Date 31/10/2025

Dear Parents,

Seasonal Influenza 'flu' outbreaks in Cumbria

You may be aware that we have recently seen significant outbreaks of flu in several schools in Cumbria, unfortunately resulting in some children becoming poorly enough to be admitted to hospital.

Preventing the spread of flu

The best way of avoiding flu is to take up the offer of a vaccination. All school aged children (reception to year 11) are offered a free flu vaccination which is given by the school-aged immunisation team. You should have received information about this.

The flu vaccination for children is usually given as a painless spray up the nose of the child and provides excellent protection for the child. Because the strain of flu circulating can change every year, it is important that children are vaccinated every year to make sure they stay protected.

Younger children over the age of 2 who are not yet in school can get the same vaccine from their GP surgery or some participating pharmacies across Cumbria.

Injected alternatives to the nasal flu vaccine are available for those who cannot have the nasal vaccine for any reason and for younger children (6 months to 2 years) with some underlying health conditions which makes them vulnerable to flu.

If your child has missed their flu vaccination, look out for an invitation to a catch-up clinic in your area the details of which will be circulated by the school age immunisation service.

How the infection spreads

Flu is spread by droplets and aerosols from the nose and mouth of an affected person, especially when coughing and sneezing. Close contact with an infected person or touching contaminated surfaces are most likely to contribute to the spread of infection.

Symptoms of flu

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Are varied but generally include sudden onset, high temperature, fatigue, cold type symptoms (cough, runny nose, etc), headache. Nausea & vomiting can be common in younger children.

Managing outbreaks

Children who are unwell, and particularly if they have a fever, should stay at home until they feel better and the fever has resolved.

- Practice good hygiene – wash hands regularly with soap and water, and following 'catch it, bin it, kill it' measures for coughs and sneezes
- Those children and family members who are eligible for flu vaccines are advised to get them

Thank you for your support in protecting your child from flu.

Kind regards

Katrina Stephens
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