

International HPV Awareness Day – Information for Parents



From **April to July 2026**, the **School Age Immunisation Service** will be offering the **HPV vaccine** to all **Year 8 pupils**, as well as pupils in **Years 9–11** who have not yet received it. The vaccine is offered to **both boys and girls**.

Every year, **International HPV Awareness Day** takes place on **4 March**. It's an opportunity to raise awareness about HPV and the protection the vaccine provides.

To help families feel informed, we focus on the **Three Ws**:

- **What** HPV is
 - **Why** the HPV vaccine is important
 - **When** your child will receive it and what to expect
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What is HPV?

Human papillomaviruses (HPVs) are a very common family of viruses that infect the skin and body linings. There are hundreds of different types.

Most HPV infections are harmless and clear on their own, but some types can cause **genital warts** and increase the risk of developing certain **cancers** later in life.

HPV can increase the risk of:

- **Cervical cancer** – HPV causes more than 90% of cases
- Some **mouth and throat cancers**
- **Anal and genital cancers**, including vaginal, vulval, penile and anal cancers

These cancers can affect both men and women. Since **2019**, the HPV vaccine has therefore been offered to boys as well as girls.

Why is the HPV vaccine important?

The HPV vaccine used in the UK is **Gardasil 9**. It protects against **nine types of HPV**, including the high-risk strains that cause around **90% of cervical cancers**.

It also protects against the two HPV types responsible for most cases of **genital warts**.

Some key facts:

- Cervical cancer is the **most common cancer in women under 35**.
- Around **3,200 women** in the UK are diagnosed each year, and about **900** die from it.
- Since the HPV vaccine was introduced, cervical cancer rates have fallen by **almost 90%** in women in their 20s who were vaccinated at ages 12–13.
- Since 2019, boys have also been routinely offered the vaccine because it clearly protects them from HPV-related cancers.
- Protection is now achieved with **one dose** of the vaccine.


When will the HPV Vaccine be offered.

The vaccine is offered in **Year 8** because it works best when given **before** a young person becomes exposed to the virus.

The **IntraHealth School Age Immunisation Service** will be offering the **HPV vaccine** to year 8 pupil and those in years 9–11 who are outstanding the vaccine, from **April – July 2026**.

We will work with your school to provide parents with information about the vaccine and how to provide consent.

Further information

 Contact the School Age Immunisation Service directly on **0333 3583 397 Option 7 then Option 2**

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[HPV vaccine - NHS](#)