

Trust Headquarters
Brighton General Hospital
Elm Grove
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www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk

2016-2017

Dear Parent or Guardian

School Based Vaccination Programme

This year we are offering Tetanus / Diphtheria / Polio and Meningitis (School Leaver Booster) to pupils in Years 9 and 10 in your child's school.

These booster vaccinations are important for ensuring protection against all of the above serious, disabling and potentially fatal diseases. Protection continues into adult life. These vaccinations are now given in school to improve access for young people, as they have previously only been offered through GP Practices.

On the back of this letter, there is some useful information for you and your child about the vaccines and the diseases they protect against. More information is available on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk. You can also contact the Immunisation Team (numbers below) or your School Nurse for more information.

Enclosed with this letter, is a consent form. Please complete the form and return to your child's school in the next seven days.

Before signing the consent form, please can we ask that you advise us; on the back of the consent form; of the immunisations your child has had in the **last 5 years**. Including vaccinations for travel or given following an accident, to enable us to assess whether these vaccinations are needed. They may be recorded in their Red Book (Personal Child Health Record). It is important that you share this information with us.

Please take this opportunity to check that your child is up-to-date with all their vaccinations. You can check with your GP Practice or on www.nhs.uk for the vaccination schedule.

Dates of Immunisation sessions in schools are listed on the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust website. If your child misses the immunisation session in school, these vaccinations will still be available at a later date through catch-up clinics that the Immunisation Team organises. Please contact the Immunisation Team on one of the numbers below to discuss further.

We hope that the information provided helps you and your child make a positive decision about the vaccinations and the protection they offer.

Yours sincerely



Rosanna Raven
Immunisation Clinical Nurse Manager – Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust

Brighton Team
01273 696011 ext. 3789

Chichester Team
01273 265985 ext. 8100

Crawley Team
01293 600300 ext. 3985

Information for parents and teenagers

What vaccines are being offered and why?

Revaxis is a combined vaccine which protects against **tetanus**, **diphtheria**, and **polio**. Provided that your child has had all the previous scheduled doses against these three illnesses, this booster will give long term protection against these serious infections.

Polio is a virus that attacks the nervous system which can cause permanent paralysis of muscles, and can be fatal. **Diphtheria** is a serious disease that can cause breathing problems, can damage the heart and nervous system, and in severe cases, it can kill. Thanks to vaccination polio and diphtheria are now much rarer than they used to be, but have still not been eradicated on a global scale.

Tetanus is a painful disease affecting the nervous system which can lead to muscle spasms, cause breathing problems and can kill. It is caused when germs found in the soil and manure get into the body through open cuts or burns. Because tetanus spores are everywhere, it can never be eradicated.

Bacterial **Meningitis** is a very serious infection which can cause inflammation of the brain and blood poisoning, with complications such as epilepsy, hearing loss, gangrene and amputation. A dose of **Nimenrix** or **Menveo** protects against four strains of meningitis and is advised for all teenagers, as they are at higher risk of contracting Meningitis C and W.

If your daughter is having the HPV vaccination in year 9 this will be given on a separate visit to the schools.

Safety

Both the Tetanus/Diphtheria/Polio and Meningitis vaccines contain no live organisms and they cannot cause any of the illnesses they protect against. They are well established vaccines with a known safety profile, and like all other vaccines unwanted reactions are constantly monitored.

Who should not have these vaccines?

Very few people cannot have these vaccines. Only those with a severe allergic (anaphylactic) reaction to a previous dose or to any of the ingredients of the vaccines (such as neomycin, streptomycin or polymyxin B, which are antibiotics present in trace amounts in the vaccine) should not have the vaccines.

If your child has a bleeding disorder, a history of convulsions (fits), or has a weakened immune system, we may need to ask more details before vaccination. However you might be directed to your GP for vaccination if necessary.

Vaccination is always postponed if someone is unwell on the day with a feverish illness. Minor illnesses such as colds without fever do not prevent vaccination.

What to expect afterwards

It's common to get some swelling, redness or tenderness where you have the injection. Sometimes a small painless lump develops, but this usually disappears in a few weeks. Less frequently you might experience fever, aches, headache, nausea, or tiredness. Any other side effects are unusual.

A mild fever can be treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen (never aspirin for under-16s). Always follow the directions on the packet. If you're worried about any reaction you can call the NHS 111 service.

Please inform us or your GP if your child has any side effects other than those listed above following vaccination.