



10th October 2018

Case Ref: 201174

To: parents and carers of children in Reception and Year 1

Dear parents/carers,

Hepatitis A

We have been informed that two people at Heavers Farm Primary School have recently been unwell with Hepatitis A. Hepatitis A is a virus which causes infection in the liver and is spread in the stool (faeces) of an infected person. Hepatitis A can be spread to others if they share the same environment, for example toilets, or share food with a person who has the infection.

We are writing to offer your child vaccination against Hepatitis A. This is a precautionary measure and we are offering vaccine to some members of the school community, to help prevent spread of the illness. This includes all children in Reception and Year 1, and some staff. Children who usually receive the nasal flu (influenza) vaccine at school will also be offered this at the same time. It is safe and effective to have both vaccines at the same time.

Only children in Reception or Year 1 classes require vaccination in school.

What about siblings and children in other years?

Our offer is for children in reception and year 1 only. We consider the risk to others in the school is very low and there is no need for vaccination in school.

You will need to give written consent and attend with your child for them to receive the hepatitis A vaccination - we will not be able to vaccinate your child if you do not accompany them. There are two opportunities for your child to be vaccinated:

1. A team of nurses will be running a clinic at the school on Friday 12th October from 8:30am, to provide vaccination to any Reception and Year 1 children accompanied by a parent.
2. You and your child can attend an extra clinic at Lennard Road (Croydon Health Services, 12-18 Lennard Road, Croydon, CR9 2RS) on Saturday 13th October clinic, between 10am and 2pm (Walk-in). You only need to attend one appointment, on either Friday or Saturday this week.

If your child is unable to attend at either of these times, please take this letter to your GP and arrange for vaccination. You will not need to pay your GP to have this vaccination. If you or your GP have any queries, please call the South London Health Protection Team on 0344 326 2052.

It is possible that your child may already be protected against hepatitis A if they have had any of the following:

- one dose of hepatitis A vaccine in the past 12 months
- OR
- two doses of hepatitis A vaccine in the last 10 years
- OR
- natural infection with hepatitis A in the past (they will not need any further vaccination)

Please fill in the consent form with any previous hepatitis A vaccine that your child has received. If you are unsure, it is safe for them to have the vaccine, even if they have been fully immunised or had hepatitis A infection in the past.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

The symptoms of hepatitis A develop two to six weeks after contact with the infection. Often hepatitis A does not cause any symptoms, particularly in children, who may not realise that they have had the infection. Most people recover and have no long term problems.

Symptoms can include:

- feeling tired and generally unwell
- joint and muscle pain
- a high temperature (fever)
- loss of appetite
- feeling or being sick
- pain in the upper-right part of your tummy
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- dark urine and pale stools
- itchy skin

If you think your child may have Hepatitis A

It is unlikely that you or your child will develop Hepatitis A. If your child or a member of your household develops any of the symptoms above in the coming few weeks, please go to your GP and take this letter with you.

If your doctor diagnoses Hepatitis A

Your GP will notify South London Health Protection Team. They will probably do a test to check what the problem is. People with Hepatitis A need to stay away from school or work until the doctor advises they can return. This is usually for about a week after their symptoms develop.

Our factsheet has more information about hepatitis A and vaccine, or visit the NHS Choices website and search for "hepatitis A". Good hand hygiene is important to reduce the spread of infection.

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Hepatitis-A/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the South London Health Protection Team on 0344 326 2052 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm), quoting reference number 201174.

Kind regards,

Louise Bishop
Consultant in Health Protection