

September 2023

Dear Parent/Caregiver

### **Regarding Flu vaccination offer for your child**

As we approach the autumn/winter season, we want to ensure that you are aware about the risk of winter bugs like flu and norovirus, and the opportunity to protect your child's health with the flu vaccine.

#### **What is flu?**

[Flu](#) is different from a common cold and it circulates every year, usually in the winter. It is caused by the influenza virus. It can be a very unpleasant illness for children. It can also lead to serious problems, such as [bronchitis](#) and [pneumonia](#).

#### **Who should have the nasal spray flu vaccine and why?**

Children can catch and spread flu easily. The good news is that the children's nasal spray flu vaccine is safe, effective and needle free. It's offered every year to children to help protect them against flu. The flu virus changes every year; this is why those who had a flu vaccine last winter still need another one this year to stay protected. The nasal spray vaccine offers the best protection for children aged 2 to 17 years. They'll be offered a flu vaccine injection if the nasal spray vaccine is not suitable for them. Injected flu vaccines are also safe and effective.

All children aged 2-3 years, and primary school aged children (from Reception to Year 6) are eligible for a flu vaccination. It is free on the NHS. Vaccinating children also protects others who are vulnerable to flu, such as babies and older people.

#### **How to get a flu vaccine for your child**

1. Two and three year olds will be invited by their GPs – please contact your GP if you are waiting to hear from them.
2. Primary school children can get theirs at school – if your child goes to school in Lambeth and has been offered the flu vaccine by the school-age vaccination service (Hounslow & Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust), we encourage you to complete and return your child's consent form to the school as soon as possible.

If you haven't been contacted by your child's school in Lambeth or if your child misses the in-school vaccination session, you can contact the school-age vaccination service directly on 020 8614 5495 / 020 8614 5496. The school age vaccination team has also arranged catch-up vaccination sessions in the community to ensure that no child is left out. Please find a schedule of planned catch-up vaccination sessions enclosed with this letter. Note that the catch up clinics do not apply to 2 and 3 year old children. Please contact your GP for your 2 and 3 year old child's flu vaccine.

We urge you to take this opportunity to protect your child and family from the flu.

Find out more about the [flu vaccine](#).

Yours Faithfully



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