

My ref: Parent Letter – Autumn 2022
Your ref:

Date: 13 October 2022

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Education Directorate

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Dear Parent / Carer,

As schools and settings return for the autumn term, we expect to see an increasing number of children and staff absences due to winter viruses including Covid-19. As a result, schools and settings are working hard to balance safety with the need to ensure that children receive the education and care they need.

As parents/carers, you have a role to play in helping reduce the spread of infections and ensuring schools and settings can continue to operate.

Covid-19/Respiratory Infections

The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar. It is not possible to tell if your child has COVID-19, flu or another respiratory infection based on symptoms alone. Most people with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections will have a relatively mild illness.

Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and where possible avoid contact with other people. They can go back to their school or setting when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

In some cases, a continued cough or feeling tired remains after other symptoms have improved, this does not mean that the person is still infectious. Children with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or mild cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their school or setting. All children and young people with respiratory symptoms should be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing and/or sneezing and to wash their hands after using or disposing of tissues.

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should stay at home and where possible avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test. In children, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower after 3 days if they feel well and do not have a high temperature.

If your child is aged 5 years and older and has not had 2 doses of the COVID vaccine, you can book a vaccine appointment. [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Influenza

School-aged children (reception to year 6) will be offered influenza immunisation at school through the Community and School Age Immunisation Service. All children 2 and 3 years of age on 31 August 2022 will receive nasal spray vaccine at the GP surgery. Secondary school children

will be offered influenza vaccination as far as it is possible to do so, with primary schools and lower years 7, 8 and 9 prioritised, and older ages offered vaccination once an offer has been made to younger children and subject to vaccine availability. All children aged 2-17 years with long-term health conditions will be offered the flu vaccine.

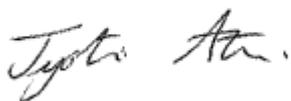
The flu vaccine will help protect your child against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia and will avoid the need for you to take time off work due to your child becoming unwell with flu. For children from the age of 2, flu immunisation is delivered via nasal spray which is painless and easy to have. Flu vaccines are needed every year as the vaccine is updated as flu viruses can change from one winter to the next. Some children may not be able to have the nasal spray but this will be covered in the consent form which you will be required to fill in before it is given.

Diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V)

During autumn/winter we see increased levels of diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V). Good hand hygiene is important to stop the spread of the virus. It is important to understand that alcohol gels, whilst effective for COVID-19 do not kill viruses which cause D&V and people are advised to wash their hands thoroughly using soap and water and dry them after using the toilet, before preparing food and eating. If your child has had symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they should not return to their school or setting until they have been symptom-free for at least 48 hours.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Following this advice will help to keep our children's childcare and education settings safe.

Yours sincerely



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