|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| My ref: |  | High_Res_CCC_Logo_v7_col01 |
| Your ref: |  |
| Date: |  |
| Contact: |  |
| Telephone: |  |
| E Mail: |  |
|  |  | **Public Health**  Deputy Director: Val Thomas  Cambridgeshire County Council  New Shire Hall  Alconbury Weald Civic Hub  Emery Crescent  Alconbury Weald  Huntingdon  PE28 4YE |

Dear Headteacher

We are writing to you in advance of the national influenza (flu) immunisation programme for 2025-2026, guidance on which has been released. The school-aged eligible cohorts remain unchanged. All primary school aged children (from reception to year 6) and all secondary school aged children (from year 7 to year 11) will be offered free influenza vaccination. The priority is to start vaccinating children from September, as soon as vaccine is available, therefore vaccination clinics will be arranged for schools when the autumn term commences. As in previous years, Vaccination UK will be coming into schools to administer the influenza vaccination.

The childhood element of seasonal flu vaccination is vital to the health of our communities over the winter period; DHSC modelling has shown that over twice as many hospital admissions are averted per 1000 additional doses to children (up to year 11) than by an additional 1000 doses to the 65+ cohort.

Last season’s uptake in Cambridgeshire was 75.6% for primary and 68.3% for secondary schools (UKHSA data). The lowest uptake for primary school was seen in year 3 (69.9%), whilst the lowest uptake in secondary schools was shown to be year 11 (58.9%). To improve uptake for this influenza season, headteacher support with the following is requested:

* **All pupils should attend the influenza vaccination clinic, even if the consent form has not been returned**. Vaccination UK can contact parents during the clinic to get parental consent over the telephone. In schools where this takes place, uptake is improved considerably. In secondary schools, some older children may be able to provide their own consent if their parent/carer has not returned the consent form. The vaccination team is trained to assess competency to self-consent, whilst making every effort to obtain verbal consent from the child’s parent/carer.
* Where decline for influenza vaccination is documented, pupils do not need to attend the vaccination clinic.
* Please supply Vaccination UK with class lists including parent/carer contact details when requested. This enables the vaccination team to contact the parent/carer during the clinic using the most up-to-date contact numbers.
* If Vaccination UK provide paper consent forms, please ensure that these are sent to parents/carers in good time prior to the planned vaccination clinics.
* Please send reminders to parents/carers on forthcoming vaccination clinics via your usual channels – website, newsletters or text distribution lists
* An injectable influenza vaccination will be available at all school vaccination sessions as an alternative to the nasal spray vaccine for children whose parents do not accept the use of porcine gelatine in vaccines.
* If you feel that your parent population would benefit from translated or easy-read information on the influenza vaccination, please let the Vaccination UK team know when they contact you and these can be provided where possible.
* If you feel that parents/carers require assistance in completing the consent form, please do so where possible.

A briefing for primary schools is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-in-schools/flu-vaccination-programme-2021-to-2022-briefing-for-schools). Guidance for secondary schools on adolescent vaccination programmes including influenza is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adolescent-vaccination-programme-in-secondary-schools/adolescent-vaccination-programme-briefing-for-secondary-schools).

Many thanks in advance for supporting the influenza vaccination programme, which remains a critically important public health intervention to reduce morbidity and mortality in those most at risk.

Yours sincerely,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | A signature on a white background  AI-generated content may be incorrect. |
| Val Thomas  Deputy Director of Public Health  Cambridgeshire County Council | Sarah Callaghan  Service Director: Education  Cambridgeshire County Council |

Useful resources:

* Flu vaccination films for people with a [learning disability](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqGSm0jaF9A) and autistic people and their [family or carers.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJ9QdwUitFg)
* [British Islamic Medical Association Flu Resources](https://britishima.org/advice/flu/) for the Islamic position on taking up flu vaccination and halal requirements.
* [Consent forms](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-in-schools)
* [GOV.uk resources](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-in-schools)