

# Vaccinations in Schools - Good Practice 'How to Guide'



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# Why should 12-15 year olds be offered a vaccine?

Healthy 12-15 year olds are being offered **two doses of the vaccination**.

A booster vaccine should be offered to children aged 12-15 who are in a clinical risk group or who are a household contact of immunosuppressed individuals, and those who are severely immunosuppressed and have had a third primary dose. This will usually be delivered through routes such as walk-in vaccination centres

The COVID-19 vaccination programme for 12 to 15 year olds will help to reduce the need for children to have time off school, reduce the disruption to face to face education and reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 within schools.



# How can children aged 12-15 years get the COVID-19 vaccine?

There are 2 routes on offer for 12-15 year olds to get the vaccine:

1. Through schools **OR**
2. Through the community at a local vaccination site

Children who received their first dose in school can get their second dose outside of school in the community and vice versa. This means there are more opportunities for children to get the vaccine. Through opening up the community route, parents have the opportunity to accompany their child to the vaccination site if they wish.


**This pack focuses on vaccinations in schools.** Offering vaccines in schools is important for ensuring all children can get a vaccine if they and their parents choose to do so. It also helps to ensure we can drive delivery at pace and mitigates health inequalities while minimising disruption to education for children. So thank you for your ongoing support to the SAIS teams.

Providers for the in school offer will generally be SAIS providers. In some local situations this offer will be delivered by other providers, i.e community pharmacies and GPs. SAIS teams will let schools know where this is the case. Where schools have fewer than 35 eligible pupils, vaccination in a school setting may not be appropriate. Schools should discuss with SAIS providers to determine appropriate alternative arrangements for example delivering through a local pharmacy, to ensure timely, accessible, and equitable vaccination for these children.



While some vaccination teams may be able to offer staff and those aged 16 or over in secondary schools vaccination you should not expect staff or those aged over 16 to receive their vaccination through the school – they should already have accessed their vaccination via the community vaccination route (such as their GP, or local vaccination centre)

## Interaction between the school and community routes

- Parents will get a letter from the NHS saying they can get a vaccine for their child either at school or through the community. The letter contains information on consent and the booking process for getting a vaccine in the community.
- Some children in school will have already been vaccinated in community settings.
- The consent processes for a child receiving a vaccine in school or in an alternative vaccine setting are different.
-  **Separate consent for the vaccine will need to be given at a community vaccine setting even if it has already been given for a child to receive it in school.**
- The School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) team will check consent and whether a child has already been vaccinated before vaccinating them in school– you do not need to do anything.

# **Vaccination through schools**

# Role of the School Age Immunisation Service

- Vaccination for 12-15 year-olds will continue to be deployed primarily through school age immunisation services (SAIS).
- During visits in the spring term, SAIS teams will be able to administer first doses to those who have not yet received any vaccination and second doses to those eligible.
- SAIS teams will identify the children due to receive either first or second doses.
- The SAIS provider is contractually and legally responsible for the service, as they are for other school vaccination programmes.
- You are supporting the vaccination programme by hosting the SAIS team and helping them with aspects of the vaccination process, including providing space and time in the timetable for vaccination, sharing information leaflets and consent forms and providing a list of eligible pupils.
- Where vaccination visits have been most successful, the team and the school have worked in close partnership, respecting each other's different roles and responsibilities whilst working flexibly and planning together.
- You will want to consider how to ensure the SAIS teams can best administer the vaccine on your school site, facilitating access for the team and their kit, providing practical support for clinical teams to take breaks and ensuring that their time in your school is maximised to vaccinate as many eligible and consented pupils as possible.
- The in-school vaccination programme will start from the 10th January and all schools should have received at least one visit before February half term. SAIS teams will be in touch with schools from the start of the spring term to discuss what is best for their circumstances.
- You can contact the SAIS team directly if you have any queries or questions, or would like to start your planning with them ahead of this. If you do not already have contact details for your SAIS team, your regional NHS England (NHSE) office will be able to help you to identify which organisation in your area will be delivering the school age immunisation programme and provide contact details. NHSE Regional contact details can be found at [NHS England Regional teams website](#).



