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7th October 2021

Dear parents/carers,

Re: COVID vaccination of students at The Phoenix Collegiate on 14th October 2021

Last night we were contacted by the NHS to say that the vaccination process for students aged 12-15 years old will commence on Thursday 14th October in school.

In the paragraphs below, I have highlighted some of the key information around this process. At this point, can I please stress that **this is a process that is being conducted solely by external professional NHS staff**. The Vaccination UK Immunisation Service will be legally responsible for the delivery of the vaccine. Legal accountability for offering Covid-19 vaccines to children and young people sits with the Vaccination UK and not with the school.

Schools are merely providing the venue. Therefore, if you do have any questions can you direct them to the NHS and the VaccinationUK Immunisation Service, and not the school.

At present we have almost 1400 students who would be eligible for the vaccination, and these will be completed on the day. This is a large-scale operation so please be mindful that there will be disruption to the school day, and we will as always be expecting our students to conduct themselves in the good manner that we are accustomed to.

What should I be receiving with this letter?

Alongside this correspondence, you will later today receive a letter via email which we are forwarding from the NHS entitled 'Schools COVID-19 vaccination letter and FAQ for consent'. You will also have the consent form itself. This letter goes into detail about all aspects of the procedure and provides links for further reading should you want more information. **I urge you all to read this with your child.**

When does the consent form need to be in?

Monday 11th October 9pm. The NHS have made it very clear that they need this time to process consent and plan for the numbers who will be receiving the vaccine on each day.

Who will be conducting the vaccination?

A team of 24 medical professionals and NHS admin staff will be on site for the duration of the school day. They will organise the event and conduct the vaccinations.

My child is in year 7. Will they get a vaccination?

If your child has turned 12 by either the 28th or 29th September, then yes, they will be eligible. If they are 11 years old, then they will not be able to receive a vaccination. The SAIS will be providing the school with details of when catch-up vaccinations will be available but as yet we do not have this information.

My child is 16 in year 11 but hasn't yet had the vaccination. Will they be eligible?

No, as they are able to access vaccinations through the NHS directly.

What about consent? Is this from a parent, or child?

In this series of vaccinations, the NHS will only vaccinate if there is consent from parents

What about after care following the vaccination?

Each child will be given a leaflet following their vaccination which will provide all the information they need around after care. The NHS are confident that side effects of the vaccination will be minimal and therefore, if your child is absent from school after the event, we have been advised that it will be coded as 'ill' on their attendance (as advised by the NHS).

How will they know when it is their turn to be vaccinated and where do they go?

There will be a team of Phoenix staff who will send for students when it is their turn. They will report to the school hall and a member of the NHS group will meet them there.

What do I wear?

The only stipulation is that students wear a short-sleeved shirt on the day. The vast majority of our students wear short sleeved shirts anyway but if long sleeved shirts are worn, they must bring in their PE top to change into. A changing area will be provided should this be the case. **All students will be expected to be in full school uniform as normal on these days.**

What if my child is absent on the day?

For any children absent on the vaccination days (or for year 7s who turn 12 later), there will be catch-up arrangements in place that the vaccination team will share with school, however, as yet we do not know when these will be.

What if I have trouble completing the online consent form?

We are aware the online form that vaccination UK wishes to use to collect consent may be difficult to complete for some families. If this is the case please contact the school who will be able to assist you

Yours faithfully,



Mike Smith
Head teacher





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Updated: 17/09/2021

COVID-19 vaccination programme for young people: guidance for parents/carers:

GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

COVID-19 vaccinations for 12-15s – FAQ for parents/carers

How will I know which vaccinations are going to be given?

The information we ask your child's school to send you tells you which vaccinations are taking place. This year, the national flu programme has been extended and is being offered to all pupils up to and including year 11. The COVID-19 vaccination programme is being offered to all 12-15-year olds.

Which COVID-19 vaccine will my child receive?

The Pfizer BioNTech (Comirnaty) vaccine.

