

NHS England - North West

Communications Toolkit for Primary Schools – Flu Vaccinations 2024/25

Background

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness in children causing fever, extreme tiredness, aching muscles and joints, stuffy nose, dry cough, and sore throat. Most children are well enough to go back to school a week after getting sick with flu, but for some it can be life-threatening. 10,000 children in England were hospitalised with flu in the 2022/23 winter season.

The flu vaccine is the best defence we have against flu, and it cuts the risk of being hospitalised due to flu by around two-thirds. Vaccination of children is based on the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the independent expert advisory group that advises the Government on vaccination.

The benefits include protection against flu for the children who receive the vaccine and reduced transmission of flu in the community. This is because children play a key role in the transmission of flu, including to those who may be at higher risk from the complications from flu such as the elderly.

Since the start of the programme, research has shown that vaccinating large numbers of children has reduced the circulation of flu in the community. This has reduced the number of GP consultations for flu like illness for both the vaccinated children and the wider community and has also reduced hospital admissions from flu. For schools the benefits include reduced absenteeism and the reduced likelihood of teachers catching flu from their pupils.

This toolkit provides information and resources that can be shared through school channels and may also be helpful when speaking to parents and carers to help them make an informed decision about their child having the vaccine.

It includes:

- Links to information leaflets and posters.
- Links to information leaflets and posters in translated languages and alternative formats.
- Links to information in easy read format and information for people with a learning disability and their carers.
- Link to national briefing letter for schools around the importance of the primary school flu programme.
- Link to letter for use by schools to accompany consent forms.
- Social media wording and assets.
- Website and newsletter content.
- Wording for reminder text messaging.

Important information

- The flu vaccine comes in two forms; the nasal spray and an injectable version.
- The nasal spray is routinely offered to eligible young people up to the age of 18.
- The nasal spray is a porcine-containing product. If parents have concerns, they should speak to a trusted religious leader. Children who can't have the nasal spray for medical or faith reasons should request an injected flu vaccine instead.
- The injectable vaccine will be available from the start of the school flu vaccine programme but must be specified by the parent or guardian on the child's consent form.

Key messages

There are 5 reasons why pupils should have the flu vaccine. They are:

1. Protect your child

The vaccine will help protect your child against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia.

2. Protect you, your family and friends

Vaccinating your child will help protect more vulnerable friends and family.

3. No injection needed

The nasal spray is painless and easy to have.

4. It's better than having flu

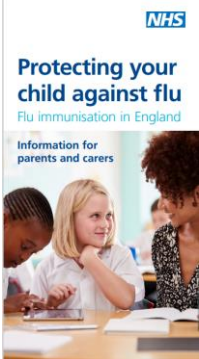
The nasal spray helps protect against flu, has been given to millions of children worldwide and has an excellent safety record.


5. Avoid costs

If your child gets flu, you may have to take time off work or arrange alternative childcare.


Resources:

<p>Key messages for parents and guardians</p>	<p>Flu can be a very unpleasant illness, even when you are young, causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints and extreme tiredness. Some children need to go to hospital for treatment – more than 10,000 children in England were hospitalised with flu in 2022/23 winter season.</p> <p>The flu vaccine is the best protection we have against this virus, and it has an excellent safety record.</p> <p>The vaccine will be given in school <insert any relevant information such as confirmed clinic dates/times></p> <p>You will receive a consent form for your child’s annual flu vaccination.</p> <p>Please return this whether you want your child to have the vaccine, if you don’t want your child to have the vaccine or if your child is in an at-risk group and you plan to take them to the GP.</p> <p>If your child can’t have the nasal spray for medical or faith reasons you can request an injected flu vaccine instead when you sign your child’s consent form.</p> <p>You can find more information about the flu vaccine for primary school children at nhs.uk/child-flu</p> <p>If you have any questions, please contact <add details></p>	
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<p>Leaflet</p>	<p>Protecting your child against flu.</p> <p>Information for parents and carers.</p>  <p>Translated languages and alternative formats – PLEASE SHARE THESE LINKS WITH PARENTS WHO MAY NOT SPEAK ENGLISH AS A FIRST LANGUAGE.</p>	<p>This leaflet is available free to download / order in the following languages:</p> <p>English, Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Cantonese, Estonian, Farsi, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Latvian, Lithuanian, Punjabi, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Romany, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu and Yiddish.</p> <p>An English large print version is available to order.</p> <p>A Braille version of this leaflet is available to order.</p> <p>A British Sign Language video of this leaflet is available to download.</p> <p>An audio version is available to download.</p>
<p>Poster</p>	<p>Flu: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child.</p>	<p>5 reasons to vaccinate your child against flu poster for primary schools and pre-schools is available to order from HealthPublications</p> <p>This poster is available in the following languages: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese (simplified), Estonian, Farsi, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Latvian, Lithuanian, Punjabi, Polish, Romanian, Romany, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu and Yiddish.</p>

		
<p>Information in easy read format</p>	<p>These resources are aimed at people who have, or care for someone with, a learning disability.</p> <p>They provide advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the flu virus and why you need a vaccine every year • signs of flu • flu vaccinations and where to get one <p>People with a learning disability, and their carers, can get a free flu vaccination from their doctor or pharmacist. Some people with autism may also be eligible for a free flu vaccination.</p>	<p>Links to assets:</p> <p>Easy-read and simple text flu vaccination resources are also available for downloading or ordering.</p> <p>Paper copies of these resources are available to order free of charge.</p>
<p>Information for carers of people with a learning disability</p>	<p>A short video for carers of people with a learning disability about the importance of vaccinating themselves and the people they care for.</p>	<p>Link to YouTube video:</p>

	The video explains why it is important to have it every year, who is eligible for a free vaccine, where you can get the vaccine and the reasonable adjustments carers might need for the person they care for.	youtu.be/OqGSm0jaF9A
National briefing for schools	National briefing containing detailed information about the programme, vaccine and FAQs.	Link to national briefing: Flu Briefing for Primary Schools 2024/25 - Health Publications
School letter template	Letter for use by schools to accompany consent forms.	Link to letter: Flu vaccination: invitation letter template for school children
Social media suggested wording and assets	<p>You will receive a consent form for your child's annual flu vaccination.</p> <p>Please return this whether you want your child to have the vaccine, if you don't want your child to have the vaccine or if your child is in an at-risk group and you plan to take them to the GP.</p> <p>For further information go to: nhs.uk/child-flu or speak to <add contact details here></p>	<p>Links to social media assets:</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o0Hlwl-ACr6iEaC2yLQxXmQoS9T-xwK6/view?usp=drive_link</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W-7HaLfNAhJPeKB3O7VzTYhGErSc-zVH/view?usp=drive_link</p>

		
<p>Social media video with suggested wording</p>	<p>Walton was worried about getting his flu vaccine, but once he had it, he didn't know what all the fuss was about. It's that quick and easy.</p> <p>Young children can become very unwell with flu and complications and are more likely to be hospitalised with flu than any other age group.</p> <p>They can easily pass it on to people who could be vulnerable - even if they don't show any symptoms.</p> <p>For further information go to: nhs.uk/child-flu or speak to <add contact details here></p>	<p>Link to video:</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Mec8sNn7hRMY8-JM0je6Ra8656DRmtq7/view?usp=drive_link</p>
<p>Newsletter and website content</p>	<p>Flu is an unpredictable virus that can kill thousands of people during a flu season. 10,000 children in England were hospitalised with flu in the 2022/23 winter season. The flu vaccine is the best defence we have against it.</p> <p>Having your child vaccinated against flu can help protect them, you, and other more vulnerable people in the community such as their grandparents and teachers.</p> <p>Thank you to those who have returned consent forms for the flu vaccination to date.</p>	<p>A copy of the poster could be used on web / newsletter:</p> <p>5 reasons to vaccinate your child against flu poster for primary schools and pre-schools is available to order from HealthPublications</p>

	<p>Please return any outstanding consents whether you want your child to receive the vaccine, not receive the vaccine or you have taken them to the GP for their flu vaccination.</p> <p>For more information on the children's flu vaccine go to: nhs.uk/child-flu or speak to <add contact details here></p>	<p>This poster is available in the following languages: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese (simplified), Estonian, Farsi, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Latvian, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Polish, Romanian, Romany, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu and Yiddish.</p>
Text message reminders	<p>Thank you to those who have returned consent forms for the flu vaccination to date.</p> <p>Please return any outstanding consents; whether you want your child to receive the vaccine, not receive the vaccine or you have taken them to the GP for their flu vaccination.</p> <p>For further information go to: nhs.uk/child-flu or speak to <add contacts details here></p>	

If you have any questions about this toolkit or need more information, please contact <provider contact details>