**The MMR vaccine was introduced in 1988.**

It contains weakened forms of measles, mumps and rubella.

**These diseases lead to long term brain damage, infertility and death if left untreated.**

MMR is suggested as a compulsory vaccine for all new born children. They then receive a booster when they go to primary school.

**Parents can choose for their children not to be vaccinated. But why would they?**

In 1998 a doctor (who has now been struck off) published some data that showed a link between MMR and autism. He was trying to persuade people that the MMR vaccine caused autism.

**Lots of parents decided it was better to face a small risk of catching measles, mumps or rubella than have an autistic child (autism is incurable).**

Since 1998 the number of cases of measles has risen steeply, with 2012 and 2013 having the largest numbers of measles cases since vaccination began.

**In 2004 the data was found to be insufficient, as well as being collected in dubious circumstances. It was withdrawn and a study in Finland showed no link between autism and MMR.**

Some parents are still concerned as the media made a big deal of it originally.

**The recent outbreak in Wales has affected people who were born when the original study connecting MMR and autism was published.**

They did not get vaccinated and nor did lots of other people their age. This meant that once one of them had caught it, it spread very quickly.

**Now, health authorities are urgently vaccinating anyone who was not vaccinated as a baby.**