection against four diseases with one vaccine.

When will my child get the vaccine?

If your child was born on or after 1 January 2025, they'll get their first dose at 12 months old and their second dose at 18 months old.

If your child was born between 1 July 2024 and 31 December 2024, they'll get their first MMRV dose at 18 months and their second dose at 3 years and 4 months.

If your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 30 June 2024, they'll get one MMRV dose at 3 years and 4 months.

Selective catch-up programme - Children born between 1 January 2020 and 31 August 2022 will be offered a catch-up dose between November 2026 and March 2028 if they haven't already had chickenpox or two doses of chickenpox vaccine.

A vaccine with a proven track record

The MMRV vaccine has been safely used for over 10 years in countries including Canada, Australia and Germany. In these countries, chickenpox cases and hospital admissions have fallen dramatically. Introducing this vaccine will have a positive impact on children's health and mean fewer missed days at nursery and school.

What you need to do

Your GP practice will contact you when your child is due for their vaccination. This could be by letter, text, phone call or email. Please book your child's appointment when you receive your invite. If you have any questions or think your child may have missed any of their vaccinations, speak to your GP practice. You can read more at <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

#BeWiseImmunise #HereToHelp

Newsletter text

From 1 January 2026, children have been offered the MMRV vaccine as part of the routine childhood immunisation schedule, protecting against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox. While chickenpox is often mild, it can cause serious complications. Children born from January 2025 will receive MMRV at 12 and 18 months. Those born between July and December 2024 get MMRV doses at 18 months and 3 years 4 months. Children born between September 2022 and June 2024 get one MMRV dose at 3 years 4 months. A catch-up programme runs from November 2026 for eligible children aged under 6. GP practices will contact families when appointments are due.

How to book your MMRV vaccine

The MMRV vaccine, which protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chicken pox, is now routinely offered to all children in the UK.

Your GP surgery will usually get in touch with you when your child is due for their MMRV vaccinations. This may be by letter, text message, phone call or email.

Prior to 1st January 2026 MMR vaccination was given at 1 year with a second dose as a pre-school booster at around 3 years and 4 months. For those having their first birthday after 1 January 2026 this has been replaced with the MMRV vaccine to be given at 1 year with a booster dose at around 18 months of age.

From 1 January 2026, the MMR vaccination programme changed:

- For children born on or after 1 July 2024, the second MMRV dose will now be given at 18 months of age.
- Children born on or before 30 June 2024 (aged between 18 months - 3 years and 4 months) will stay on the current schedule.

If your child missed one or both doses, it's important to catch up. You can contact your GP surgery at any time to arrange a catch-up appointment.

The MMRV vaccine is free on the NHS and provides lifelong protection for most people.

If you're unsure whether your child is up to date, check their Red Book or contact your GP surgery.

Social media messaging

**Join us on social media so we can remind eligible groups to #BeWiseImmunise
Please tag North East and North Cumbria ICB in your social media posts and use #BeWiseImmunise**

Our social media handles are:

Facebook - NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS

X – @NENC_NHS

Instagram – nenc_nhs

TikTok - @NENC_ICB

Linked-In - @north-east-and-north-cumbria-nhs

YouTube - North East and North Cumbria NHS

The following pages include social media posts for the MMRV vaccine campaign.

All assets are available to download from the [ICB toolkit page](#) and are supported by paid for advertising, radio, outdoor and programmatic advertising.

This will be updated over the coming weeks with additional messaging and assets.

General posts

Post	Instagram	Facebook	X	Visual/film
1.	<p>Measles can make your child very poorly and can sometimes be dangerous.</p> <p>If your child has missed any of their MMRV jabs (measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox), speak to your GP practice to catch up as soon as you can.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, works well and is the best way to keep your child protected.</p> <p>✅ Check they've had all their jabs 💬 Not sure? Ask your GP</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Measles can make your child very poorly and can sometimes be dangerous.</p> <p>If your child has missed any of their MMRV jabs (measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox), speak to your GP practice to catch up as soon as you can.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, works well and is the best way to keep your child protected.</p> <p>✅ Check they've had all their jabs 💬 Not sure? Ask your GP</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Measles can make kids very poorly & sometimes be dangerous.</p> <p>💉 MMRV is safe & protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.</p> <p>✅ Check they've had both doses.</p> <p>💬 Not sure? Ask your GP, it's never too late.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
2.	<p>What do parents need to know about measles?</p>	<p>What do parents need to know about measles?</p>	<p>Measles spreads easily & can make kids very poorly.</p> <p>Look for: 🤒 fever 🤒</p>	

