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Public Health says children who are not immunized cannot attend school during outbreak

Public Health is informing parents in writing about the importance of making sure their children's vaccinations are up-to-date or their children may be excluded from attending school.

If an outbreak of a disease is declared by Public Health in a school, any student with an incomplete immunization record, or an exemption form on file with Public Health, will be excluded from attending school until the outbreak is over.

?Our priority is to stop the spread of disease and protect vulnerable children and the community at large,? said Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. ?Immunizations are the safest and most effective way to stop diseases that once made many thousands of people sick. Today, we are seeing a return of some of those diseases because some people are not receiving vaccinations for personal reasons. It is the law in Ontario that students must be immunized and have complete records with Public Health if they want to attend school.?

In addition to vaccination for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus and polio, three additional vaccines were added to the vaccination schedule in July 2014: pertussis (whooping cough), meningococcal disease and varicella (chicken pox).

Parents who choose not to immunize their children must contact Public Health at 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4396 to complete an exemption form. Parents can also call to make sure their child's immunization records are up-to-date or to book an appointment for these vaccines which are available at no cost.