

EDUCATION AND MANPOWER BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 27/2006

From : Secretary for Education and Manpower
To : Heads of All Schools in Hong Kong
Ref. : EMB(SD_CT)/ADM/20/5/05/1 Pt VIII
Date : 9 February 2006

Handbook on Prevention of Avian Influenza in Schools

Summary

A Handbook on Prevention of Avian Influenza in Schools has been uploaded to the web page of the Education and Manpower Bureau (www.emb.gov.hk). Schools are reminded to remain vigilant and step up precautionary measures to prevent the spread of Avian Influenza in schools.

Details

2. This Bureau has issued Circular Memorandum No. 226/2005 on 25.10.2005 to call on schools to take precautionary measures against avian influenza. In view of recent reports of avian influenza cases among some birds in Hong Kong, this Bureau has compiled a Handbook on Prevention of Avian Influenza in Schools as based on the advice of all relevant government departments in particular the Department of Health and uploaded it to our web page for reference of schools.
3. The school authorities, staff members and students should pay heed to the following:
 - The Government has amended relative legislative Regulation and Ordinance to ban backyard poultry keeping activities in Hong Kong. The ban will come into force on 13 February 2006. Schools must not keep poultry in the school premises and should refrain from keeping live birds where possible;
 - Establish barriers to prevent children from touching live birds;
 - Avoid organizing activities that may expose children to live birds;
 - Do not touch live birds, poultry and their excreta (Wash hands with soap and water immediately after contact with live birds or surfaces contaminated by bird droppings). Schools should call the government hotline at 1823 for advice of handling sick, wounded or dead birds found in school premises. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will collect the birds for laboratory examination if deem necessary.
 - Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and wash hands with soap and water afterwards;
 - Keep hands clean and wash hands properly, use liquid soap for hand washing and disposal

towel for drying hands, do not share towels;

- Cleanse used toys and furniture properly;
- Maintain good ventilation;
- Keep sufficient stock of face masks in the school for staff/students who may need one; and
- If any students/staff develop respiratory symptoms, they should consult their doctor promptly, wear a surgical mask, and take rest at home and refrain from going to school as advised by their doctor.

4. Schools should also visit the web site (<http://www.chp.gov.hk>) of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health for more information about the prevention of avian influenza. For general information on the prevention of communicable diseases in school settings, please refer to the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Child Care Centres / Kindergartens / Schools on Department of Health's web (Hyperlink: <http://www.info.gov.hk/dh/diseases/index.htm>; path: Communicable Diseases Division > Information on communicable diseases).

Enquiries

5. If you have any enquiries, please contact your District School Development Officer.

K S LEE

for Secretary for Education and Manpower