



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Professor Isabel Oliver
Prif Swyddog Meddygol/Cyfarwyddwr Meddygol, GIG Cymru
Chief Medical Officer/Medical Director NHS Wales

09/12/2025

Dear Directors of Education,

I wanted to bring to your attention that we are seeing a significant rise in flu infections across Wales. This illness can be very serious for some children causing complications such as pneumonia. We have already seen hospitalisations this season, as well as the temporary closure of a school following widespread flu like illness amongst staff and pupils.

Vaccination is the best defence that we have against influenza, with benefits also including reduced transmission of flu in the community. Children play a key role in the transmission of flu, including to those who may be at higher risk from the complications of flu such as babies, pregnant women, and the elderly. I therefore encourage you to do all you can to raise vaccination uptake in the schools in your local authority.

All school children up to school year 11 are eligible for an influenza vaccine. This is a safe, painless, and effective vaccine, which is administered as a nasal spray. Influenza vaccination is offered to children to help protect them and to reduce transmission to other people, particularly those in clinical risk groups. Vaccination also brings benefits to schools including reducing the likelihood of flu outbreaks in schools and reducing pupil and staff absence.

Given the early start to this year's flu season, we need to take action to ensure we protect as many children as possible. The latest data from the 2 December showed 43.9% of Primary School children and 18.6% of secondary school children have received a flu vaccination. This is significantly below the target uptake rate of 75%

Your headteachers have a vital role to play in the success of the influenza programme by both promoting vaccinations in their schools and by ensuring those administering vaccinations can do their job as efficiently as possible.

To support this year's flu programme, I would be very grateful if you would please take action and ask that your headteachers:

- Remind parents to provide consent for planned flu clinics before the end of term:
- Signpost parents to check the Public Health Wales website if a child has missed their vaccination, so they can find out how they can get their child vaccinated.




BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Ffon/Tel: 029 2082 3911
Parc Cathays, Caerdydd CF10 3NQ Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Ebst/Email: PSChiefMedicalOfficer@wales.gsi.gov.uk

- Work closely with their local health board representatives to support any pending visits or plan for follow up visits and wider mitigating action as needed.

Thank you very much for your help and support for this nationally important programme of vaccination.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isabel Oliver". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Professor Isabel Oliver
Chief Medical Officer for Wales