	<p>Measles spreads easily and can make children very poorly.</p> <p>Look out for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🤒 High fever 🤧 Cough and runny nose 👁️ Sore eyes ● A blotchy rash (usually starts on the face and behind the ears) <p>If you think your child has measles, keep them at home and call your GP or NHS 111.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is the best way to protect them – check they're up to date.</p> <p>i Search NHS MMRV vaccine</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Measles spreads easily and can make children very poorly.</p> <p>Look out for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🤒 High fever 🤧 Cough and runny nose 👁️ Sore eyes ● A blotchy rash (usually starts on the face and behind the ears) <p>If you think your child has measles, keep them at home and call your GP or NHS 111.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is the best way to protect them – check they're up to date.</p> <p>i Search NHS MMRV vaccine</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>cough/runny nose 👁️ sore eyes ● rash on face/behind ears.</p> <p>If you think they have it, keep them home & call your GP or NHS 111.</p> <p>MMRV is the best protection – check they're up to date.</p> <p>i Search NHS MMRV vaccine</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
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<p>3.</p>	<p>Measles can cause: Pneumonia Blindness Deafness Swelling of the brain and it can be fatal</p> <p>Check your child's red book or speak to your GP practice to make sure they are up to date with their MMRV vaccines.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Measles can cause: Pneumonia Blindness Deafness Swelling of the brain and it can be fatal</p> <p>Check your child's red book or speak to your GP practice to make sure they are up to date with their MMRV vaccines.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Measles can cause: Pneumonia Blindness Deafness Swelling of the brain and it can be fatal</p> <p>Check your child's red book or speak to your GP practice to make sure they are up to date with their MMRV vaccines.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Saskia contracted measles as a baby, a highly infectious disease that can cause serious health complications. Her mum, Scarlett, tells the story as a reminder of why the MMRV vaccine is so important in protecting children, families and communities.</p> <p> The MMRV vaccine protects against: Measles – which can lead to pneumonia, brain inflammation and long-term complications</p>	<p>Saskia contracted measles as a baby, a highly infectious disease that can cause serious health complications. Her mum, Scarlett, tells the story as a reminder of why the MMRV vaccine is so important in protecting children, families and communities.</p> <p> The MMRV vaccine protects against: Measles – which can lead to pneumonia, brain inflammation and long-term complications</p>	<p>Saskia caught measles as a baby, a serious, highly infectious illness. Her mum, Scarlett, shares their story to highlight why the MMRV vaccine matters.</p> <p> The MMRV jab protects against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles • Mumps • Rubella • Chickenpox <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe,</p>	<p>Saskia's story: Why the MMR Vaccine Matters (3 minutes)</p> <p>https://youtu.be/u_bBymL-pRM</p>

