

November 2015

Dear Stowe Parents and Guardians of Year 11 pupils

Meningococcal ACWY – Year 11 Pupils

Meningococcal disease is a rare but life-threatening disease caused by the meningococcal bacteria which are divided into several groups. The most common are A, B, C, W and Y. Infants, teenagers and young adults have the highest risk of meningococcal disease.

Since 2009 there has been a year on year increase in the number of cases of meningococcal W (Men W) disease and there are no signs of the numbers declining. Older teenagers and young adults are more at risk of getting meningitis and septicaemia from Men W.

The ACWY booster for protection against Meningococcal bacteria is now recommended for teenagers in addition to those doses previously received as a baby. This has been added to the Teenage Immunisation Schedule and will be offered this year for the first time to year 9 students. A catch-up programme offering a Men ACWY vaccination to every pupil from years 10 to 13 has started this academic year, with year 11 pupils being offered this in school and years 12 and 13 being able to receive this vaccination through their GP surgery. This will extend protection for your child against Meningococcal strains ACWY into early adulthood.

As your child is in year 11, he/she is now being offered the Men ACWY vaccine in school and you will find enclosed with this letter a consent form for you to complete and return to your child's school. You will see that the consent form is the same as that for Year 9 pupils and it is probable that your child will have already received his/her diphtheria, tetanus and polio & MMR vaccination. If this is the case, please write on the diphtheria, tetanus and polio & MMR section of the consent form that they have already received it and if possible the date, in order that we can check our school health records and ensure they are correct. However, if your child has missed these immunisations in school, this is another opportunity for him/her to receive them, to ensure that he/she is fully protected.

If your child received the meningitis C vaccine (Men C) in year 9 or 10 he/she will still require the Men ACWY vaccine as Men C will only protect against Men C and not provide protection against Men W and the other Meningococcal groups.

These immunisations will be offered on Tuesday 9 February by the School Nursing Team.

Consent Form

It is important for you to discuss and complete the consent form with your child. Every pupil should return the consent form to their school as soon as possible, whether or not they need the immunisations. However, we will use Gillick Competence for self consent with those pupils whose forms are not returned and who wish to have the vaccine.

If you have any concerns please contact the School Health Nurses via your child's school. **Please return the completed consent form to your child's Matron as quickly as possible.**

Yours sincerely

*Sam Smissen*Samantha Smissen
Buckinghamshire Immunisation Lead
School Nursing Team

PLEASE USE A BALLPOINT PEN

Vaccination Consent Form

**For Tetanus, Diphtheria / Inactivated Polio Vaccine (Td/IPV)
Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)
Meningococcal groups ACWY**

Child's Surname	First Name	Date of Birth	Male / Female
Home Address		Contact telephone numbers	
Postcode			
GP Name and Address		NHS Number	
		Ethnicity	
School		Tutor Group	
Severe Allergies	Medical Conditions	Regular Medication	

Immunisation History – UK Schedule

This information is important; if you are unsure please check with your Doctor/GP surgery

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Inactivated Polio Vaccine (Td/IPV)

In order to be fully protected your child should have received 4 Td/IPV immunisations before starting school.

- Did your child receive Td/IPV immunisation as a baby? Yes No
- Did your child receive Td/IPV immunisation before starting primary school? Yes No

The 5th and final Td/IPV is now due. OR If your child has already received the 5th dose please give date

Meningococcal groups ACWY

In order to be fully protected your child is now due the Meningococcal ACWY Vaccine

Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)

Only 2 MMR immunisations are required for your child to be fully protected. These are normally given before your child starts school.

- Did your child receive their first MMR immunisation around their first birthday? Yes No
- Did your child receive a second MMR immunisation before starting primary school? Yes No

If you have ticked either of the 'No' boxes, please give consent below.

Immunisation Consent

I give my consent for my child to receive the following immunisations (please tick)	Name (print)
Tetanus, Diphtheria and Polio (Td/IPV) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/Guardian
Meningococcal groups ACWY Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reason consent refused, add comments overleaf	

Please complete and return the consent form ASAP, whether or not your child needs this immunisation.
If the form is not returned, your child will be asked on the day if they would like to self consent.

Vaccine	Date	Site of IM injection		Vaccine Name	Batch No / Expiry Date	Immuniser	Signature
		L arm	R arm				
Td/IPV		L arm	R arm				
MenC		L arm	R arm				
MMR 1		L arm	R arm				
MMR 2		L arm	R arm				

Entered on RiO date initials

In school years 9 to 13?

Protect yourself against

**meningitis and
septicaemia**



Are you in school
years 9 to 13 (aged 13 to
18 years)? Living in England?

You need to get the MenACWY
vaccination before you leave school
or soon after. This leaflet tells you
what to expect next.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

is a rare but life-threatening disease caused by meningococcal bacteria which are divided into several groups. The most common are A, B, C, W and Y. Infants, young children, teenagers and young adults have the highest risk of meningococcal disease.

This leaflet explains why it's important that students in school years 9 to 13 have MenACWY vaccination to protect against meningococcal disease.



Since 2009 there has been a year on year increase in the number of cases of meningococcal W (MenW) disease and there is no sign of the numbers declining. Older teenagers and young adults are more at risk of getting meningitis and septicaemia from MenW. A catch – up programme offering a MenACWY vaccination to every pupil from years 10 to 13 is starting in general practice from late August and in schools from September 2015 onwards.