**It is important that you engage as early as you can with your SAIS team to form a partnership and establish a clear plan that allows parents to engage with the consent arrangements.**



# Vaccine delivery

The SAIS team will bring all equipment and consumables with them on the day.

We expect most schools to require multiple visits so vaccines can be administered to all consenting pupils.

The number of children SAIS teams can vaccinate varies and is dependent on a range of factors - but the suggestions in this guide on how to support SAIS teams will help to maximise this number.

## Schools can help by

- ✓ Allowing pupils to wear loose fitting short sleeved tops on the day of vaccination (e.g. PE tops)
- ✓ Providing a large, well-ventilated space to undertake the vaccinations – generally a sports hall or similar
- ✓ Identifying and supporting anxious children
- ✓ Helping to keep disruption and noise to a minimum
- ✓ Ensuring a steady flow of pupils throughout the school day (SAIS staff breaks can be staggered if required)
- ✓ Providing, where possible, access to power supply with extension cables and anti-trip mats, separation screens, defibrillator, gym mats, tables and chairs.
- ✓ Removing any household waste generated on the day (SAIS teams, not schools, will remove any sharps, medical or hazardous waste)





# The Vaccination Journey from start to finish

*Applicable to both first and second dose delivery.*

1

## Schools prepare for vaccination team arrival

- Nominate someone in the school as a link for the SAIS team.
- Begin considering the space and how vaccination could fit into the school day.
- SAIS team will require a large, well-ventilated space (e.g. hall) to carry out vaccinations and will need access to power, extension cables and wifi.
- You may want to share a photo of your space with the SAIS team.

2

## SAIS teams make contact with schools

- SAIS teams will make contact to agree date and discuss logistics for the vaccination.
- Agree with SAIS teams what equipment and support you can provide.

3

## Vaccination invitation and consent materials go out to pupils/parents

- SAIS teams provide invitation pack and consent paper work or e-consent for schools to email /send to the parent/guardian.
- Schools can use the template cover letter included in this pack when sending the invitation pack on behalf of the SAIS team.
- SAIS teams check whether pupils have received the vaccine out of school.

4

## Returning consent decisions from parents/carers

- It is important that you encourage parents to return their decision on time to the SAIS team or school.
- SAIS providers will contact parents of non-responders when needed.

**Consent forms must be returned to the SAIS team 48 hours before the SAIS team arrives at the school to vaccinate children**



9

## Follow up visit

- If the SAIS provider has not been able to vaccinate all consenting eligible children at the first visit they may organise follow up visits.
- These visits will be completed as per steps 5-8 of the journey.

8

## Parents/ carers notified

- SAIS providers make a record of the vaccination event and notify parents / carers that the vaccination of their child has taken place.
- SAIS providers will keep a track of any pupils who missed their vaccination and notify parents/schools of how these children can access vaccination.

7

## Pupil vaccination

- Eligible children may need to be escorted/taken to the vaccination area by school staff.
- Following pre-vaccination checks, pupils will be vaccinated by trained staff in SAIS teams and their vaccination data will be captured using a Covid assured point of care tool (NIVS).
- At the end of the session consumables and equipment will be collected by the SAIS provider. Schools do not need to collect any medical waste.

6

## Setting up on the day

- On the day equipment will be delivered and SAIS teams will set up for vaccination.
- The team will not all arrive together so it is useful to know where staff should report to on arrival.

5

## Setting up ahead of the vaccination day

- SAIS team shares a confirmed list of pupils who require first or second vaccinations who have consented and confirmation of space requirement with schools ahead of the vaccination day.
- Schools should consider how to timetable vaccination slots to ensure a steady stream of pupils.



