

January 2017 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Health chiefs urge Suffolk people not to miss out on flu vaccination

There is still time to get a flu vaccination, say senior health leads, as winter bites. Those with diagnosed conditions - like heart conditions or diabetes or asthma and other breathing problems - are particularly urged to get the free vaccination from their local pharmacy or surgery. Preventing flu can prevent more serious conditions like pneumonia. Cllr Tony Goldson, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Health said: "We're into the winter season now and with it the risk of flu. That's why we're calling on Suffolk people to get vaccinated, if they have not done so already. The flu vaccination is widely recognised as an effective way to reduce harm from flu - it protects individuals from the worst effects of flu and helps prevent the spread of flu to friends, family and others."

The flu vaccination is widely recognised as an effective way to reduce harm from flu. It reduces the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and even death. Pregnant women, people with an underlying health condition and those aged 65 and over qualify for a free jab. Anyone who does not fall into these categories can arrange vaccination for a fee at participating pharmacies. Dr Ed Garratt, Chief Officer at Ipswich and East Suffolk and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups said: "Flu is a particularly unpleasant illness that generally affects people over the colder months. Those at particular risk qualify for a free vaccination, which I would strongly encourage. It's a simple but vitally important way of protecting your health, as well as the spread of flu to the wider community."

Children of aged two, three and four and in school years one, two and three have for the second year running been offered the vaccination as a nasal spray delivered in schools. Those not eligible for a free vaccination can arrange for a paid-for vaccination through participating community pharmacies. The most common symptoms of flu are fever, chills, headache, aches and pains in the joints and muscles, and extreme tiredness. Healthy individuals usually recover within two to seven days, but the effects can be more severe for those in vulnerable groups. Flu is caused by influenza viruses that infect the windpipe and lungs. Because it is caused by viruses and not bacteria, antibiotics won't treat it. The best way of avoiding flu is by having the vaccination, but it helps to practise good hygiene such as covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and regularly washing hands.

Promising School Results for Suffolk in 2015/16

Suffolk County Council continues to drive up educational standards across Suffolk, making sure that every child has access to the best possible education. In October, provisional A-level, GCSE and Early Years Foundation results were released by the Department for Education. The overall A-level pass-rate has continued to rise and for the first-time GCSE progress has risen above the national average, and there has been a 3% rise in the number of students achieving the GCSE threshold in English and Maths. Provisional results also show a rise in Suffolk children achieving a Good Level of Development in their Early Years Foundation Stage results and we are above the rest of England. While Key Stage 2 results, released in August, remain below the national average, Suffolk's ranking has significantly improved from 134 to 119. 86% of Suffolk schools are now being judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, this is the highest percentage we have ever had and it is improving twice as quickly as England overall. We continue to remain dedicated to supporting all Suffolk Schools to become Good or Outstanding.

Young people make more than 1,000 Brilliant Baubles as part of festive recycling campaign

Schools and groups from across Suffolk have made their own festive decorations as part of a campaign aimed at teaching children how they can have fun reducing their waste in the run up to Christmas. Following on from the successful 1,000 Suffolk Stars project last year, the Suffolk Waste Partnership invited schools and groups across the county to make 1,000 Brilliant Baubles. As part of the campaign to promote reuse and recycling, children and young people were asked to use recycled materials to decorate old CDs, to be displayed at two major Suffolk venues - The Apex in Bury St Edmunds until mid-January and Ipswich Town Hall until 9 January. Twenty-four schools, two guide and brownie groups and one library have taken part in the project, with around 1,200 baubles being created and hung up just in time for Christmas. The fantastically festive decorations, which have captured the imagination of children, have acted as a reminder that making decorations and presents from reused and recycled materials is especially important at Christmas when more waste than normal is produced. Old CDs you no longer need can be sold on or sent for re-use at Charity shops. They can also be placed in media banks at Suffolk Recycling Centres. If they are still in their cases they'll be sorted for reuse, if not they'll be recycled. All schools that took part were also entered into a prize draw to win a £50 gardening voucher, which was won by Tudor Primary School in Sudbury.

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division

Tel : 01728 628176 Mob : 07824474741 E-mail : matthew.hicks@suffolk.gov.uk