

Dear Headteachers,

We are writing with the latest information on the Polio Booster Vaccination programme. Please could you share this information with parents of children aged 1-9.

Polio Booster Vaccination Programme

Following the detection of polio virus in sewage samples taken from North and East London, the NHS is offering all 1-9 year olds in London a polio booster vaccination. For some children this may be an extra dose of polio vaccine, on top of their routine vaccinations. In other children it may just bring them up to date.

Polio is an infection caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system – it can cause permanent paralysis of muscles. Because of the success of the polio vaccination programme, there have been no cases of natural polio infection in the UK since 1984. By giving an extra polio vaccine dose, this will boost each child's protection.

Find more information about polio, its symptoms, and vaccinations by visiting

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/polio/>

You can read the information leaflet by visiting

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1097153/UKHSA_12440_polio_leaflet_for_parents_and_carers.pdf

Getting Vaccinated

The polio vaccine is safe and effective. The best way to prevent polio is to make sure parents/carers and children are up to date with their vaccinations. The vaccine is given as part of a combined jab to babies, toddlers, and teenagers as part of the NHS routine childhood vaccination schedule.

It's given when the child is:

- 8, 12 and 16 weeks old as part of the 6-in-1 vaccine
- 3 years and 4 months old as part of the 4-in-1 (DTaP/IPV) pre-school booster
- 14 years old as part of the 3-in-1 (Td/IPV) teenage booster

You will need to have all these vaccinations to be fully vaccinated against polio.

The NHS in London has contacted parents to come forward for a booster or catch-up polio dose - parents should take up the offer as soon as possible.



Where can you get vaccinated?

Parents in South West London have been contacted by the NHS to ask them to book an appointment. Parents should take up the offer as soon as possible.

Parents and guardians can check their child's red book or can speak to their General practitioner (GP) if they are unsure if their child has received this vaccine.

If you are not yet registered with a GP, details on how to find and register with a GP can be found at GP services by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/>. GPs treat all common medical conditions and provide immunisations to adults and children.

Children aged between 1 and 4

Parents with children aged between 1 and 4 are being offered an appointment at their GP practice.

Children aged between 5 and 9

Parents with children aged between 5 and 9 years old can use the following link to book a vaccination appointment for your child <https://bit.ly/poliovax>. It is important to come forward for the Polio booster as soon as possible.

We are working on increasing the number of sites offering the polio vaccine across South West London - more vaccination clinics will be opening soon.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Polio Booster you can speak to someone by calling 0203 8800338 or emailing homecare.covidvaccine@swlondon.nhs.uk.

Frequently asked questions about the polio vaccination programme for children can be found by visiting <https://www.southwestlondon.icb.nhs.uk/find-nhs-services/vaccinations/polio/polio-vaccination-faqs/>

Best wishes,

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