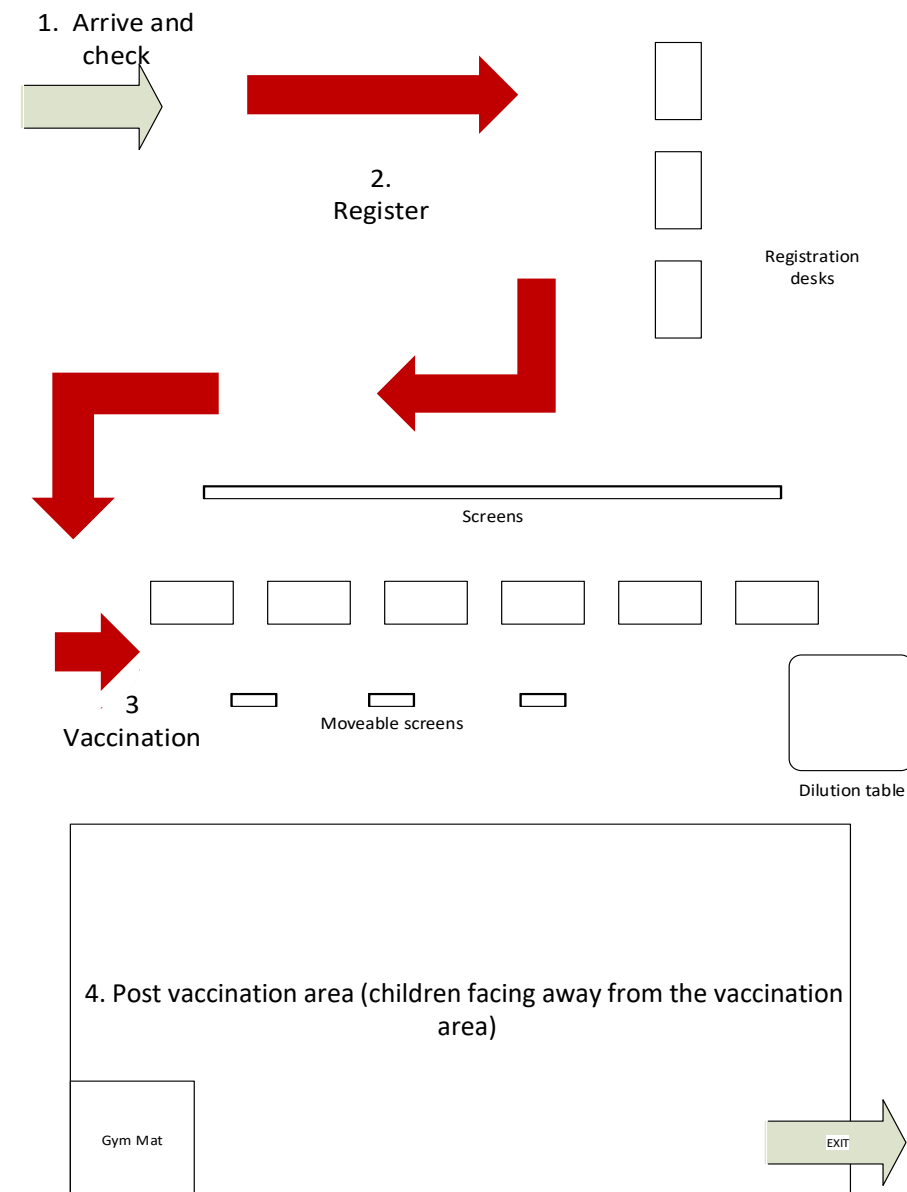
The SAIS teams are legally responsible for delivering the vaccination programme in your school. We have asked that you host their activity, and provide assistance with aspects of the process, including providing space and time in the timetable for vaccination, sharing information leaflets and consent forms and providing a list of eligible pupils.

# User journey on the day of vaccination

## This will be managed by the SAIS team


1. Pupil arrives in designated hall.
2. SAIS team carry out pre-registration check against a list of those who have returned consent forms and check whether pupil has already received one or both of their vaccines.
3. Pupil pre-registered on Point of Contact system so that vaccination details are available on national systems (2 mins).
4. Vaccinator asks pupil pre-vaccination questions (standard time 3 mins but can take longer for some pupils).
5. Vaccinator vaccinates pupil.
6. Completion of Point of Care system.
7. Previously students were observed for 15 minutes following vaccination. This wait time has been suspended following advice from Chief Medical Officers. It will be reviewed in the longer term and schools will be provided with an update if it is reinstated.
8. Some children may wish to remain in the hall for a short time before returning to class.


## Example room layout




# Role of schools in engaging with SAIS teams and parents

**Nominate someone in school as a link person for the SAIS team and engage early ahead of the visit, to help with planning and set up.**

 Consider what space could be made available to maximise the numbers who can be vaccinated in a day. If possible, provide your SAIS team with a photo sent in advance which shows the room size and layout and location of any electrical sockets. This helps teams plan in advance how they can quickly set up and start vaccinating efficiently.


