

## **Vaccinating healthy 12 to 15 year olds FAQs**

### **Why are you offering healthy children a second dose of the vaccine?**

COVID-19 is usually mild in most children, but it can make some children unwell. One dose of the COVID-19 vaccine gives good protection against your child getting seriously ill, but 2 doses gives stronger and longer-lasting protection.

Vaccinating children can also help stop the spread of COVID-19 to other people, including within schools, this means that children will miss as little school time as possible

Further information for the second dose can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine-for-children-aged-12-to-15/>

### **When will children be offered their second dose?**

Children can get a first dose of the vaccine from the day they turn 12. Most children can get a second dose from 12 weeks after they had their first dose, with the first children being eligible from the 10<sup>th</sup> January.

If your child has tested positive for COVID-19 and is not at high risk from COVID-19, they need to wait 12 weeks before they can have a COVID-19 vaccine. This starts from the date of their positive PCR test.

### **Where will children be offered their second dose?**

We want to make sure that 12 to 15 year olds have access to many different options to get their vaccine, making it quick and easy for them to get jabbed.

To this end, they will not only be offered the additional dose in school, they will also be able to use the NHS National Booking Service to book an appointment at any of our Community Pharmacies, Large Vaccination Centres, or any other venue we have listed on there that is convenient to you.

## **Who is giving the COVID-19 vaccine to healthy 12 to 15 year olds?**

Vaccination is already being carried out by school aged immunisation services (SAIS), provider organisations such as NHS community trusts who are contracted in local systems to provide routine immunisation services such as flu. And this will continue.

Through vaccination sites available on the National Booking Service, all vaccinations will be given by staff who are specifically trained in the delivery of vaccinations for children and young people.

Appointments can be booked at [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine) or by calling 119.

## **Can my child get their first dose in school if they weren't able to the first time?**

As part of 2nd visits to schools, SAVS providers will continue to offer a 1st dose if a child missed the opportunity last year due to absence or COVID.

## **Will this now be a child's last chance to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

No. COVID-19 vaccination will continue to be delivered by the school aged vaccination service and is the main way for children to get the vaccine, however they can also get it out of hours through the National Booking Service.

This includes plans to vaccinate those who are home schooled, in further education colleges, secure services or specialist mental health settings.

But by offering more places where children can receive their vaccination, means that as well as being able to continue to get their vaccine at school, children will now have the opportunity to get their vaccination at a large vaccination centre, local community pharmacies and some local GP service locations.

## **Are vaccines safe for children?**

On 4 June 2021, the UK's independent medicines regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), concluded a positive safety profile for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in children aged 12-15.

This follows a stringent and rigorous review of the safety, quality, and effectiveness of the vaccine in this age group by the MHRA and the Government's expert independent advisory body, the Commission on Human Medicines.

## **Why should a child get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Getting the vaccine will help to protect children and young people against COVID-19. Whilst most children usually have mild symptoms, they can pass on their infection to others in their family and those they come into contact with.

Getting vaccinated will also help to reduce the chance of disruption to their education from COVID-19. This is an important decision and further information is supplied with this letter to help children and their parents to make an informed decision.

The information is also available online at [bit.ly/children-guide](https://bit.ly/children-guide).

## **Is there a risk of a child having an allergic reaction to the vaccine?**

As part of the process, every child will be taken through a set of screening questions designed to pick up any conditions that may need special consideration before vaccination.

Before any vaccination appointment, it would be helpful for children and their parents to consider what is likely to be asked, and some pre-screening questions to help do this are available online at [bit.ly/vaccine-checklist](https://bit.ly/vaccine-checklist).

## **When will the second dose be available at local venues?**

Appointments for eligible children will be open from the 10<sup>th</sup> January.

When making an appointment, you will be given a choice of venue that suits you.

To make an appointment, visit [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination) or **call 119**. All appointments offered will be outside of school hours, including evenings and weekends – with daytime appointments available during half term.

More venues are being added to the booking system regularly, so it is important that parents check [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine) website for the most up to date information.

## **Where can I get my child vaccinated locally?**

There is an in school offer through the School Aged Vaccination Service (SAVS) and an out of schools hours across the North East and North Cumbria region. Vaccinations will be available at five vaccination sites, 19 primary care networks and 30 community locations.

As this wider offer is opened up, more venues will be added to the booking system, so it is important that parents check [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine) website regularly.

### **Will a child be able to book a COVID-19 vaccine if they are within a few weeks of their twelfth birthday?**

No child under the age of 12 can receive a COVID-19 vaccination yet. The only vaccine legally licensed for children is for those aged 12 and above, meaning that only children who are 12 on or before the date of vaccination can be vaccinated.

### **If my child gets vaccinated locally, should they still get a jab at school?**

No. Parents are asked to advise their child's school if they receive their vaccination at another venue.

### **Is the vaccine at local national booking system sites the same as the one offered in schools?**

Yes, there is one vaccine licensed in the UK for school-aged children (Pfizer-BioNTech) and it will be exactly the same in schools or at local NHS services.

### **Who provides consent for a child to get a vaccine out of school, and how?**

Parents and those with parental responsibilities are strongly encouraged to attend vaccine appointments with their child to go through consent and screening questions on site (in line with the approach set out in the [Green Book](#)).

If the parent is not present and the child is not deemed to be able to consent, it is likely that the child will be asked to come back with a parent or guardian at a later date.

Some children may be sufficiently mature to provide their own consent if they express a wish to have a vaccine. Trained professionals with expertise in vaccinating children and assessing consent will speak to the child to assess intelligence, competence and understanding to appreciate fully what's involved, to determine appropriateness of administering the vaccine.

For vaccinations in schools, a consent form will continue to be provided in advance and should be returned before the session.

## **What information will be given to ensure informed consent can be given?**

Pre-consenting materials, including a copy of a patient information leaflet with factual information about the COVID-19 vaccine, will be shared with families along with the letters inviting them to book an appointment.

Further information can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools) and [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people),

and a consent form is at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-consent-form-for-children-and-young-people-or-parents](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-consent-form-for-children-and-young-people-or-parents).

## **I'm still undecided about whether my child should get vaccinated - where can I find out more information?**

If parents have any questions about their child's vaccination, they are encouraged to book an appointment for their child and then discuss any concerns or questions with the healthcare professional at the vaccination location.

More information about vaccinations for 12 to 15-year-olds [here](#).

## **When will public facing communication materials be available?**

This information is regularly updated at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people).