# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **COVID-19 vaccination – Children and young people** |
| **DATE** | **22 December 2021** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Today, following discussion and consideration of the evidence, the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has made two recommendations to further expand the COVID-19 vaccination programme for children and young people.

Firstly, following the recent decision by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to approve the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®) vaccine in younger children, the JCVI has recommended children aged 5 to 11, who are in an “at-risk” group or are the household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed should be offered two 10 micrograms doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine with an interval of eight weeks between the first and second doses. The minimum interval between any vaccine dose and recent COVID-19 infection should be four weeks.

At the current time, the JCVI considers the balance of potential benefits and harms is in favour of vaccination for this group. The JCVI has not as yet advised whether children aged 5 to 11, who are not in an “at-risk” category should receive vaccination until more information and evidence is available.

Secondly, the JCVI has recommended offering a COVID-19 booster dose to:

* All children and young people aged 16 to 17 years
* Children and young people aged 12 to 15 who are in a clinical risk group or who are a household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed
* Children and young people aged 12 to 17 years who are severely immuno-compromised and who have had a third primary dose.

The booster dose should be offered no sooner than three months after completion of their primary course.

As always, appropriate information about the potential benefits and risks of vaccination will be made available for children and young people, parents and guardians to make an informed decision on vaccination.

I have accepted this advice. Our intention, as it has been from the start of the pandemic, is to follow the clinical and scientific evidence.

NHS Wales will identify eligible 5 to 11-year-olds in the “at risk” groups and begin offering appointments in the New Year, and under 18s who are eligible for a booster dose will receive an appointment when they become eligible.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.