Dear Parent or Carer,

**Letter to Parents from Joe McDonnell, Director of Public Health at Waltham Forest Council**

I am writing to you to ask for your support in helping us protect more teenagers in Waltham Forest against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio and Meningitis.

This year, the number of teenagers immunised against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio, and Meningitis in Waltham Forest has dropped from 80% last year to 50% in 2022. Such low levels of immunisation put children and young people at risk of getting these serious diseases – however it is not too late to change this.

As part of the [national immunisation programme](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/), teenagers in Year 9 are required to get the 3-in-1 booster and the Meningitis ACWY vaccines in addition to the HPV vaccine in Year 8. These vaccines have been used for decades as an effective way of protecting teenagers against a whole range of dangerous diseases such as Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio, Meningitis and several types of cancer.

Meningitis is an inflammation of the lining of the brain which causes long-term problems and can be fatal. Tetanus, Diphtheria & Polio are three separate diseases which can cause problems such as difficulty breathing and swallowing, muscle spasms and a high temperature. Not getting the vaccine could lead to your child becoming very unwell. You can read more about both vaccines and the diseases they protect against below:

* <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/men-acwy-vaccine/>
* <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/3-in-1-teenage-booster/>

**Parental consent**

To support us in protecting more teenagers against these serious diseases, we ask that parents or carers who haven’t yet completed the online consent form do so by visiting <https://london.schoolvaccination.uk/dtp/2021/walthamforest.> It is important to do this even if you choose not to consent to your teenagers’ vaccination.

If you require a paper consent form, please contact Lisa Jordan at Vaccination UK who will be able to provide this. Her contact details are included at the end of this letter.

**It's not too late for your child to get vaccinated**

If your child hasn’t already received these immunisations, it’s not too late for them to do so. Please complete the online consent form or contact Vaccination UK if you require a paper consent form. Vaccination UK will either arrange a date to go back into your child’s school or alternatively you can attend one of the drop-in clinics taking place across the borough. The details of these clinics are below:

Venue: Highams Park, Vaccination UK Office. Address: 490, Larkshall Road, E4 9HH

* Monday 4th April 2022: 10:30 – 12:30
* Monday 11th April 2022: 10:30 – 12:30

Venue: Leytonstone, United Free Church. Address: 55a Wallwood Road, E11 1AY

* Thursday 7th April 2022: 10.30 - 12.30
* Thursday 21st April 2022: 15:00 – 18:00

Venue: Walthamstow, Priory Court Community Centre. Address: 11 Priory Court, E17 5NB

* Tuesday 12th April 2022: 10.30 - 12.30

With your support, we can ensure that our children and young people are kept safe from these diseases.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lisa Jordan at Vaccination UK who is responsible for the immunisation programme in secondary schools across the borough. You can contact Lisa by email (WalthamForest@v-uk.co.uk) or by phone (0208 017 4291).

Yours faithfully,



Joe McDonnell

Director of Public Health