

Tomlinscote School Sixth Form College

A DfES Designated Language College

"Learning for all, above all"



1 July 2009

Dear Parent

Re: Swine Flu ('Influenza A/H1N1v')

I am writing to let you know that there has been a suspected case of influenza A/H1N1v ("swine flu") in the school, impossible to confirm because swabs are no longer routinely tested by GPs. We are working with the Health Protection Agency who have advised us that Swine Flu is usually a mild illness. Tomlinscote will remain open, but the situation will be kept under review over the coming days and weeks.

The student concerned is in Year 7 and was a member of the party that visited Germany last week, a period during which the student might have been infectious. I repeat, the case is **not** confirmed, but I felt it appropriate to let you know the situation. If your son or daughter was on the same trip to Germany, you may wish to exercise particular vigilance with regard to 'flu' like symptoms.

Guidance on swine flu is evolving rapidly, and may change again, but at present the advice from the Health Protection Agency (HPA) is as follows.

1. Very close contacts of the pupil concerned who remain well can carry on their normal lives without any restrictions. They will not normally be offered antiviral treatment unless they are in an 'at-risk' group (see below).
2. Parents of any other pupils who have flu-like symptoms **MUST KEEP THEM AT HOME**. These pupils may have swine flu and, if they have symptoms, they are likely to be infectious. Sending them to school would risk their infecting others. Ideally they should keep their contact with others to a minimum until 7 days from the onset of their symptoms. If:
 - i. you are concerned about the state of their health;
 - ii. the pupil is more ill than you would normally expect with flu; or
 - iii. anybody in the household is in an 'at risk' group,

please contact your GP, who may consider advising antiviral treatment.

3. Pupils who:

a. are in an 'at risk' group, ie:

- chronic respiratory disease (including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- chronic heart disease
- chronic renal disease
- chronic liver disease
- chronic neurological conditions
- diabetes mellitus.

In addition to the above risk categories, the following circumstances should also be considered to count as 'at risk':

- pregnancy
- immunosuppression (including e.g. treatment for cancer)

AND

b. were a very close contact of a pupil with swine flu

may be offered antiviral treatment if they have symptoms, and a preventative course of antivirals if they do not have any symptoms. This can be arranged by ringing your GP and saying that you have received this letter from your school.

4. Staff who have had close contact with a pupil with swine flu AND who are pregnant or in an 'at risk' group should contact their GP for advice.

I enclose a leaflet about Swine Flu. Further information can be obtained from NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or from the Swine Flu Information Line on 0800 151 3513.

Yours sincerely

A A Ryles
Principal