

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination

Parent/ Carer Information Pack

2018/19



Dear Parent/ Carer

Re: Seasonal Influenza Vaccinations (flu) for children from Reception to year 5

This autumn the school immunisation team will be returning to your child's school to offer the seasonal flu vaccination to all children aged 4 to 10 years (date of birth between the 1st September 2008 and the 31st August 2014). This is an increase in one year group since the last seasonal flu delivery, with the addition of year 5. There may be some children in Reception year and years 1, 2, 3 and 4 might be outside of these date ranges (e.g. if a child has been accelerated or held back a year) but it is acceptable to offer and deliver immunisations to these children with their class peers.

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness in children, with serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Annual immunisation provides important protection to individual children and helps reduce the spread of flu to their friends, families and the wider community, protecting younger siblings, grandparents and others who are at increased risk of becoming seriously ill from flu.

The vaccination is free and is a quick and simple spray up the nose. Even if your child had it last year, it is recommended to have the flu vaccine again this year. Consent forms and additional information will be issued via schools in the autumn term. Further information is available at: www.nhs.uk/child-flu and the national leaflet can be viewed via:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714954/PHE_Protecting_Child_Flu_DL_leaflet.pdf

Should you have any problems or queries please do not hesitate to contact the Immunisation team for your locality found within the contacts page.

Yours sincerely



Charlotte Church
Service Lead for the School aged immunisation team

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Your child's personal information

Immunisation is one of the most successful and cost effective health protection interventions and is a cornerstone of public health. High immunisation rates are key to preventing the spread of infectious disease, complications and possible early death among individuals and protecting the population's health through both individual and herd immunity. Due to the significant impact of immunisations on school aged children and the wider population it is really important that the Immunisation team can access and share patient identifiable information (on eligible children) securely. Without this information we would not be able to fully monitor/ report and offer vaccination to all eligible cohorts which could lead to poor public health outcomes.

When you and your child use our services, we'll ask for and record your child's personal and health information to help us treat your child now and in the future. We may share your child's information with other organisations to assist with giving your child the best care possible, only information that is required and appropriate to support your child's care and treatment will be provided. To find out more about how we use your child's information please visit the Berkshire Healthcare website to see our Privacy Notice: <https://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/protecting-your-data-privacy-notice/>

At the beginning of the autumn term you will receive a consent form for your child to receive their Influenza vaccine. The information collected within the consent form will be shared with your child's GP following vaccination so that their health records can be updated accordingly. The consent form will then be stored and archived securely by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust following their Record Keeping Policy.

If you do not want your child to receive the flu vaccine or they have been given it elsewhere due to underlying medical conditions we would still like you to complete their consent form to indicate this so that we can accurately report numbers of students back to NHS England. **Please note** that unless your child has an underlying medical condition that puts them in an 'at risk' group for flu they will be unable to access this vaccine from your GP surgery as they are not commissioned to administer the flu vaccine to any child born on or after the 1st September 2013.

For further queries please contact BHFT's data protection officer via the details below:

Email: information.governance@berkshire.nhs.uk

Telephone number: 01344 415600

Children with Long Term medical conditions and Influenza

Children more at risk of Influenza:

Children with certain health conditions, even if well managed, are at higher risk of severe complications if they get flu. It is therefore especially important that these children are vaccinated. These conditions include:

- Serious breathing problems, for example, severe asthma needing regular inhaled or oral steroids
- Serious heart conditions
- Severe kidney or liver disease
- Diabetes
- Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, for example, chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment for cancer or long-term steroid use, and problems with the spleen, either because the spleen has been removed (asplenia) or doesn't work properly, for example, because of sickle cell or coeliac disease.
- Your GP may also recommend that your child is vaccinated against flu if they have a condition that affects the nervous system such as cerebral palsy. From the age of six months onwards these children should have a flu vaccination every year. Most of these children should have the nasal spray vaccine. For some children, the nasal spray is not suitable for medical reasons and it should not be given to children under the age of two years. These children will be offered an injectable vaccine instead either at the school or through the GP. If you are not sure whether your child needs a flu vaccination or you need more advice, speak to the immunisation team or your GP.

