



January 15, 2026

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that a child or staff member with measles was present at Starr Elementary on January 7, 2026. Measles is a viral infection that spreads through coughing and sneezing. It is very contagious, but most school-aged children who are fully vaccinated with two doses of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine are protected from measles. However, 3 in 100 people who have received two doses of MMR vaccine will still get measles if exposed to the virus. Therefore, we want to provide you with information about measles, and the signs and symptoms to look for in your child.

Usually about 8-12 days (but up to 21 days) after exposure, measles begins with a mild to moderate fever accompanied by cough, runny nose, and red eyes. Two or three days later, the fever spikes, often as high as 104-105°F. At the same time, a red blotchy rash appears, usually first on the face, along the hairline and behind the ears. The rash rapidly spreads downward to the chest and back and, finally, to the thighs and feet.

Most children with measles are sick enough that they will need to stay home at least a week. One in every 20 people with measles develops pneumonia. More rarely, serious, even life-threatening complications can occur.

If your child is not in compliance with the MMR requirements, they should receive a dose of MMR vaccine, unless there is a medical reason why they cannot receive the vaccine. MMR vaccine is effective and safe. If they receive the dose within 72 hours after their initial exposure to the case-patient, they may remain in school or daycare. Otherwise, unvaccinated children, including those who have a medical or other exemption to vaccination, must be excluded from school or daycare through 21 days after their most recent exposure. We recommend that you contact your healthcare provider for immunization as soon as possible. If you do not have a healthcare provider, your child may be able to receive the immunization at the local health department.

If your child develops an illness with fever (101°F or more), cough, runny nose or red eyes, with or without rash, immediately call your doctor and let them know about your child's exposure and symptoms so that they can tell you what to do next. Your doctor can make special arrangements to evaluate you, if needed, without putting other patients and medical office staff at risk. Keep your child at home until the doctor and the school staff have cleared him/her to return. If you have any questions call the *Upstate Region* Health Department, at (864) 423-6648.

Sincerely,

Marco Tori, MD, MSc

Medical Officer, South Carolina Department of Public Health