



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局  
Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

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To: Supervisors/Principals of all ESF Schools,  
International Schools and Private Independent Schools

Dear Supervisor/Principal,

### **Strengthening Precautionary Measures Against Human Swine Influenza**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) confirmed on 28 May 2009 that a secondary school student, who had contracted Human Swine Influenza (HSI), took part in activities at school after returning to Hong Kong from an overseas trip. After assessing the situation, the Education Bureau (EDB) has announced class suspension of the school for 14 days until 10 June 2009. To strengthen precautionary measures against HSI, we would like to appeal to all schools for reminding their staff and students to enhance their personal hygiene and carrying out thoroughly the cleansing and disinfection of school premises.

CHP has issued the "Guidelines on the Preparation and Management of Human Swine Influenza in Schools" to all schools for reference and necessary action. The Guidelines have been uploaded to CHP's website. Schools could also browse or download the guidelines via the following path of our webpage:

*EDB Homepage > School Administration > Administration > Prevention of Flu & Other Communicable Diseases in Schools > 1. Prevention of Human Swine Influenza > Guidelines > Guidelines on the Preparation and Management of Human Swine Influenza in Schools*

As some students may be participating in overseas exchange programmes, schools should pay special attention to the part of the aforesaid Guidelines concerning measures that should be taken by students returning from overseas. Besides, schools are requested to remind students returning from areas affected by HSI to wear a mask for 7 days, avoid going to school and pay close attention to their health. Students should seek medical consultation from public clinics or hospitals and contact the DH hotline (Tel: 2125-1111). Please note that individual

school having a confirmed imported HSI case would be requested to suspend classes according to CHP's advice.

As early reporting of suspected cases is crucial in preventing against HSI in schools, if an increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among staff or students is noticed, schools should follow the existing reporting mechanism to report the case(s) to the Central Notification Office of DH (Fax: 2477-2770; Tel: 2477-2772) immediately by completing the "Suspected Infectious Disease Outbreak in School / Kindergarten Notification Form" for epidemiological investigation and outbreak control, and forward a copy of the Notification Form to their respective Regional Education Offices. Schools should also keep in close contact with CHP and EDB for advice and support.

Schools should have reviewed and activated relevant crisis management procedures so that contingency measures could be readily implemented in case of class suspension. Such measures include keeping the school open, arranging duty staff to take care of students who have a need to return to school and providing appropriate learning support to students. Schools should have also established an effective communication mechanism with parents and staff to facilitate exchange of important messages at all times (including holidays and after school hours).

Since all confirmed cases are imported cases, the Government is adopting a containment strategy at the moment to prevent the disease from spreading in the community, and that there is no need for a territory-wide class suspension for the time being. EDB would keep close contact with DH to monitor the development of the situation. In case the first local HSI case occurs without an identifiable link, as a prudent measure and having on the advice of DH, EDB would consider suspension of classes in the first instance for up to 14 days in kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child-care centres, primary schools and special schools (except those with secondary school section only). All school and out-of-school assembly/extra-curricular activities, including internal examinations, should be suspended. EDB and DH would monitor the situation and make appropriate review. Announcement would be made in the middle of the second week of the suspension period on whether classes could be resumed as scheduled or an extension of the suspension would be required. If classes are resumed as scheduled, schools could arrange activities according to their contingency plan, including internal assessments and examinations. Details of the arrangement would be announced as soon as possible.

For enquiries, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers.

Yours sincerely,



( Raymond Sy )  
for Secretary for Education