Children who may be excluded or delayed from receiving nasal flu and actions we would take to ensure they are protected from flu

Medical Contraindication	What action will be taken for their flu vaccine
Has your child received a flu vaccine since September 2018 ?	If yes, your child is up to date with their 2018 flu immunisation and will not require another flu vaccine until Autumn 2019
Does your child have a disease or are they currently receiving treatment that severely affects their immune system? (this includes currently, or in the last month, taken high dose steroids e.g.	You should seek the advice of the Doctor who manages your child's condition before signing and returning this consent form as they may advise one vaccine over the other (e.g. injectable rather than live nasal flu)
Does your child have severe or poorly controlled asthma, for example children who are currently taking or have taken oral steroids (e.g. prednisolone) or inhaled high dose steroids (e.g. budesonide) in the past 14 days	We would delay your child having the nasal flu vaccine when their asthma has improved by inviting them to a community catch up clinic
Is anyone who you have close contact with, including family currently having treatment that severely affects their immune system? (e.g. they need to be kept in isolation) If yes to the above question can your child avoid contact with them for 2 weeks after receiving vaccination?	If your child cannot avoid contact we would advise having the injectable flu vaccine as it is not a live virus. Your child will be invited to a community catch up clinic for the injectable flu vaccine
Has your child had a severe allergic reaction (that has required intensive care) to any previous flu vaccine or to any component of the vaccine including gelatine and Gentamicin? For a full list of ingredients visit: Nasal flu (LAIV): https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/3296/pil Quadrivalent Injectable vaccine (QIV): https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/666/pil	Your child would be referred onto your GP by the Immunisation team to discuss having this vaccine within a hospital setting to ensure they were monitored against further serious allergic reactions.
Does your child have an egg allergy? If yes, has your child ever suffered with a severe egg allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) that has required intensive care?	If your child is otherwise eligible for the nasal flu vaccine they would be fine to have this. If they were requiring the injectable vaccine, we would review vaccines to ensure they were given the vaccine with the lowest Ovalbumin (egg) content. Your child would be referred onto your GP by the Immunisation team to discuss having this vaccine within a hospital setting to ensure they were monitored against further serious allergic reactions.
Does your child have a severe allergic reaction to latex? (That has required hospital care)	Your child would be referred onto your GP by the Immunisation team to discuss having this vaccine within a hospital setting to ensure they were monitored against further serious allergic reactions.
Is your child receiving salicylate therapy? (i.e. aspirin)	Your child would be invited to a community catch up clinic for the injectable flu vaccine as they would be unable to have the live nasal flu vaccine
Does your child have any unrepaired craniofacial malformation?	Your child would be invited to a community catch up clinic for the injectable flu vaccine as we are unable to administer the nasal flu vaccine. This is because we cannot guarantee that the medication will be absorbed within the nasal passages effectively.

Parent Checklist for flu

		√ when completed
	<p>Review information on childhood flu/ influenza vaccine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/ • http://vk.ovg.ox.ac.uk/nasal-flu-vaccine • http://vk.ovg.ox.ac.uk/inactivated-flu-vaccine • https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714954/PHE_Protecting_Child_Flu_DL_leaflet.pdf 	
	<p><u>Complete consent form</u> (provided in the autumn term)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person with parental responsibility for the child must complete the consent form. • Please complete in black or blue ink (not pencil) • As you will see on your child's consent form there are a number of boxes that YOU MUST tick either yes or no to. This is really important to complete as it helps us to assess your child's eligibility for the flu vaccine. <i>If any boxes are left blank this will result in your child's vaccine being delayed.</i> • If you do not consent to this vaccine or your child has already received this vaccine (since 1st September 2018) please still complete the consent form so we can record this outcome and not further chase your child for this vaccine. <p><u>Please note</u> if your child has never received a flu vaccine before, is aged 4 to 9 years and is considered to be in an 'at risk' medical group (see page 5) they will require two doses of their flu vaccine (4 weeks apart). The second dose will either be given in school or via a community clinic.</p>	

