



Who ARE the real-life Country Princesses in the new novel that's got the Cotswolds smart set buzzing with speculation?

SEE PAGES 28-29

WORST WHOOPING COUGH OUTBREAK IN FORTY YEARS

Five babies dead as experts blame fall in vaccination rates

By **Kate Pickles** and **Emily Stearn**

FIVE babies have died of whooping cough amid fears of the worst outbreak in 40 years.

Almost 3,000 cases have been reported so far this year, three times the total for the whole of 2023.

The babies, who were all under three months, died from January to March.

Experts blame the surge in infections on a fall in vaccination uptake, a less effective jab and reduced community immunity caused by lockdowns. It is believed that three of the five grieving mothers had jabs during pregnancy to protect their children.

Doctors said last night that vaccination remained the best defence and urged parents to check their children's jabs were up to date. Data shows the number of deaths so far this year is the highest since 2014.

The first signs of the illness, which is also known as pertussis or the '100-day cough', are similar to a cold. But after about a week it can develop into long coughing bouts that are typically worse at night.

As contagious as measles, whooping cough can be severe in babies under six months and lead to long-term complications.

It is the latest disease associated with the Victorian era to make a comeback, with similar outbreaks of measles and scarlet

Turn to Page 4

STORMY DANIELS:
If I'd made up
my story about
sex with Trump
I'd have written
it a lot better

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