How will the COVID-19 vaccine be given to my child?

The COVID-19 vaccine is an intramuscular injection that will be given in the left or right upper arm.

How will I know when my child's vaccination will take place?

The Vaccination UK Immunisation Service team sends information to your child's school for them to forward onto you, on our behalf. Details include the date we'll be visiting your child's school and which vaccinations we will be administering.

There will also be information about the vaccinations and a link to complete a **consent form**. Please print the consent form and return completed to your school. If you have any problems printing the consent form please speak to your school for support. The consent form needs to be returned to school 2 days prior to vaccination date.

Will I have to consent for my child to have the vaccinations or will it just be given?

The vaccination will only be given to your child (aged 12 to 15) with parent/carer consent. In the information we send to you via the school, we ask you to tell us whether you do or don't want your child to be vaccinated.

My child was off sick when the vaccines were given in school, how do I get my child a COVID-19 vaccine now?

If your child is unable to get vaccinated during the school schedule as planned, the school will provide a slip to the family with a number to call to book an appointment at a local venue.

What should I do if my child is ill after the vaccine – do they still go to school?

If your child has a sore arm or any of the usual mild symptoms, they should still attend school. If you're worried about any symptoms your child may have, please refer to the information your child brings home or call NHS 111.

I want my child to have the vaccine but they're afraid of needles – can I take them to the GP?

Most young people want to be vaccinated with their school friends and classmates. The Vaccination UK team delivers vaccines to thousands of children and young people every year. They are very skilled and supportive of children who are worried or scared. Please tell us if

your child is concerned about needles when you complete the form so we can look after them in school.

My child has recently had COVID-19 – can they have the vaccine?

If your child has had COVID-19 more than 28 days before the vaccination then they can have the vaccine. If they are not eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine when the Vaccination UK team visit the school, they will be offered an alternative appointment

I am a foster carer – can I consent to the vaccine for the child I care for?

The consent for a child or young person to receive a vaccine needs to be from someone who has delegated authority to give permissions for immunisations. If you don't have this, you'll need to speak with the child's social worker to arrange this.

Will you still vaccinate my child for COVID-19 if I as a parent say no?

No. If you indicate on the form that you don't want your child to be COVID-19 vaccinated, we won't vaccinate your child.

It is important that you discuss the vaccination with your child beforehand to avoid any problems and that you complete the consent form indicating your decision. There is the option for children and young people to consent for themselves using a strong legal framework, but this is not being used in these sessions. If on the day a young person says they would like to be vaccinated, we do try and contact the parents whilst we are at the school to discuss this further.

There will be opportunity for a second offer but this has not yet been planned and will only happen once the first offers have been completed.

Where do the vaccinations take place?

COVID-19 vaccinations take place at school and within the normal school day.

I have a child who is in this age group but is immunosuppressed [or clinically extremely vulnerable] – can they get a COVID vaccine with the other 12-15s on the day?

At-risk children aged 12 to 15 who are at increased risk of infection from COVID-19, or living with someone at risk, can receive their first dose of the vaccine in school. However, their second dose (due at least 8 weeks after their first dose) cannot be administered in school by the immunisation team. Second dose appointments will need to be booked or will be given by a direct invitation from their GP or healthcare professional.

For further information: <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-vaccination-children-young-people>.

One of my children is 16 and eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. Can he join with the younger children to get vaccinated as well?

Children aged 16 in Year 11 do not need parental consent to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and can get vaccinated in by visiting a local walk-in clinic. You can find details of your nearest walk-in clinics [here](#). More clinics are added daily so do please keep checking back.

Can my 11-year-old have the vaccine?

No, the vaccine can only be given to children and young people aged 12 and over.

Where can I find more information about the COVID-19 vaccination?

For more details visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people>

Where can I find more information about the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine?

Please see the Product Information leaflet: <http://www.hse.ie/covid19vaccinePIL>

