



## **Key things to know about the flu vaccination programme and COVID-19 vaccination programme for children and young people**

1. Flu and COVID-19 are completely different viruses. They have different vaccines to protect people from becoming seriously ill. Therefore, young people that are eligible for the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine should get both. There isn't one single vaccine that protects people from illness caused by flu and COVID-19.
2. While most children are eligible for the flu vaccine and can get it in school (for eligible school aged children) and in GP practices (for eligible children that haven't started school and school aged children that are in an at risk group can get the vaccine through their GP or school ). Only young people over the age of 12 are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.
3. As with other vaccines, consent is needed before children and young people can have either the flu vaccine or the COVID-19 vaccine. Separate consent must be given for the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine.

All parents, or those with parental responsibility, are asked for consent and will usually make this decision jointly with their children.

In secondary schools, some young people may be mature enough to provide their own consent. This sometimes occurs if a parent has not returned a consent form but the child still wishes to have the vaccine on the day of the session. Every effort will be made to contact the parent to seek their verbal consent.

This is a well-established process which you will be familiar with from other school-based vaccination programmes.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/COVID-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools>

4. There are other important vaccines that children and young people should also get before they start school and during their time at school. We would encourage parents and guardians to check their children are up to date with these vaccinations. More information on what vaccinations children and young people should have is at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

## **Which children and young people can have the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine?**

### **COVID-19 vaccination**

- Anyone over the age of 12 years of age is eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Most 12 to 15 year olds will be offered a single dose of the COVID-19 vaccine through their school.

Young people aged 12 to 15 years that are at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19, or who are household contacts of severely immunosuppressed individuals, will be offered two doses of vaccine. A third dose is being offered to all those aged 12 years and older who had a weakened immune system around the time they had their first 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

- Children under the age of 12 years of age are not being offered the COVID-19 vaccine. Most children under 12 can get the flu vaccine though.

More info on who can get the COVID-19 vaccine:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/)

### **Flu vaccination**

The flu vaccine is offered to:

- children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2021 (born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2019)
- all school aged children from reception to year 11
- children aged six months old to 17 years with long-term health conditions

If your child is aged between 6 months and 2 years and has a long-term health condition that makes them at higher risk from flu, they'll be offered a flu vaccine injection instead of the nasal spray. This is because the nasal spray is not licensed for children under 2 years.

The nasal spray vaccine offers the best protection for children aged 2 to 17 years. If parents have any concerns, they can make that clear during the

consent process. Children will be offered the flu vaccine injection instead if the nasal spray vaccine is not suitable for them.

### Where to have the flu vaccine?

| Child's age  | Where to have the flu vaccine |
|--|-------------------------------|
| From 6 months until 2 years<br>(with long-term condition)      | GP surgery                    |
| From 2 years until child starts primary school                 | GP surgery                    |
| All children at primary school                                 | School                        |
| Year 7 to year 11 secondary school children                    | School                        |
| Children in reception to year 11<br>(with long-term condition) | School or GP surgery          |
| Home-schooled children<br>(same ages as reception to year 11)  | Community clinic              |

In some cases, children will also be offered the injected flu vaccine instead.

More information on the flu vaccine for children :

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

## **Will school children get the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine on the same day?**

Most children over 12 years are eligible for the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine.

Most children will be offered the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine in schools. This may be at different vaccination sessions rather than on the same day. If children are offered flu and COVID-19 vaccines on the same day though, then they can be given at the same time.