

Trading Standards are reminding businesses, such as takeaways, sandwich bars, care homes and retailers who supply certain single-use plastic items, that a ban comes into force on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October, and that they should start thinking now about alternatives.

The ban includes all single-use plastic cutlery, trays, plates, bowls, and balloon sticks, as well as banning the use of certain types of polystyrene cups and food containers used to supply food that is ready to consume. It also includes the supply of items by businesses from existing stock and includes single-use plastic that is biodegradable, compostable, recycled and items wholly or partly made from plastic, including the coating or lining.

Businesses who continue to supply banned single-use plastic items could be given a fine. It is estimated that England uses 2.7 billion items of single use cutlery each year, and 721 million single-use plates. Only 10% of these items are recycled.

Certain plastic items, such as straws, stirrers and cotton buds, have already been banned.

Plastic pollution takes hundreds of years to break down and inflicts serious damage to our oceans, rivers, and land. It is also a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, from the production and manufacture of the plastic itself to the way it is disposed.

Businesses could: Swap plastic for bamboo or wooden cutlery for takeaway food; Swap plastic for metal cutlery for inhouse guests; Swap single use plastic plates or bowls to re-usable alternatives that can be washed; Offer paper plates instead of plastic; Offer to refill customers' water bottles or travel cups and Encourage customers to bring their own clean containers for takeaway food

Steve Brown, Director of Public Health Devon, said: "Starting or returning to school is an exciting time for all children. But as they will be mixing with lots of other children, making sure they are up to date with their routine immunisations gives them the best protection from what can potentially be very harmful infections."

Relevant immunisations are

- Pre-school Boosters, offered to children from age three years and four months, are: The four in one pre-school booster (diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and polio)
- The MMR (measle, mumps, rubella) vaccine is given at one year (first dose) and at three years and four months (second dose)

A list of all the vaccinations your child should have had, by age, and by when, is available via the NHS website. If you are not sure if your child has had all of their vaccinations, please check their personal health record (the red book) and if you have any questions, contact your child's surgery.

Annual flu vaccinations are also available to all school children from reception age to year 11, and these are usually given at school. The vaccine for children is a nasal spray. Vaccinating your child protects them, but also others who are vulnerable to flu, such as babies and older people.

"Look out for a message from the school immunisation team and please allow them your consent to give the vaccination," says Steve Brown.

Children who are aged two or three by Thursday 31 August 2023 will be invited for vaccination at their registered GP practice, as well as any children who are at greater risk from flu to enable them to access the vaccine as early as possible in the flu season.

The NHS has information online to help parents and carers know how long their child should be kept off school when they are ill. Further guidance here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources#exclusion-table>

Devon County Council have agreed to give care leavers – young people who have been in the care of the local authority – protected characteristic status. It's recognition that young people's experience of being in the care system can be a potential source of discrimination similar to other protected characteristics such as race or disability.

A Notice of Motion put to members of our Councillor, made the case. It said that a study has shown that 70 per cent of care experienced people die early; that more than half of the people who are in custody up to the age of 21 years old have been in care; and that a quarter of the homeless population is care experienced.

County Councillors unanimously supported the Motion, which means that we will do more to ensure that care experienced young people are not discriminated against.

It means, for example, that Devon will make sure that the experiences of young people in care and care leavers will be considered in all of its decisions. But it is also a foundation on which to develop better support across Devon as whole, not just in the services that we are responsible for.

Officers will therefore work with partners to improve support for care experienced people in all aspects of their lives including housing and accommodation, health, employment, as well as education.

Young people with care experience attended the meeting and spoke passionately to councillors about the importance of the Motion to all children in care and people who have been in care.

At the same meeting it was agreed that the Council would support Parish Councils who wished to pay for a 20 mph speed limit, or extension to one, if they so wished in their community.

This is a significant move by the Council and I have written to the Chief Highway Officer asking for details as to how this will be effected and I will be reporting this to you in due course.

There have been numerous calls for a 20 mph speed limit in the village and due to the restrictions currently in place I have not been able to progress this important safety measure.

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