

Annex B: General H1N1 information leaflet for parents

Revised: September 15, 2009

Dear Parents:

In recent months, the new H1N1 flu virus (known as "Swine Flu") has spread throughout many countries in the world, starting from Mexico. The number of cases reported each day is also rising steadily in Germany. One particular cause can be traced to travelers returning from countries where the H1N1 flu is already a widespread infection in the general population.

We cannot therefore exclude the possibility that students and teachers at the school who have spent their vacation in such countries may have become infected by the H1N1 virus. People in close contact with holidaymakers returning from vacation in these regions may also be in danger of contracting the flu.

Children and young people are significant carriers for a viral flu infection, as a result of their many opportunities for contact in institutions within the community. Infections that are picked up in places such as schools can be communicated to family members at home, and, in turn, to people in other community institutions.

Experience so far has shown us that an H1N1 infection is usually a mild illness. However, where people have prior illnesses (e.g. chronic illnesses involving the respiratory, circulatory or immune systems), this can lead to the flu taking a more serious course. Pregnant women and babies are also in this risk group.

Typical indicators of this H1N1 flu are as follows:

- Sudden feeling of illness **with a fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$** , occasionally with shivering and one or more of the following indications of illness:
- Coughing, shortness of breath,
- Pain in muscles, limbs and/or headache,
- Sore throat

We depend entirely on your help to avoid an outbreak of this illness in our school!

Please do not send your child to school if you notice that he or she is showing any of the signs of illness named above. In such cases, take your child to your family physician/pediatrician as soon as possible for diagnosis. Phone your physician beforehand and inform him or her of your situation, so that your clinic can take appropriate precautions. If your doctor suspects that your child has H1N1 flu, then he or she will inform the health authorities.

If your child develops the symptoms named above while still at school, then, in accordance with health regulations, we will be forced to exclude your child from lessons. In this situation, we will contact you and request that you collect your child from school as quickly as possible.

Excluding your child in this way serves as a precautionary measure, reducing the risk of infection for other children and teachers in the school. In this way, lessons can be continued

for the rest of the class, since they will have a greatly reduced risk of infection. Accordingly, it is generally not necessary to close the whole school if isolated cases of infection occur.

As a rule, the following precautions can be taken to **hinder the spread of H1N1 influenza**: Regular washing of hands with soap and water for at least 20-30 seconds; regular full ventilation of rooms; keeping your distance when coughing and sneezing (here it is best to hold a paper tissue in front of your mouth and dispose of it immediately afterwards - if you do not have a paper tissue to hand, then cough/sneeze into your sleeve and not into your hand).

We hope you understand the reasons why we have adopted this strategy and would like to thank you in advance for supporting our implementation of these measures designed to protect the children, teaching staff and personnel who attend our school.

The School Management Board

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