

Stuart Carlton
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Contact: Stuart Carlton

16 July 2020

Dear colleague

Re: School Aged Vaccination and Covid-19

As you make your final arrangements for opening in September, including considering Public Health guidance for your risk assessments, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your hard work and dedication in ensuring that all our schools are able to provide safe and supportive environments at this very difficult time.

While we face some uncertainty at the moment in terms of planning for our children returning to school, I am confident that all schools will be very busy developing their risk assessments for the variety of scenarios that may see the return of pupils from September.

Protecting our children, now and in the future is very important and I am sure all of your assessments meet all Covid-19 Safe Guidance. However, please can I remind you also of the importance of continuing to prevent all childhood illnesses. I would like to encourage all secondary schools to ensure that their risk assessments and plans for return, include plans to continue to facilitate the delivery of the School Aged Vaccination programme. It is vital to continue to make sure our children are protected against vaccine preventable diseases such as Human Papilloma Virus, Meningitis and many other deadly infections. It is also important that we have effective plans in place for delivery of the seasonal flu vaccination programme to all eligible groups in North Yorkshire as soon as possible.

As a result of lockdown, the current School Aged Vaccination Programme was suspended in March 2020. Unfortunately, this means that a large number of our eligible children will not have received their vaccination as scheduled and remain susceptible to these infections. While we are beginning to ease lockdown restrictions and beginning to return to business as usual, it is vitally important to the future health of this cohort that we can catch up and provide the routine vaccinations as soon as possible.

You will be contacted very soon by the School Based Immunisation Team to discuss options for catch up to ensure those children who have missed out can take up their vaccinations. We would encourage schools to do all they can to support the catch-up delivery of these vaccinations, which may include provision of space and contact with families.

I am also aware that you will be planning for the potential full return of the pupils from September and space may be at a premium in schools. However, it is vitally important that your plans can maintain capacity for the delivery of the School Aged Programme to ensure we continue to protect our children, not just against Covid-19 but against all preventable childhood illnesses.

The Immunisation Team are happy to work with any school to look at the requirements and procedures that need to be put in place, specific to your setting, to ensure that the programme can be delivered efficiently and effectively, maximising the safety of all staff and children.

The Immunisation Team will be in touch soon to arrange dates for vaccination sessions, but please feel free to call them to discuss any assistance you may need in the development of your plans ahead of time. Please contact the School Based Immunisation Team on the contacts below:

- Lois Alderson, North Yorkshire and York Childhood Immunisation Service Clinical Lead.
E: loisalderson@nhs.net T: 07815 700454 or 01423 542360.

I appreciate your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



Stuart Carlton
Director of Children and
Young People's Service



Dr Lincoln Sargeant
Director of Public Health