



By email

Our ref: 19/06/jb/111

4 July 2014

Dear

Re: Vaccinations

Thank you for your email dated 6 June 2014 in which you asked a number of questions related to childhood vaccinations. You made your request under the Freedom of Information Act, and we have therefore considered your request in accordance with the Act, where it is appropriate to do so. I have set out your questions below and addressed each in turn. In accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the Act I can confirm that Public Health England (PHE) holds some of the information you have specified.

- **Could you tell me how many vaccinations a child receives from birth to 16 years of age?**

You were advised by the HSCIC that the NHS Choices website has a schedule listing all the vaccinations routinely offered to everyone in the UK for free on the NHS and the ages at which they should ideally be given. It can be found here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/vaccination-schedule-age-checklist.aspx>

- **Are any or all of these vaccinations mandatory?**

All immunisation in the UK is voluntary. The informed consent of the person being vaccinated or, in the case of a child, their parent, guardian or carer, must be obtained. Responsibility for this policy in England rests with the Department of Health. In their letter of 12 May, the HSCIC provided a web link to a document called "Immunisation against infectious disease"; this is commonly referred to as "The Green Book". The HSCIC did this so that you would read about the need to obtain informed consent before immunisation takes place. I notice that the HSCIC provided you with a link to an out of date version of the Green Book. I am therefore providing you with a link to the current version:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunisation-against-infectious-disease-the-green-book>

Because its contents change frequently and it would be necessary for paper versions to be regularly updated, The Green Book is only available on line. The interests of patient safety are best served by it being solely an online resource, so that medical practitioners and patients can be confident that the guidance being used is completely up to date.

- **Is the choice not to vaccinate my child an issue likely to concern Social Services?**

This is not a valid Freedom of Information request because it does not ask for information held. You would need to address your enquiry to your local authority social services department.

- **Would my decision be of concern to any other government department?**

This is not a valid Freedom of Information request because it does not ask for information held, nor is it a question with which PHE can assist.

- **Is it ever likely to be considered a case of 'neglect'?**

This is not a valid Freedom of Information request because it does not ask for information held, nor is it a question with which PHE can assist. You would need to address the question to the relevant authorities, perhaps your local authority's social services department.

If you have any queries regarding the information that has been supplied to you, please refer them to me in the first instance. If you are dissatisfied with this response and would like to request an internal review, then please contact Mr George Stafford at the address above or by emailing internalreview@phe.gov.uk

Please note that you have the right to an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office if a complaint cannot be resolved through the PHE complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted by writing to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer