



Public Health Commissioning
London Region
1st Floor,
Wellington House,
133-155 Waterloo Road,
SE1 8UG
14th August 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

Please check your child is up to date with their routine vaccinations before they start school in September 2020.

Before your child begins school, it is really important that they are up to date with their vaccinations to protect themselves from several contagious and potentially serious diseases.

Although COVID-19 has introduced a 'new normal' of schooling with social distancing measures, 'bubbling' and infection control measures, children are still at risk of germs (virus and bacteria alike) spreading. Vaccination builds children's immunity to protect against these illnesses. It also, for a number of diseases, stops these germs being spread, thus protecting the very vulnerable children who may not have, or may not be able to develop, immunity.

In London, vaccination rates in children are lower than needed. Due to COVID-19, vaccination rates dropped even lower. This puts unvaccinated children at greater risk and increases the likelihood of an outbreak in the wider population. Please check that your children are up to date with their vaccinations. As well as the infant vaccinations, all children should have immunisations at 12/13 months of age and again between 3 years 4 months and 5 years. If you are not sure if your child has had all their routine vaccinations, check their personal health record (Red Book) or contact your GP surgery. For a checklist of the vaccines and the ages at which they should ideally be given visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations.

All London general practices have adapted their delivery of vaccinations to ensure that they are safely vaccinating children in COVID-19 secure venues with social distancing, Personal Protective Equipment and infection control measures in place.

This winter it is likely that flu and COVID-19 will both be circulating. Flu is a dangerous virus that can be harmful to children and kills thousands of people a year. All children aged 4-11 years are offered the child 'flu vaccination in schools by school aged vaccination teams. Vaccination against flu will reduce the levels of flu in the population and help reduce the burden on health services this winter.

Thanking you in advance for your support,

Dr Catherine Heffernan
Principal Advisor for Commissioning Immunisations and Vaccination Services,
NHS England London.

Public Health Commissioning
London Region
1st Floor,
Wellington House,
133-155 Waterloo Road,
SE1 8UG
14th August 2020

Re: 'Flu vaccination for 2 and 3 year olds this winter 2020/21

Dear childcare provider,

As winter approaches, I would be very grateful if you could remind parents that their 2 and 3 year olds are entitled to free 'flu vaccine on the NHS. This winter it is likely that flu and COVID-19 will both be circulating. Flu is a dangerous virus that can be harmful to children and kills thousands of people a year. Young children catch influenza very easily. Each winter on average 5-20% of adults will be infected with 'flu, whilst 30-50% of children are infected. Children also spread the infection for up to 7 days, which is longer than in adults. Vaccinating children reduces the risk of influenza for family members, childcare staff and other children.

This vaccine is provided by the child's GP practice. The vaccine is given as a nasal spray and protects the child against the four main strains of influenza predicted to be in circulation this winter. Vaccination against flu will reduce the levels of flu in the population and help reduce the burden on health services this winter.

All London general practices have adapted their delivery of vaccinations to ensure that they are safely vaccinating children in COVID-19 secure venues with social distancing, Personal Protective Equipment and infection control measures in place.

Although COVID-19 has introduced a 'new normal' of nursery and preschool with social distancing measures, 'bubbling' and infection control measures, children are still at risk of germs (virus and bacteria alike) spreading. Vaccination builds children's immunity to protect against illnesses. Please also check that children are up to date with all the other vaccinations that they would have been invited for as a baby, at 12 months old and at 3 years 4 months. For a checklist of the vaccines and the ages at which they should ideally be given, please visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations.

Thanking you in advance for your support,



Dr Catherine Heffernan
Principal Advisor for Commissioning Immunisations and Vaccination Services,
NHS England/Improvement London.