	<p>Mumps – which can cause meningitis and hearing loss Rubella – which can be especially dangerous in pregnancy Chickenpox – which can cause scarring, itching and fever</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, effective and the best way to prevent outbreaks.</p> <p>→ Learn more about the MMRV vaccine on the NHS website</p> <p>Help us raise awareness by sharing Saskia’s story. Together, we can protect more children from preventable diseases.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Mumps – which can cause meningitis and hearing loss Rubella – which can be especially dangerous in pregnancy Chickenpox – which can cause scarring, itching and fever</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, effective and the best way to prevent outbreaks.</p> <p>→ Learn more about the MMRV vaccine on the NHS website</p> <p>Help us raise awareness by sharing Saskia’s story. Together, we can protect more children from preventable diseases.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>effective & prevents outbreaks.</p> <p>→ Learn more about the MMRV vaccine on the NHS website</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
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<p>5.</p>	<p>👤💉 Protect your child's health, measles can be serious.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, and protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox. Children need two doses.</p> <p>✅ Vaccination not only keeps your child safe but also helps protect others around them.</p> <p>Not sure if your child is up to date? Check their red book or get in touch with your GP.</p> <p>It's never too late to catch up.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>👤💉 Protect your child's health, measles can be serious.</p> <p>The MMRV vaccine is safe, and protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox. Children need two doses.</p> <p>✅ Vaccination not only keeps your child safe but also helps protect others around them.</p> <p>Not sure if your child is up to date? Check their red book or get in touch with your GP.</p> <p>It's never too late to catch up.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>👤💉 Measles can be serious. The MMRV vaccine is safe & protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.</p> <p>✅ Check your child's red book or ask your GP. It's never too late.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
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<p>6.</p>	<p>The MMRV vaccine protects your child for life.</p> <p>They need 2 doses to be fully protected from measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.</p> <p>If your child has missed a dose, it's not too late, your GP can help.</p> <p>✔ Keep your child safe ☎ Contact your GP practice</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>The MMRV vaccine protects your child for life.</p> <p>They need 2 doses to be fully protected from measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.</p> <p>If your child has missed a dose, it's not too late, your GP can help.</p> <p>✔ Keep your child safe ☎ Contact your GP practice</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>The MMRV vaccine protects your child for life.</p> <p>They need 2 doses to be fully protected from measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.</p> <p>If your child has missed a dose, it's not too late, your GP can help.</p> <p>✔ Keep your child safe ☎ Contact your GP practice</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Going abroad?</p> <p>Before you travel, check your child has had all their usual jabs – including the MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox) vaccine.</p> <p>Measles is more common in some countries and spreads quickly. Two MMRV jabs protect your child for life.</p>	<p>Going abroad?</p> <p>Before you travel, check your child has had all their usual jabs – including the MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox) vaccine.</p> <p>Measles is more common in some countries and spreads quickly. Two MMRV jabs protect your child for life.</p>	<p>Going abroad?</p> <p>Check your child's had all their jabs including MMRV.</p> <p>Measles is common in some countries & spreads fast.</p> <p>2 MMRV doses protect for life.</p> <p>✈️ 🚢 🚗 Not sure? Contact your GP practice before you go.</p>	

	<p>✈️ 🚢 🏠 Not sure? Call your GP to book any missed jabs before you go.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>✈️ 🚢 🏠 Not sure? Call your GP to book any missed jabs before you go.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	#BeWiseImmunise	
8.	<p>Since January 2026, the MMR vaccine has been replaced by the MMRV vaccine, which also protects against chickenpox.</p> <p>This updated vaccine is offered at the 18-month appointment. You do not need to take any action, your GP will contact you when your child is due.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Since January 2026, the MMR vaccine has been replaced by the MMRV vaccine, which also protects against chickenpox.</p> <p>This updated vaccine is offered at the 18-month appointment. You do not need to take any action, your GP will contact you when your child is due.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Since January 2026, the MMR vaccine has been replaced by the MMRV vaccine, which also protects against chickenpox.</p> <p>This updated vaccine is offered at the 18-month appointment. You do not need to take any action, your GP will contact you when your child is due.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	

<p>9.</p>	<p>Since January 2026, protection against chickenpox has been included in the routine vaccines given to babies and children.</p> <p>Chickenpox is usually mild, but it can sometimes lead to more serious illness.</p> <p>Your GP will contact you when your child is due for their appointment.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Since January 2026, protection against chickenpox has been included in the routine vaccines given to babies and children.</p> <p>Chickenpox is usually mild, but it can sometimes lead to more serious illness.</p> <p>Your GP will contact you when your child is due for their appointment.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	<p>Since January 2026, protection against chickenpox has been included in the routine vaccines given to children.</p> <p>Chickenpox is usually mild, but it can sometimes lead to more serious illness.</p> <p>Your GP will contact you when your child is due for their appointment.</p> <p>#BeWiseImmunise</p>	
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