

A university teaching and research-active Trust
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Dear Parent / Carer,

Second COVID-19 dose for 12-15-year-olds

In line with government guidelines, we will be revisiting your child's school to offer them the chance to have their second COVID-19 vaccination – or the chance to have their first COVID-19 jab if they haven't already got the protection of the vaccine.

For those children eligible for a second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, this will help to bolster their protection, particularly in light of the highly contagious Omicron variant of the virus.

Our next visit will also provide those young people who were not vaccinated on our last visit, because they may have been absent on the day, not yet 12 years old or because they decided not have the vaccine at the time, with a new opportunity to have the vaccine.

You will shortly receive a letter with a link to our online consent form, as well as a contact number if you need support in completing the form.

Please note that some secondary schools where students have not yet had the flu vaccine will be offered the chance to get both a COVID-19 vaccine and flu on the same day.

More information about the vaccine

The vaccine used will be Pfizer-BioNTech, which is administered via a quick injection in the top of the arm.

Healthy children who have tested positive for COVID-19 need to wait 12 weeks before they can have the vaccine. Second doses also have to be 12 weeks from the young person's initial first dose.

If a young person is anxious about having the vaccine because they're afraid of needles, please contact the service, speak to a school nurse or a vaccinator on the day and they will be able to help. We can do things such as ensure the person is vaccinated quickly or in a separate area. More tips on needle phobia can be found on the LPT website: <https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/overcoming-your-fear-of-needlesv1.pdf>

What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. The administration of two vaccines at the same time might make side-effects more likely, but these side-effects are likely to be mild.

Some of the most common side effects of the COVID-19 include:

- having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection. This tends to be worst around 1 to 2 days after the vaccination
- feeling tired
- headache
- general aches, or mild flu like symptoms

Is it safe for my child to have the flu and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time?

Yes it is. National advice has deemed it both safe and effective to administer both vaccines together. The Joint Committee for Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) has outlined that it is preferable to offer the COVID-19 vaccine together with the flu to ensure the protection is delivered as quickly as possible, rather than to delay – and this advice includes school vaccination programmes. It is very common to administer multiple vaccines at once and neither vaccine will affect the effectiveness of the other.

Consent

Once you receive your consent letter and link to the online form, please fill it out as quickly as possible.

We will not vaccinate any child who does not have consent for each vaccine being given.

Even if you have filled out a consent form before for the COVID-19 vaccine, please do so again if you want your child to have a second dose. We need to regain consent for each vaccine we give.

In addition, please note that we will always take the latest parental consent decision for each child – even if it is different to one which you gave originally. For example, if you declined to consent to the vaccine previously, but now consent to your child having it on the next visit, we will always take the latest consent decision as the one we act upon.

If you have any questions about consent, please contact the school age immunisation team on: communityimmunisations.service@nhs.net

Where else can my child get the vaccine

Having a first or second dose COVID-19 vaccine does not have to take place at school.

12-15-year-olds can book an appointment to have the vaccine online at various clinics in hospitals, vaccination centres, pop-up venues and sometimes GP surgeries or pharmacies. Some walk-in clinics will also vaccinate people in this age group. However, a parent or guardian will need to attend appointments with their child to provide consent.

To find what is available closest to you, you can either:

- visit the NHS website for walk-ins: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/>
- view the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) #GetVaxxed website, with a full list of walk-ins in the area: <https://www.leicestercityccg.nhs.uk/my-health/coronavirus-advice/coronavirus-vaccine/>
- visit the NHS National Booking System: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>
- Call the LLR central booking team on 0116 497 5700 who can help you to book an appointment.

More information about COVID-19

Gov.uk guidance for parents information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools/covid-19-vaccination-programme-for-young-people-guidance-for-parents>

A Leicestershire COVID-19 vaccine guide for parents, is available to download:

<https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/COVID-19-12-15-vaccine-parent-information-pack-1.pdf>

Information for young people is available on the Health for Teens website:

<https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/health/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccination-information/?location=Leicester%2C+Leicestershire+and+Rutland>

View our new animation about the COVID-19 vaccine for young people to answer your FAQs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNeEMgf7zSA>

More information about Flu

More information about the flu vaccine can be found on the Health for Teens website:

<https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/health/flu/flu-just-the-facts/> and on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>

Thank you once again for your continued support for this programme.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Thompson
Director of FYPC and LD Services
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust