

Chief Executive
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Director of Public Health
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FAO:
All parents and carers of children
attending nurseries and schools in
Kensington and Chelsea

Date: 28th November 2022

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Managing winter illnesses

Many children experience common illnesses like coughs and colds over the winter. I am writing to you about how to manage winter illnesses and what infections we are seeing at this time of year.

Scarlet Fever: there are cases of scarlet fever in Northwest London. Scarlet fever is very infectious but easily treated with antibiotics. The first signs of scarlet fever can be flu-like symptoms, including a high temperature, a sore throat and swollen neck glands (a large lump on the side of your neck). A rash appears 12 to 48 hours later. It looks like small, raised bumps and starts on the chest and tummy, then spreads. The rash makes skin feel rough, like sandpaper.

If you think your child has scarlet fever, contact your GP and let the nursery or school know.

Chickenpox: we see more cases of chickenpox in the winter. If your child has chickenpox, keep them at home until they feel well and their spots have scabbed over. Also, let their nursery or school know. If your child has chickenpox and scarlet fever at the same time or close together it can make your child particularly poorly, so it is important to contact your GP.

Polio: the polio virus is circulating in London, which can be dangerous for young children as it can cause paralysis. All London children aged 1 to 9 are advised to have a dose of the polio vaccine immediately. For some children this may be an extra dose of polio vaccine, on top of their routine vaccinations. For other children this dose may bring them up to date with their routine vaccinations.

Protect your child from flu:

Children from two years old are being offered the flu vaccination to protect them and prevent them spreading flu to vulnerable family members. You can tell the difference

between flu and a cold because if they have flu they will become ill within a couple of hours, it will affect more than just their nose and throat and they will be less active and may complain of pain in their ear.

How your child can get vaccinated:

- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2022 will be vaccinated at their GP practice – if you have not yet heard from your GP contact them to make an appointment
- all primary school-aged, and secondary school-aged children in years 7 to 9 children will be vaccinated at school – watch out for the parental consent form which you will need to sign and return

For most children, the vaccine will be given as a spray in each nostril. This is very quick and painless.

Protect at risk children from COVID-19 with the Autumn Booster.

Children aged 4 to 18 who have been identified as being particularly at risk are being offered an Autumn Booster by their GP.

Sources of advice on how to manage childhood illnesses

For more advice and advice in other languages about childhood illnesses and how to manage them visit the Healthier Together website produced by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health: <https://what0-18.nhs.uk/> or go to www.nhs.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Anna Raleigh
Director of Public Health