	<p>Contact the Immunisation team if you have any medical queries and ensure that any medical conditions, including severe allergies are documented on the consent form.</p>	
	<p>Return a signed consent form to school as soon as possible after receiving it</p>	
	<p>On the day of immunisation, please let the immunisation team know if your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been wheezy in the last 3 days • had an increase or change in their asthma medication in the last 14 days • have taken oral steroids (liquid or tablets) in the last 14 days • have had any other significant changes to their health that may impact them being administered flu 	
	<p>Following vaccination your child (if vaccinated) will have a vaccine record card with details on their vaccination; including date and time they received it. Please ensure that this is kept safely, preferably with their Personal child health record (Red book).</p>	

What to expect on the day of your child's vaccination session

	<p>Consent forms will be issued in advance of the immunisation session. These need to be completed, signed and returned to school as soon as possible so that we can start planning for how many children require vaccination.</p>
	<p>The immunisation team will aim to arrive at your child's school for 9am to set up the session. This will include preparing tables, sorting out equipment and checking vaccines and emergency medication. Some nurses may arrive earlier to allow time to be able to check through all of the returned consent forms – this process includes dealing with any medical queries, removing any non-consent and determining numbers for vaccinating.</p>
	<p>The team aim to start vaccinating at 9:30am and will vaccinate children, usually in class groups throughout the day.</p>
	<p>Following vaccination all children will be issued (via their class teacher) a vaccine record card to take home. This card is a record of the vaccine they received and provides information on the specific details of the vaccine and possible side effects.</p> <p>If your child is unwell on the day of the session we will record this on their record card and invite you to make a community clinic appointment as soon as possible (you will receive notification of how to do this). If your child is unable to have the nasal flu vaccine due to their medical history, we will be able to offer them an alternative injectable vaccine via our community clinic and will notify you of how to arrange this.</p> <p>As a service we sign and complete all consent forms for children who have been vaccinated and then notify the child's GP so that their health records can be updated. Any absent children who have returned (signed) consent forms requesting the vaccine will be sent recall letters inviting them to a community clinic.</p> <p><u>Please note</u> if you do not return a consent form for your child you may not automatically receive a letter/ call to book into a community catch up clinic. Therefore if you still would like your child vaccinated please call the relevant immunisation team on the contact details listed within this pack.</p>

Preparing your child for their Flu Vaccination

With the exception of Reception and children whose parents/ carers previously declined the vaccination most children who consent to the flu vaccination would have received this vaccine previously so should know what to expect. Very young children and children with special education needs may need further preparation to ensure that they are ready for the vaccination in the Autumn term. Below are some suggestions of how you can prepare your child for this vaccination:

Flu Video:

<https://www.nhs.uk/video/Pages/flu-heroes-nasal-flu-spray-for-kids.aspx?offset=17>

Easy read leaflets:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/651667/Easy_read_childhood_nasal_flu_leaflet.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/637939/PHE_Flu_easy_read_adult_flu_leaflet.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714954/PHE_Protecting_Child_Flu_DL_leaflet.pdf



Frequently asked Questions about childhood flu

Why should my child have the flu vaccine?

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness in children causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints, and extreme tiredness. This can last several days or more. Some children can get a very high fever, sometimes without the usual flu symptoms, and may need to go to hospital for treatment. Serious complications of flu include a painful ear infection, acute bronchitis, and pneumonia.

What are the benefits of the vaccine?

Having the vaccine will help protect your child from what can be a very nasty illness in children. Children under the age of five have the highest rate of hospital admissions due to flu.

It will reduce the chance of others in your family, who could be at greater risk from flu, such as grandparents or those with long term health conditions, getting flu from your child. It can help you avoid having to take time off work or other activities because you are ill or need to look after your sick child.

How effective is the vaccine?

Flu vaccine is the best protection we have against this unpredictable virus. Flu infects many people and each year causes severe illness and death particularly among at-risk groups, including older people, pregnant women and those with an underlying health condition, even one that is well managed.

The effectiveness of the vaccine will vary from year to year, depending on the match between the strain of flu in circulation and that contained in the vaccine. In the UK the vaccine offered to children has provided good protection against flu since its introduction.

Why are so many children being offered the vaccine?

As well as helping to protect children who are vaccinated, the infection is then less able to spread, and so it helps to protect other family members and friends.

My child had the flu vaccination last year. Do they need another one this year?

