

The Ridings High School

International School Status



RCE/JGG

5 May 2009

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

I have today received the following information from South Gloucestershire Council's Children and Young People Department and NHS South Gloucestershire:

I am writing to reassure you and provide you with information following media coverage of two cases of swine flu in South Gloucestershire. The first is a year 7 pupil at Downend Secondary School. The second is the parent of a child at Chipping Sodbury School.

Both Schools and South Gloucestershire Council, the Health Protection Agency and the NHS are all working together to minimise any potential spread of swine flu. I would like to reassure you that there is very little risk to either you or your child.

As a precautionary measure, Downend School has been closed until 11 May and antiviral drugs have been issued to year 7 pupils, as well as staff and other pupils who have had contact with the affected pupil. All swabs taken in relation to Downend School have come back negative from the laboratory..

You may also hear that the Chipping Sodbury parent visited the parents' evening for parents of year 8 pupils at Chipping Sodbury School over a week ago. The Health Protection Agency is testing anyone who had close contact with the parent and subsequently becomes unwell. So far, all the people who have been tested as a result of contact with the parent have tested negative for swine flu. The child has also tested negative for swine flu. In line with national guidance the school will remain open as normal because there are no positive cases in connection with it. Tamiflu is not being issued for the same reason.

Some people may be understandably anxious and wish to know more. Further information is available as below. Please use these sources if you require any information and advice.

- *Go online and visit NHS Choices for information and frequently asked questions – www.nhs.uk.*
- *Further information can be obtained from the National Swine Flu Information Line – 0800 1 513 513. This telephone line provides pre-recorded information and advice about Swine Flu.*
- *Access to NHS Direct's telephone service on 0845 4647. Callers will receive a welcome message which advises them what to do if they are calling about Swine Flu. Calls will be answered by trained health advisors. Where appropriate, callers*

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will be transferred to nurse advisors who will use a specially developed algorithm to assess their condition and advise the most appropriate course of action.

- *If you or any members of your family experience flu like symptoms then you should remain at home in order to minimise the risk of spreading infection and you should contact your GP practice by phone for advice.*
- *Further information can be also obtained from www.nhs.uk or www.hpa.org.uk.*

Nationally, government advice is the “Catch it, bin it, kill it message” which is in line with general infection control practices and good respiratory hand hygiene which can help to reduce transmission of all viruses, including the human swine influenza. This includes:

- *Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.*
- *Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.*
- *Maintaining good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to face or to other people.*
- *Cleaning hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.*
- *Making sure your children follow this advice.*

*Therese Gillespie
Director, Children and Young People
Department*

*Dr Chris Payne
Director of Public Health, NHS South
Gloucestershire*

Yours sincerely



R C Evans
Acting Headteacher