

London Borough of Waltham  
Forest  
Waltham Forest Town Hall  
Fellowship Square  
London E17 4JF

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I hope that you had a restful break over the festive period.

I am writing to you to update you on the routine winter vaccinations that will be starting in secondary schools this month and to ask for your help in us collectively seeking to protect children from getting sick.

### **Actions for parents**

- **Read this letter** to learn more about the different upcoming vaccinations, what they protect against, what they do and don't contain and why it is important for your child to get these.
- **Complete e-consent forms for the different vaccinations** so that your school vaccination team know whether you consent to your child being vaccinated or not. E-consent forms for each of the vaccinations are provided in this letter. Paper consent forms can be requested by emailing or calling the school vaccination team ([walthamforest@V-uk.co.uk](mailto:walthamforest@V-uk.co.uk) or 0208 017 4291).
- **Look out for dates of catch-up clinics** taking place across the borough if you think your child has missed any of their vaccinations. You can do this by visiting: <https://www.schoolvaccination.uk/catch-up-clinics>

### **Flu vaccination programme – Years 7,8 and 9**

Starting this month, our school vaccination team (Vaccination UK) will be visiting schools to give flu vaccinations to secondary school children in years 7, 8 and 9. We know that this year's strain of flu is much stronger than in previous years, so it is vital that school children get this vaccination. The vaccine will help protect your child against flu and reduces the chance of them spreading flu to others so in turn helps protect your family and friends. Because the flu virus changes from year to year it is important that children get this vaccine every year to protect them against any new strains of flu.

The flu vaccine is given as a nasal spray rather than an injection. The nasal spray vaccine contains porcine gelatine (derived from pigs). If you would rather your child receive the flu injection which doesn't contain porcine, you can record this on the flu e-consent form provided by Vaccination UK. The e-consent form for the flu vaccine can be found here: <https://london.schoolvaccination.uk/flu/2022/walthamforest>

### **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine – Year 8**

Also starting this month, the school vaccination team will be visiting schools to give children in year 8 the first dose of the HPV vaccine.

The HPV vaccine protects against several types of cancer caused by HPV such as cervical cancer; mouth and throat cancers and cancers of the anal and genital area. It's really important that both girls and boys get this vaccine as HPV infection is very common in both. Over 70% of those who do not get vaccinated are likely to be infected by HPV, which can lead to several types of cancer and also genital warts.

This vaccine has been around for a long time and is safe and effective at preventing against these diseases - over 280 million doses of this vaccine have been given to date worldwide. Two doses of this vaccine are needed to give protection against these diseases, with the second dose given 6-24 months after the first. The e-consent form for the HPV vaccine can be found here: <https://london.schoolvaccination.uk/hpv/2022/walthamforest>

### **DPT/MenACWY vaccines – Year 9 & 10**

In February, the school vaccination team will visit schools to give both the DPT (3-in-1 teenage booster) and MenACWY vaccines to children in year 9.

The DPT vaccine, otherwise known as the 3-in-1 teenage booster protects against three different diseases: diphtheria, polio and tetanus. These diseases can be serious and sometimes fatal in children - getting vaccinated is the best way to protect your child. In the UK, children should receive 5 doses of the diphtheria, polio and tetanus vaccines to be fully protected against these diseases. The 3-in-1 teenage booster given in year 9 is the fifth and final dose of this vaccine. Getting this vaccine is important because for the first time since 2003, polio has been spreading in North and East London.

The MenACWY vaccine is given to children in year 9 and offered again to children in year 10 who missed this. One dose of the vaccine is enough to protect children against meningitis and blood poisoning (septicaemia) caused by these bacteria, which can lead to life-changing disabilities such as amputations, hearing loss and brain damage. The e-consent form for the DPT/MenACWY vaccines can be found here: <https://london.schoolvaccination.uk/dtp/2022/walthamforest>

### **Further information and guidance**

You can learn more about the different vaccines mentioned here on the NHS website:

- Flu vaccine: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>
- HPV vaccine: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/hpv-human-papillomavirus-vaccine/>
- DPT vaccine: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/3-in-1-teenage-booster/>
- MenACWY vaccine: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/men-acwy-vaccine/>

Information on the NHS website can be translated using an online translator. Guidance on how to do this for different web browsers is available at: <https://www.wikihow.com/Translate-a-Web-Page>

Once again thank you for your support and I wish you a safe and happy new year!



Joe McDonnell

Director of Public Health

Waltham Forest Council