Yes; the flu vaccine for each winter can change every year. For this reason, we recommend that your child is vaccinated against flu again this year, even if vaccinated last year.

Who will give my child their vaccination?

Children aged two, and three years old will be given the vaccination at their general practice usually by the practice nurse.

Nearly all eligible school-aged children will be offered the vaccination in school and this will be administered by the school aged immunisation team.

Children who are home educated will be offered the vaccine, provided they are in an eligible age group. This can be done at a community clinic site; please contact the school aged immunisation team to book an appointment.

How will the vaccine be given?

For most children, it is given as a nasal spray.

Can the vaccine cause flu?

No, the vaccine cannot cause flu because the viruses in it have been weakened to prevent this from happening.

So how does the nasal spray work?

The nasal spray contains viruses that have been weakened to prevent them from causing flu but will help your child to build up immunity. When your child comes into contact with flu viruses they will be better able to fight off the infection.

The vaccine is absorbed quickly in the nose so, even if your child sneezes immediately after having had the spray, there's no need to worry that it hasn't worked.

Are there any side-effects of the vaccine?

Children may develop a runny or blocked nose, headache, general tiredness and some loss of appetite. However, these are much less serious than developing flu or complications associated with flu. Serious side-effects are uncommon.

Does the nasal vaccine contain gelatine derived from pigs (porcine gelatine)?

Yes. The nasal vaccine contains a highly processed form of gelatine (porcine gelatine), which is used in a range of many essential medicines. The gelatine helps to keep the vaccine viruses stable so that the vaccine provides the best protection against flu.

Can't my child have the injected vaccine that doesn't contain gelatine?

The nasal vaccine provides the best protection against flu, particularly in young children. It also reduces the risk to, for example, a baby brother or sister who is too young to be vaccinated, as well as other family members (for example, grandparents) who may be more vulnerable to the complications of flu. The injected vaccine is not thought to reduce spread so effectively and so is not being offered to healthy children as part of this programme. However, if your child is at high risk from flu due to one or more medical conditions or treatments and can't have the nasal flu vaccine they should have the flu vaccine by injection.

Some faith groups accept the use of porcine gelatine in medical products – the decision is, of course, up to you. For further information about porcine gelatine and the nasal flu vaccine, see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/460069/8584-Vaccines-porcine-gelatine-2015-2P-A4-04-web.pdf

When will the vaccine be given?

For school-aged children a vaccination session will be held at school during the autumn term (between September and December 2018). Your child's school will provide details from the school aged immunisation team.

Are there any children who shouldn't have the nasal vaccine? (see page 6)

As children with pre-existing medical conditions may be more vulnerable to complications of flu it is especially important that they are vaccinated. If you are unsure whether your child should get the injected vaccine or the nasal vaccine please check with the school immunisation team.

Children who should not have the nasal vaccine include those who:

- are currently wheezy or have been wheezy in the past three days (vaccination should be delayed until at least three days after the wheezing has stopped)
- are severely asthmatic, i.e. being treated with oral steroids or high dose inhaled steroids
- have a condition, or are on treatment, that severely weakens their immune system or have someone in their household who needs isolation because they are severely immunosuppressed
- have severe egg allergy. Most children with egg allergy can be safely immunised with nasal flu vaccine. However, children with a history of severe egg allergy with anaphylaxis should seek specialist advice. Please check with your GP
- are allergic to any other components of the vaccine* (see website <http://xpil.medicines.org.uk> and enter Fluenz Tetra into the search box for a list of the ingredients).

If your child is at high risk from flu due to one or more medical conditions or treatments and can't have the nasal flu vaccine because of this, they should have the injected flu vaccine.

Children who have been vaccinated with the nasal spray should avoid household contact with people with very severely weakened immune systems for around two weeks following vaccination.

Contact Details for the School Aged Immunisation Team

Berkshire West Team

Including schools based within Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire

Contact Number:

For general medical queries: 01189207547

For community appointment bookings: 01189207575

Email Address: bks-tr.SchoolimmunisationTeam@nhs.net

Berkshire East Team

Including schools based within Bracknell, Windsor, Ascot, Maidenhead and Slough

Contact Number (for all queries): 01753 636759

Email Address: bks-tr.SchoolimmunisationTeam@nhs.net