

21st September 2021

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust
Minerva Road
Farnworth
Bolton
BL4 0JR

Dear parent/guardian

As you may be aware, the government recently announced that they are extending the COVID-19 vaccination programme to all children and young people aged 12 to 15 years, not just those who are considered at higher risk.

This decision is based on the recommendations from the UK's Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), which advises that whilst COVID-19 is typically mild in most young people, it can be unpleasant for some. One dose of the vaccine will provide good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation. Vaccinating 12 to 15 year-olds will help to keep young people in school and reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 within schools, communities and families.

From this week (20th September 2021) children aged 12 to 15 years attending schools in Bolton will be eligible for their first COVID-19 vaccination. They will be offered a first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine over the coming weeks. Children who have started year 7 in secondary school, but who have not yet reached their twelfth birthday will not be currently eligible for the programme. Children and young people aged 12 to 15 years who are at increased risk from infection or are living with someone who may be at increased risk, have already been offered two doses of the vaccine, eight weeks apart.

The vaccination programme will be delivered within local secondary schools by our skilled and experienced School Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS). This is provided by Bolton NHS Foundation Trust, who will be legally responsible for the programme; with oversight from Dr Helen Wall, Senior Responsible Officer for the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Bolton, and the Public Health department at Bolton Council.

The SAIS along with our school nursing teams, have long-standing and trusted relationships with our schools, and already deliver routine immunisation programmes within education settings.

Prior to the vaccination, children and young people, and you as parents or guardians, will be offered advice and information on the vaccine including information around consent. The COVID-

19 vaccination programme is voluntary, although we do encourage as many young people to take the vaccine as possible.

We understand that this may be an anxious time for families considering whether their child or children should have the vaccine and that you may have some questions. Detailed information on the vaccine will be provided to students and families by the team providing the vaccination, to help you make an informed decision.

A frequently asked questions document can be found in addition to this letter, and you can also access it online here [COVID-19 vaccination programme for young people: guidance for parents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-vaccination-programme-for-young-people).

Our teams are on hand to help throughout this process. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we roll-out this programme.

Your faithfully,



Karen Meadowcroft
Chief Nurse
Bolton NHS Foundation Trust



Dr Helen Lowey
Director of Public Health
Bolton Council



Dr Helen Wall
SRO Covid Vaccination Programme
Bolton CCG