 Ensure SAIS teams can access the agreed space before the school day starts, so they can set up. The space needs to be clean and clear and it can be helpful to offer separation screens, which teams can use to help maintain privacy between children as they are vaccinated, and a gym mat or similar for pupils if they feel faint and want to lie down after vaccination, if you have these available.


 Optimise the time available in which pupils can be vaccinated (e.g. consider early opening or late closure, make use of break times and lunchtimes, ensure each cohort immediately follows another one) .

 Consider whether support staff or student representatives could help move children to and from the vaccination area.

 Work with the SAIS provider to arrange any dates for follow-up visits which might be required.

## **Communicate with parents and children to support consent and uptake**

 Engage with your designated clinical leader who can visit your school and engage with parents to support them in making an informed decision around consent. Contact [the NHSEI Regional contact](#) if you have not have contact from a clinician.

 Ensure the consent materials, leaflets and cover letters that will be provided to you by your SAIS team are sent to parents/guardians/carers as early as possible with a clear deadline for return.

 Encourage parents to return their decision on time to the SAIS team or school.

 Answer queries from parents on the logistics and date of vaccinations. SAIS teams are responsible for asking parents for their consent decision.!

# Consent

You should communicate with parents / carers on behalf of the SAIS team about the COVID-19 vaccination programme as early as possible. If a child has received a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine parents will still be asked to provide consent for a second dose.

The SAIS team will provide you with an invitation pack to send to parents/ guardians/ carers. We have also provided a template letter which you can use to communicate with parents (next slide). The letter includes information on the consent process and links to further guidance. You can use this letter to share information with parents ahead of receiving the invitation pack from the SAIS team, even if you are still waiting for a visit date (or you can use it as a cover letter if you already have the invitation pack to send, if you wish to). This applies to children receiving either first or second Covid-19 vaccinations.



**It is crucial that parents/guardians/carers provide their consent decisions at least 48 hours before the SAIS team arrives.**



SAIS teams order the required number of vaccines in advance, based on the consent returns. This is because storage, transport and use of the vaccine is closely regulated – orders need to be confirmed with enough notice to allow for vaccines to be taken out of storage, thawed and transported while maintaining cold temperature requirements. This means that if parents/guardians/carers miss the consent deadline, the SAIS teams might not have enough vaccines for everyone who wants one on the day.



Your SAIS Team should manage the collection of consent forms and clinical screening information. However you can help them to ensure this information is received to deadline by liaising with them regularly and helping them to chase up any outstanding consent forms.



NHS England have asked the healthcare system in every area to provide a clinical leader linked to each school who can support schools where you choose to engage with parents in making an informed decision around consent. You will be contacted by the designated clinical lead, to talk about how they can support you. If you have not been contacted please contact the NHSEI Regional Team who have this information see [NHS England Regional teams website](#).



Some young people may be mature enough to provide their own consent. This sometimes occurs if a parent has not returned a consent form but the child still wishes to have the vaccine on the day of the session. Every effort will be made to contact the parent to seek their verbal consent. This is a well-established process which you will be familiar with from other school-based vaccination programmes.

# Template cover letter for communications with parents

- This is a template cover letter with information on the COVID-19 vaccination that schools can use to send to parents.
- The cover letter template can be [downloaded here](#).

[Insert Date]

**COVID-19 vaccination information for parents of children aged 12 to 15 years of age**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As you know, we have been working hard to keep our school and our community safe this school year. The main purpose of the COVID-19 secondary schools vaccination programme is to provide protection to the children who are vaccinated and to reduce the disruption to face to face education. COVID-19 is a very infectious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Very few healthy children and young people with COVID-19 infection go on to have severe disease.

The decision to vaccinate is down to you as the parent/guardian/carer, and your child. I understand that you will have questions about the vaccine and the process.

**What will happen next**

You [have been/are being/will be] sent a [paper/electronic] consent form organised by the NHS England School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) for you to complete, as well as an additional information leaflet from the NHS. The SAIS team will carry out the vaccinations and manage the consent process. We are expecting the SAIS team to visit [insert name of school] on [insert date(s) of scheduled visit] to vaccinate all 12 to 15 year olds who have provided consent.

