

March 2025

Dear parent or carer,

Your year 8 child's HPV vaccination is now due.

This includes one single injection:

- The HPV vaccine

Along with this vaccine, your child can receive the following vaccination, if they are missing one or both doses:

- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine (MMR)

If you would like further information on the HPV vaccine, please visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/hpv-vaccine/.

Please discuss the vaccines with your child, and use the link provided to access and complete the electronic consent form: <https://sav.hrch.nhs.uk/hpv/2024/bexley>

The Bexley Immunisation Team will visit your child's school on 13th June 2025

Even if you decide not to vaccinate your child this year, please ensure you complete the consent form. As providers of school age vaccinations, NHS England requires that we provide numbers of parents that do not consent to their child being vaccinated. If you do not complete your consent form, you may be contacted by phone, text, or letter, to offer your child future opportunities to receive vaccination. If you return a 'no' consent, we will not make any further contact this year.

For more information on this, please see our privacy notice:

www.kingstonandrichmond.nhs.uk/services/service-search-z/immunisations-childrens

We offer all young people the opportunity to receive their vaccinations in an appropriate and comfortable environment. If your child is anxious about receiving their vaccination in school, you are welcome to attend a clinic setting in the community. Our teams hold clinics over the school holiday periods, some weekends, and after school sessions. Please contact your local school immunisation team to book a clinic slot.

In the absence of a signed consent form from parents, we invite young people to self-consent, providing they can demonstrate:

- an understanding of the vaccinations due;
- the benefits of vaccination compared to being unvaccinated;
- the potential side effects of vaccination.

This is done on a case-by-case basis – ultimately, the decision to consent is the young person's choice. This is in line with the Gillick Guideline Competence.

We have included some frequently asked questions about the HPV vaccine and the MMR vaccine below.

If you have any queries, please contact your Immunisation team:

- 0203 903 3380
- HRCH.ImmunisationTeamBexleyMailbox@nhs.net

Yours sincerely,

Bexley Immunisation Team

HPV vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need to get the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine protects you against the human papillomavirus (HPV). Most HPV infections are harmless, but some are associated with an increased of some cancers, including:

- cervical cancer
- mouth cancer
- anal cancer
- penile cancer
- vulval cancer
- vaginal cancer
- head and neck cancers

HPV can also cause genital warts.

I'm nervous about getting the vaccines - what can I do?

Tell your immunisation nurse - they are used to helping people who are nervous and will work with you to overcome your fears.

If you don't want to get your vaccines at school, you can come to a catch-up clinic. These clinics are quieter and calmer, and you will have more time to talk to a nurse about your nerves.

Can I have the vaccine at my GP surgery?

Your GP surgery is not commissioned to vaccinate you. Getting your vaccines in school also means you don't have to go to the surgery when you aren't ill.

Why should I have the vaccine now?

The best time to get the vaccine is before you are exposed to HPV. As HPV is spread through sexual contact, it is best to have the vaccine in year 8, before you are sexually active.

Are there any side effects?

Possible side effects include:

- swelling or pain at the injection site
- a headache
- feeling or being sick
- dizziness
- a high temperature

More serious side effects, such as a severe allergic reaction are very rare.

What if I miss my vaccine at school?

Our Immunisation teams run catch-up clinics after school, at the weekends, and during the school holidays. Head to our website to see all the details of our clinics:

www.kingstonandrichmond.nhs.uk/services/service-search-z/immunisations-childrens

The MMR vaccine

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need the MMR vaccine?

Measles cases are on the rise in London. Measles is a very serious illness - the best way to protect yourself is to have two doses of the MMR vaccine.

When should I have received the MMR vaccine?

According to the NHS Immunisation schedule, children are first offered the MMR vaccine at:

- 1 year old
- 3 year and 4 months old

However, you can catch-up with your missed vaccines at any time. You need two doses to be fully protected.

Are there any side effects?

Possible side effects include:

- swelling or pain at the injection site
- feeling or being sick
- a raised temperature
- swollen glands, a measles-like rash

More serious side effects, such as a severe allergic reaction are very rare.

There are no links between the MMR vaccine and autism.

Does the vaccine contain gelatine?

There are two MMR vaccines: MMRVaxPro and Priorix. The MMRVaxPro vaccine contains a small amount of porcine gelatine.

If you do not consume gelatine, speak to your immunisation nurse. They will ensure you receive the Priorix vaccine, which is porcine gelatine free.

How do I check my vaccination status?

If you received the MMR vaccine as a child, it will be recorded in your Red Book. You can also ask your GP surgery to check.

Can I get the MMR vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

It is safe to have the MMR vaccine at the same time as most other vaccines. The nurse will check if you can have the vaccine.