

NHS Wigan Borough CCG
Wigan Life Centre
College Avenue
Wigan
WN1 1NJ

Our Reference: COVIDVACC SCHOOL

Tel: 01942 482711
Email: public@wiganboroughccg.nhs.uk

16th February 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE: COVID-19 Vaccinations

We are writing to every parent/guardian in the Borough about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine for their child or children and to give you information on how to access a vaccine.

Thank you for all your support in the COVID-19 vaccination programme so far. As a result of your support, over 84% of residents within the Borough have been vaccinated.

However, currently only 54% of young people aged 12-15 have had their first vaccine and only 14% have had the two doses advised by the experts – the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

We understand that whether to have your child vaccinated is a personal decision that each parent must make in discussion with their child and we respect each parent's decision. We hope that the information provided here will help you to make the decision and to arrange a vaccine should you decide to go ahead with it.

Why is the vaccine important?

- It is recommended by the experts, including both local and national doctors
- It reduces the chance that you will catch and pass on COVID-19
- It helps to protect your family and friends, particularly any older family members like grandparents who are likely to be more at risk
- It reduces the risk of spending time in hospital with COVID-19
- It helps to return your schooling and other parts of life to normal.

Why are children being offered the vaccine?

COVID-19 continues to circulate round our schools; getting a vaccine will help to keep the number of cases of COVID-19 down in schools. This will mean that schools can return to a more normal routine, with fewer pupils needing to isolate and less disruption to your education. This is so important that the Chief Medical Officer has decided that despite young people being at very little serious risk from COVID-19 itself, they should still be offered the vaccine.

Worries about the vaccine for children

We recognise that people have concerns about possible side effects, they may have read things that worry them, or they may have a fear of needles.

Millions of young people aged 12 and above have had the Pfizer vaccine across the world, including in France, Germany, the USA and this country.

For young people aged 12-17, the Pfizer vaccine has been approved as safe for use and you are being offered it to try to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on your education and schooling.

However, no vaccine is completely safe as there may be very rare side effects in a very small number of people. Most people don't suffer any side effects at all, but some people feel a bit ill afterwards for about 24 hours, including a sore arm, a headache, feeling a bit like you've got the flu. If you do get side effects, paracetamol will help with most of them.

Will they need to be vaccinated for travel?

Some holiday destinations may require children aged 12 and over to have had 2 doses of the vaccine 14 days before they enter the country. Different rules apply in different countries and the rules continue to change, with some places refusing entry to unvaccinated people, some requiring 10-day isolation, and some don't have any vaccination requirements at all.

We advise that you check the requirements of any places that you want to visit before booking. The safest and easiest way to travel is to make sure that you are vaccinated in advance.

Where can I get the vaccine?

Our local clinics are offering the Pfizer vaccine to everyone aged 12 and over. You can ring 01942 807780 to book an appointment or visit nhs.uk/covid-vaccine to find your closest walk-in clinic. These clinics are not just for your children, but are open to anyone in your family who still needs any dose of the vaccine.

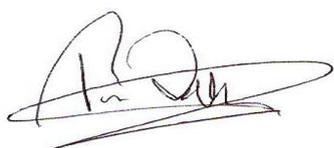
The clinics open for appointments or walk-ins (no appointment needed) over half term week are:

	Sat 19 th Feb	Tues 22 nd Feb	Wed 23 rd Feb	Sat 26 th Feb
Leigh Leisure Centre, WN7 4JY	9.30-1.00		4.30-7.30	9.30-1.00
Robin Park Leisure Centre, WN5 0UL	9.30-1.30	4.30-7.30		9.30-1.00

If you need any more information, please visit our website: www.healthierwigan.nhs.uk/covid-19-vaccination/12-17-covid-19-vaccines/ or visit nhs.uk/covid-vaccines. Alternatively, you can contact us on the details at the top of the letter.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you have done to keep yourselves and your families safe during the pandemic. We know it has been tough, but these actions have saved lives.

Yours sincerely



Dr Tim Dalton
GP Chair
NHS Wigan Borough CCG



Prof Kate Ardern MBChB MSc FFPH
Director of Public Health
Wigan Council