The MenACWY vaccine will also replace the teenage MenC vaccine usually offered to year 9 or 10 students and become the routine vaccination for teenagers.


What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal bacteria can cause meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning). Both diseases are very serious and can kill, especially if not diagnosed early.

The early symptoms of meningococcal disease are similar to those of flu, so you need to be able to recognise the symptoms very quickly (even if you have been vaccinated, the vaccines offered through the routine immunisation programme do not protect against all forms of the disease). A full description of the signs and symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia can be found at www.meningitis.org and www.meningitisnow.org

What causes meningococcal disease?

There are five main groups of meningococcal bacteria that can cause meningitis and septicaemia – A, B, C, W and Y. The same bacteria that cause this serious disease are also commonly carried in the back of the nose and throat, especially in young adults.



Look out for any of these symptoms

- Fever, cold hands and feet
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Drowsiness, difficult to wake up
- Irritability and/or confusion
 - Dislike of bright lights
- Severe headache or muscle pains
 - Pale, blotchy skin with or without a rash
 - Convulsions/seizures
 - Stiff neck

How common is it?

Meningococcal group C disease is now rare since MenC vaccination was introduced to the national immunisation programme in 1999. MenB is now the most common cause of meningococcal disease in children and young adults, while MenW and MenY used to mainly cause serious illness in older adults. Since 2009, however, there has been a large increase in MenW disease in England, resulting in several deaths among infants and teenagers. From September 2015, MenB vaccine will become part of the routine infant programme to help protect young babies.

Why do I need to get the vaccine?

As an older teenager, you become at higher risk of getting MenW meningococcal disease, so you need to get vaccinated to protect yourself. Vaccination also reduces the risk of you carrying the bacteria and so protects other people around you. This should, in turn, prevent the numbers increasing to serious levels. You may have had a MenC vaccination as a baby and again more recently but this will not protect you against

other meningococcal groups. The MenACWY vaccine will increase your protection against MenC and help to protect you against three other meningococcal groups (A, W and Y). It is still important to know the signs and symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia because there are many other bacteria that can also cause these illnesses, including the group B strain that is not covered by this vaccination.

When will I get the vaccination?

It's recommended that all teenagers in school years 10 to 13 have the MenACWY vaccination before or soon after they leave school. The catch – up programme will start in August 2015 and end in around October 2017. With so many pupils to vaccinate, the programme will be rolled out gradually, with year 13 pupils offered the vaccine first. These older teenagers are at greatest risk of the disease especially when starting university where they will come into contact with many new people of a similar age.

In addition, all year 9 students (and year 10 students in some areas) will be offered the MenACWY vaccine routinely instead of the MenC vaccine.

Do I have to have it?

All vaccinations in the UK are voluntary but it's recommended that everybody in this age group has the MenACWY vaccine to help protect themselves and others, such as young infants, who may be particularly susceptible to this disease. You, or your parent/guardian, have to consent to have the vaccine.

What if I want the vaccination but my parents don't agree?

If you can show that you understand the benefits and risks of MenACWY vaccination, you can consent to have the vaccine. But it's hoped that you will discuss the matter as a family and come to a shared decision.

What if I want more information before consenting?

If you feel you need more information about any aspect of vaccination you or your parents can always speak to the nurse or GP. You can also call the NHS helpline 111 or contact the meningitis charities listed at end of this leaflet.

What do I need to do if I'm in year 13 now?

You will get an invitation from your GP to have the vaccine in the summer. Students in lower years will be offered the vaccine through schools or general practice. You will get further information about this later in the year.

What do I need to do if I'm planning to go to university?

New university students are at particularly high risk in the first weeks of term. You should always register with a GP in the area when you start university and you can arrange to get the vaccine there. You should do that straight away – ideally in your first week of term – don't leave it till later.


Is the vaccine safe?

The vaccine has been used for many years across the world and has an excellent safety record. Serious side effects from the vaccine are rare.

Does the vaccination hurt?

What are the common side effects?

It's like a sting. You may get soreness and some redness and swelling in your arm after the injection - you may also get a headache, but these symptoms should disappear after one or two days. If you feel unwell at any time after vaccination, you should contact your GP.



Meningitis and septicaemia are very serious and require urgent attention. If you think you've got either, get help immediately and make sure your fellow students know to look out for you and each other.

Do the glass test

Someone with septicaemia may develop a few spots or a widespread rash with fever. Later on the rash can develop into purple blotches that do not fade under pressure. You can do a test for this by pressing the side of a drinking glass against the rash. If you have a fever and a rash, and the rash does not fade under pressure, get medical help immediately by calling 999 or getting someone to take you to the nearest hospital emergency department. Never wait for a rash, though. It can be a late sign or may not appear at all. If someone is ill and getting worse get medical help immediately.



How can I find out more?

There is more information about the MenACWY vaccination on the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk/conditions/Meningitis/Pages/Introduction.aspx or you can talk to your GP, nurse or university health centre if you have any questions.

The following charities also provide information, advice and support:

Meningitis Now

Freephone Meningitis Helpline
0808 80 10 388
9am to 10pm every day
www.meningitisnow.org

Meningitis Research Foundation

Free helpline 080 8800 3344
(9am to 10pm weekdays, 10am to 8pm weekends and holidays)
www.meningitis.org