



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

UK Health Security Agency  
South West

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 2 Rivergate  
Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EH

Follaton House, Plymouth  
Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5NE

T +44 (0)300 303 8162

[swhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:swhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency)

Re. Meningitis  
Ref 201202036

17<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear staff, parents, carers, student or young person

**If you are under 18 please show this letter to your parent / carer and discuss this with them.**

There have been three recent cases of Meningitis B (MenB) among young people who attend secondary schools in Weymouth. All are receiving treatment and are recovering well.

These cases are not linked to the recent MenB outbreak in Kent.

Close contacts of all cases have been identified and are being offered antibiotics. Please be reassured that the risk to others is very small. There remains no reason for students or staff to make any change in the school routine and no reason for students to be kept at home, unless they have been directly advised otherwise.

The young people attend two different secondary schools in Weymouth. This may mean that this strain of MenB bacteria is transmitting more widely among young people in Weymouth, which is why additional precautions are now being taken.

**UKHSA is recommending a single dose of antibiotics and a two-course dose of MenB vaccine be offered to young people who live or go to school in the Weymouth area, as follows:**

- Anyone who lives in Weymouth or Portland or Chickerell and is in current school years 7 to 13 (or equivalent), or anyone not in full time education who would be in one of these year groups

OR

- Anyone who attends an educational setting in the Weymouth, Portland or Chickerell area and is in current school years 7 to 13 (or equivalent).

Eligible students will be offered antibiotics in stages.

We will start with Budmouth Academy and Wey Valley schools, as the young people attend these settings. Pupils that attend other schools and other eligible children and young people

in Weymouth who do not attend school will be invited after the weekend. We will send further communication with instruction on this.

- All children and young people should continue to attend school as normal. There is **no need for anyone to remain off school**, or for any events to be postponed or cancelled.
- If you are not in these groups, you **do not** at present need to receive antibiotics.
- Contacts of contacts do not require antibiotics, monitoring, or any form of restriction.
- This includes people who report contact with someone who has received antibiotics.

### **Am I at risk?**

The risk of getting the disease is very low. The bacteria that cause the disease are very common: at any time about 1 in 10 of us has them in our noses and throats without ever knowing they are there, and for most of us this is harmless. We pass the bacteria between each other by close contact (e.g. coughing, sneezing, etc.). Usually, we have to be in very close or regular contact with someone for the bacteria to pass between us. Even when this happens, most of us will not become ill because we have natural immunity. The bacteria do not naturally live or survive for long outside the human body.

We are offering this as a precautionary measure to help reduce the risk of further cases in the area.

### **Signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease**

It's important everyone is alert to the signs and symptoms of meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia. Get medical help immediately if you or someone you know experiences these symptoms - call NHS 111 for urgent advice, or 999 in a medical emergency.

- a rash that doesn't fade when pressed with a glass
- sudden onset of high fever
- severe and worsening headache
- stiff neck
- vomiting and diarrhoea
- joint and muscle pain
- dislike of bright lights
- very cold hands and feet
- seizures
- confusion/delirium
- extreme sleepiness/difficulty waking.

### **Routine prevention**

It is important that everyone is **up to date with routine vaccinations**, including the MenACWY vaccine, where applicable. The full UK routine schedule is available here: [Complete routine immunisation schedule from 1 January 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

## Additional information

We understand that this situation may cause concern within school communities, particularly given the recent Meningitis B outbreak incident in Kent. Students should continue to attend school as normal and there should be no change to usual routines.

UKHSA plans to host a webinar next week to answer questions directly from schools. If you would like further advice or support, both the Meningitis Research Foundation and Meningitis Now are available:

- The Meningitis Research Foundation, [www.meningitis.org](http://www.meningitis.org) telephone: 0808 800 3344
- Meningitis Now, [www.meningitisnow.org](http://www.meningitisnow.org) telephone: 0808 80 10 388 helpline email address: [helpline@meningitisnow.org](mailto:helpline@meningitisnow.org)

Anyone who becomes unwell with symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia should seek medical help urgently at the closest Accident and Emergency Department or by dialling 999. If you're not sure if your symptoms are serious, use [NHS 111 online](#) or call 111 to find out what to do.

You can find out more about meningitis here:

- [What is meningitis? Symptoms, risks and how to protect yourself – UK Health Security Agency](#)
- [Information for education settings in England regarding the meningococcal disease outbreak - GOV.UK](#) (Please note the references to Kent are not relevant in this instance, but the other information may be helpful).

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully

Dr Alasdair Wood  
Consultant in Health Protection  
UK Health Security Agency South West