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Cancer vaccine programme in disarray after death of Natalie Morton

David Rose, Health Correspondent, and Joanna Sugden

The national vaccination programme to protect against cervical cancer was today in disarray after a 14-year-old girl died shortly after receiving the Cervarix jab.

Health officials in the Midlands suspended the campaign while parents elsewhere were left confused as schools and councils took unilateral action in defiance of government guidelines.

The London borough of Havering suspended the programme pending safety checks by the Department of Health. It said it would resume vaccinations tomorrow.

North East Lincolnshire said that it is continuing to vaccinate but one school in the county opted to postpone appointments “while they reassure parents”, the council said.

Admiral Lord Nelson School in Portsmouth was due to vaccinate girls today but has delayed the programme to “give parents time to make an informed choice”.

The family of Natalie Morton said that they are mourning a “precious daughter, sister and granddaughter” after the schoolgirl died suddenly yesterday afternoon.