

19 October 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Half-term vaccinations for your child

With school closed for half term next week (24-28 October), thousands of extra bookable and walk-in appointments will be available for children's vaccinations for polio, Covid-19 and flu, and for other routine immunisations such as measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

Polio is a highly-infectious virus – which can cause lifelong paralysis – and evidence suggests it is spreading in London. The best way to protect your child is to get a polio booster vaccine.

Also as we head into winter, getting your children vaccinated against flu and Covid-19 gives them vital extra protection from these dangerous viruses which spread more easily in colder weather when we spend more time with friends and family indoors.

Polio and other childhood immunisations

- The NHS has contacted parents of children aged one to nine offering a polio vaccine. For some children this may be an extra dose of polio vaccine on top of their routine vaccinations. In other children it may just bring them up to date. To book a child's polio vaccination, you have two options:
 - Your GP should have contacted you – follow their instructions to book an appointment with them.
 - You can also go to a vaccination clinic. There are sites across north east London offering pre-booked and walk-in appointments. Visit the NHS North East London website for more information, including opening times: www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/polio
 - King George Hospital, Barley Lane, Ilford is holding a 'Super Wednesday' polio vaccination clinic on Wednesday 26 October with over 500 appointments available. Find out more here: www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/polio
- It is important for young children and babies to complete their childhood immunisation programme for the best protection against infectious diseases including polio and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). If your child has missed a vaccine, contact your GP for a catch-up. Information on childhood vaccinations, and when to have them, is also available on the NHS website vaccinations page. The NHS is running a MMR catch-up campaign so some parents may be contacted directly. www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/

Flu vaccinations

- The children's nasal spray flu vaccine is offered every year to children (aged two to 17 – 2 to 3 year olds, all primary school aged children and some children aged up to 17 with long term health conditions) to help protect them against the virus. Flu can be a very unpleasant illness for children and can lead to serious problems. Visit here for more information www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine
- Children aged two and three will be given the vaccination at their local GP surgery, usually by the practice nurse. School-aged children and young people will be offered the flu vaccine in school. For most children, the vaccine will be given as a spray in each nostril. This is a very quick and painless procedure. Visit here for more information www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations

Covid-19 vaccinations

- All children and young people aged five to 15 (on 31 August 2022) are eligible for two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine. The number of additional doses they may be eligible for depends on their age and if they have any additional risk factors. Further information on booking your child's Covid-19 vaccination, and eligibility, is available on the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19



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