

SUNDAY, 16 AUGUST 2009

SWINE FLU - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF FROM THE NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE FOR WALES

Information for schools from the National Public Health Service for Wales:

Swine flu is now circulating in many parts of the UK, and more cases are expected in the next few months, with widespread activity in Wales by the time schools return from the summer vacation.

There are a few simple measures you can use to reduce the spread of flu in your school. Everyone can play their part by practicing good hygiene:

Washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of virus from your hands to face or to other people.

Cleaning hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.

Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.

Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.

Making sure children follow this advice.

If people think they may have flu and want to check their symptoms they can call the Swine Flu Information Line on 0800 1 513 513. If they are still concerned they should contact NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647.

Staff or students with flu like illness should stay at home until they are well and have finished any treatment their doctor has prescribed. Where people become ill during the day they should be sent home. Siblings and other household members can continue to attend school while they remain well.

With swine flu circulating within the country, closing a school would not help to slow the spread of the virus as people could still be exposed outside the school. However, where there is high staff absenteeism it may be necessary to close the school or after-school club until there is sufficient staff to safely care for the children.

It is important that any woman who is pregnant and has flu-like symptoms (headache, cough, sore throat and fever) should call NHS Wales Direct on 0845 4647 or call their GP as soon as possible. Pregnant women who are diagnosed with any type of flu may require close monitoring as they are one of the groups who have a higher risk of developing complications. Infection with the flu virus during pregnancy has not been associated with an increased risk to the unborn baby.

Other groups who are at higher risk of complications include:

people with chronic lung disease including people who have had drug treatment for their asthma within the past three years

people with chronic heart disease

people with chronic kidney disease

people with chronic liver disease

people with chronic neurological disease

people with suppressed immune systems (whether caused by disease or treatment)

people with diabetes

pregnant women

people aged 65 years and older

children under five years old.

People in these high risk groups should seek medical advice as soon as possible if they become ill with a flu-like illness.

Attached is a letter that you could send out to parents:

Draft letter for headteachers to send to parents:

Dear Parent,

By the time we return from the summer holiday break, all the evidence suggests that flu will be circulating in our communities and we will expect to see cases in the school.

Please remember that if your child is ill with flu like symptoms you must keep them at home until they are fully recovered. Siblings and other household

members who are well can continue to come to school. With swine flu circulating within the community, public health advice states that closing the school will not help to slow the spread of the virus as people could still be exposed outside the school.

Equally, over the summer, many children will enjoy various activities and holiday clubs. As is usual practice, if they become ill, they should not attend until they are fully recovered.

Symptoms of flu include a fever, cough, sore throat, aching muscles, sneezing, fatigue, runny nose and lack of appetite. Some people with swine flu have also reported vomiting and diarrhoea.

For most children swine flu is a mild illness. However, if you think you or your child may have flu and want to check the symptoms call the Swine Flu Information Line on 0800 1 513 513. If you are still concerned contact NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647.

Everyone can play their part in reducing the spread of flu by practicing good hygiene:

Washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of virus from your hands to face or to other people.

Cleaning hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.

Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.

Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.

Making sure children follow this advice

Further information will be provided by school as and when directed by the Local Authority or National Public Health Service for Wales.

Posted by PENYGAWSI PRIMARY SCHOOL at [12:03 PM](#)