

Schools face scrutiny over Covid-19 vaccinations for children

On 4 June, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved the use of the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine for 12- to 15-year-olds.

📅 09 June 2021

Please note: the information contained in this legal update is correct as of the original date of publication.

On 4 June, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved the use of the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine for 12- to 15-year-olds. The next step will be for the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation to advise whether a deployment programme should be launched for this age group.

This news has been welcomed by the Government as both Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, and Health Minister, Robin Swann, signalled their support for vaccinating 12- to 15-year-olds to prevent outbreaks. Some countries, such as Germany and France, have already announced plans for vaccinating children.

However, the news has been met with resistance by others, including the World Freedom Alliance, who are against proposed vaccination for anyone under 18. We have supported a number of our school clients who have received emails from individuals referring to a letter from the World Freedom Alliance, asking them to confirm the school's position in relation to the promotion, endorsement or facilitation of a vaccination programme for pupils.

Whilst a decision is awaited on the rollout of the vaccination programme for children, schools should continue to promote the current testing and safety measures they have adopted in line with current guidance to limit the transmission and disruption caused by Covid-19, especially with the new variants.

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