NHS
Berkshire Healthcare
Children, Young People and Families services

School-aged Immunisation Team
Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
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W: Berkshire School-Aged Immunisation Team | Children Young People and Families Online Resource (berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Your child's annual flu vaccination is now due. We will be visiting your child's school on Tuesday 16th November 2021 (Westende Junior School)

We are contacting you to make you aware that your child is now eligible for their flu vaccination. This is something that we now offer to all children from Reception to Year 11 (and children with long term health conditions that put them at greater risk from flu) as part of our winter vaccination programme. We ask that you complete our online consent form, whether you consent to your child being vaccinated or not. This allows us to monitor the uptake of vaccinations within your child's school and the wider community.

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 fu symptoms, and may need to go to hospital for treatment. Serious complications of flu include a painful ear infection, acute bronchitis and pneumonia.

Having the vaccine will help protect your child from what can be a very nasty illness in children. Children under the age of 5 years 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. This year, helping to protect them against flu is particularly important if COVID-19 is still circulating because people at risk from flu are also vulnerable to the complications of COVID-19. 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.

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 as the flu viruses change every year. To watch a child friendly video on how the nasal spray is administered click here

Porcine content in the flu nasal spray:

Gelatine from pork is a common ingredient in drugs including the nasal flu vaccine. It is a stabiliser that helps to keep the vaccine safe and effective during storage. The gelatine used in vaccines is different from that in foods as it is highly processed and broken down into small fragments. To read further information on this visit Gelatine in vaccines | Vaccine Knowledge (ox.ac.uk)

The most effective flu vaccine for children is the live attenuated nasal spray (Fluenz Tetra). However, for some children and young people, due to personal beliefs it is not considered appropriate for them to have. This is unique to each individual and should be a personal and informed choice.

If you decline the live attenuated nasal spray due to its porcine content you will be asked if you wish to consent to an alternative porcine free vaccine. Please be aware this is an injectable vaccine (QIVc) and is not as effective as the nasal spray.

Completing Consent:

To consent to your child having the flu vaccination you must complete an electronic consent form via https://www.berkshireimmunisations.co.uk/Forms/Flu and insert your school's (**Westende Junior school**) unique code: **(BK109899) by 9am 48 hours before your session** to ensure your child receives their vaccination. If your child's session is on a Monday then the electronic consent will close at 9am on the previous Thursday. It is important that you **do not** complete more than one consent form per child, as this results in duplicate consent forms. If any of your child's medical details change, and/ or you change your mind about the consent status please email us via our contact details above and include your child's full name, DOB, school they attend, vaccination and changes you wish for us to make.

NHS Number:

We ask for your child's NHS number on all consent forms, this allows your child's record to be synced with their GP records efficiently. Please, where possible try to include this information on your child's consent form. The NHS number can be found on any prescriptions they have, in the red book (PCHR) alternatively you can search via Find your NHS number - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Further Information:

A leaflet explaining the vaccination programme can be found on our e-consent website and is also available via the nhs.uk website Child flu vaccine - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and includes details about the small number of children for whom the nasal vaccine is not appropriate. Please find link below for the Protecting your child against flu leaflet Protecting your child against flu - Information for parents and carers of preschool and primary school-aged children (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

School-aged Immunisation Team