

**Oifig Náisiúnta Imdhíonta**

Aonaid 8/9 Páirc Gnó Shráid an Mhainéir  
Sráid an Mhainéir  
Baile Átha Cliath 7, D07 X320

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28<sup>th</sup> May 2025

To Primary School Principals  
By Email Only

**Influenza Vaccination Programme 2025/2026 for Children**

Dear Principal,

We are writing to update you about the influenza (flu) vaccination programme for children in autumn/winter 2025/2026 and to ask for your support.

Flu vaccination is strongly recommended for all children and young people aged 2 to 17 years to:

- protect them against infection with flu and the risk of serious complications
- reduce the spread of flu within our population

The 2025/2026 HSE seasonal flu vaccination programme will offer the free nasal spray flu vaccine to all those aged 2 to 17 years.

**Choosing a provider**

To ensure that as many children as possible have the opportunity to get the flu vaccine in primary school, HSE vaccination teams, GPs and Community Pharmacists will provide nasal spray flu vaccines in primary school settings in 2025/2026. HSE vaccination teams will provide flu vaccines to all primary and special education sector schools.

HSE vaccination teams, GPs and Community Pharmacists are already planning for the 2025/2026 flu vaccination programme, and may contact your school to offer vaccines to students. You can choose to work with one of these providers to offer vaccines to students in your school.

We request that if you choose to participate in the flu vaccination programme that **you only accept one vaccine provider** to administer vaccines in your school (i.e. either a HSE vaccination team, a GP or a Community Pharmacist).

The vaccinators will be asked to offer the nasal flu vaccine to all children in all class groups in each participating school.

It is the responsibility of the clinician/vaccinator who is providing the nasal spray flu vaccines to ensure that:

- the parents have given informed consent for vaccination
- all consent forms are reviewed in advance of the vaccination clinic in the school
- there are sufficient staff attending the vaccination clinic
- children are identified correctly before a vaccine is administered

To ensure the delivery of a safe and high-quality vaccination programme, we will be advising vaccinators not to accept consent forms given to them on the day of vaccination. This is because this does not allow sufficient time for review.



### **Support from schools**

Your school may be asked to support the vaccinators by:

- distributing consent forms to parents (e.g. sending forms home in school bags), or
- assisting the vaccinators to identify young children correctly (e.g. providing assistance if two children in a class have the same/similar names)

If a provider does not make contact with your school, or you choose not to participate in the school-based element of the programme, children can still receive the flu vaccine for free at participating GPs and Community Pharmacies. Parents can be signposted to this service with more details available nearer the time.

We know that international evidence shows that providing vaccines in schools leads to a higher uptake and therefore higher protection for school-aged children than if vaccines are provided in the community only. This is why we would encourage you to consider participating in this programme.

We would like to thank you for your continued support of vaccination programmes and our efforts to protect the health of our population.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Jessop', is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Dr. Lucy Jessop**  
**Consultant in Public Health Medicine**  
**National Immunisation Office MRCN 424447**