All consent decisions must be returned by [insert deadline for returning consent forms].

**What will happen on the vaccination day**

The process on the day will be quick and easy. The vaccine will be administered by trained and experienced healthcare staff. Whilst parents/guardians/carers unfortunately can't attend on the day, the SAIS team will do their best to support you and make them feel comfortable child during their vaccination.

If your child is absent on the day of the vaccination or unable to be vaccinated but consent has been given, or if you would prefer to accompany your child during their vaccination, then you will be able to book your child a vaccination appointment at a vaccination centre by visiting [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination).

If your child will be receiving their first dose at the [in school] vaccination appointments for a second dose at a vaccination centre can be booked by visiting [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination).

Thank you for continuing to help keep our school and community safe.

**Further information**

- Here you can find answers to your questions as a parent/guardian/carer: [COVID-19 vaccination programme for young people: guidance for parents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- If your child wants more information, they can find it here: [COVID-19 vaccination: resources for children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Translations of the information for children and young people are available in [Arabic](#), [Bangali](#), [Brazilian Portuguese](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Chinese](#), [Estonian](#), [Farsi](#), [Greek](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Latvian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Punjabi](#), [Pashto](#), [Polish](#), [Romanian](#), [Romany](#), [Russian](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Turkish](#), [Telugu](#), [Ukrainian](#), [Urdu](#) and [Yiddish](#). A [Braille version](#) is also available to order. Translated versions of the parent guidance will be available soon.

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# Resources for parents and young people

The UKHSA have produced guidance for parents, children and young people to explain the COVID-19 vaccination programme and answer any frequently asked questions:

- More detailed guidance for [parents](#) and [children and young people](#)
- [Information for children and young people about what to expect after COVID-19 vaccination](#)
- Further information is available on the dedicated [NHS website to support parents and families](#) and answer their questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Paper copies of the guidance is available to order for free from [Health Publications](#).

## Translated versions

Translations of the guidance for children and young people are available in: [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Brazilian Portuguese](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Chinese](#), [Estonian](#), [Farsi](#), [Greek](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Latvian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Panjabi](#), [Pashto](#), [Polish](#), [Romanian](#), [Romany](#), [Russian](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Turkish](#), [Twi](#), [Ukrainian](#), [Urdu](#) and [Yiddish](#). A [Braille version](#) is also available to order. Translated versions of the parent guidance will be available soon.

## Example letters parents may receive from the SAIS team

SAIS teams will provide schools with invitation packs to send to parents of eligible children. You can see examples of what this might include here:

- [Invitation letter](#)
- [Consent form](#)

## Videos for your social media channels:

- [Folder of 12–15 year old vaccine videos on the Coronavirus Resource Centre](#)
- [Folder of videos of GPs talking about the vaccine](#)
- [Q&A with Dr Nighat Arif on vaccine and immunosuppression](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine and ethnic minorities: Q&A with Professor Kevin Fenton](#)

**FAQs and joint letter from the Secretaries of State for Education and Health and Social Care** to parents of secondary school and college students to thank them for all their efforts in keeping education safe for all during the pandemic and talk about the importance of vaccinations and regular testing. The letter also includes to some **frequently answered questions for parents from Dr Mary Ramsay**, Head of Immunisation at the UK Health Security Agency. [View and share the letter](#)

# Where to find more information and further guidance

## Further guidance for schools

- [UKHSA guidance and resources for schools](#)
- [Coronavirus Resources Centre](#)
- The NHS England Vaccine Deployment Programme webinar on the vaccination programme for education leaders in secondary schools is now available on the [document sharing platform](#).
- Further information is available on the [NHS website to support parents and families](#) and answer their questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.



## Misinformation

We are aware some schools have received letters or emails which feature false or misleading information (misinformation) about the safety, efficacy and purpose of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Headteachers and teachers are advised:

- not to engage directly: misinformation narratives and tactics flourish when they are responded to.
- acknowledge receipt: if a response is needed, simply acknowledge receipt of concerns.
- if there is a need to, refer to the latest scientific guidance on the issue. Links to this can be found in the [UKSHA guidance and resources for schools](#).