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25 November 2019

**Re: Suspected Influenza like illness**

Dear Parent/Guardian and Staff,

We are writing to you to let you know that a number of students have been off sick with suspected flu-like symptoms.

Symptoms of influenza (flu) can include fever, an aching body, dry cough, headache, sore throat, diarrhoea or tummy pain, feeling sick and being sick.

Flu is generally not a serious illness and most people who have flu make a quick recovery at home within a week. However, it can cause serious illness in those with other health problems. To reduce spread of infection it is important to keep children with any symptoms of flu-like illness away from school until they have recovered, are free of symptoms and have not had a fever for at least 24 hours. Good respiratory hygiene i.e. covering nose/mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, discarding tissues after use and washing hands with water and soap, is also important to reduce the risk to others.

**It is important that any pupil, staff member or household contacts (such as grandparents or pregnant women) who fit into any of the eligible / "at risk" group list below have their seasonal flu vaccine each year.** If you believe you / your child or any household member fits into the group below and has not already had their seasonal flu vaccine, please ensure they get vaccinated **(by your GP or school as appropriate)**

The following are in an "at risk" group and eligible for flu vaccination:

- Those aged 65 years and over
- Those aged six months to under 65 years with chronic lung, heart, kidney, liver or neurological disease, or those who are immunosuppressed and those with diabetes mellitus
- Pregnant women
- Those resident long term in care homes

- Those who are morbidly obese (BMI >40)
- Carers - If you are the main carer for someone who is elderly or disabled

Additionally, all children aged two to ten years on 31st August 2019 are eligible for the free flu vaccine.

If you are concerned about your /your child's illness, particularly if you/your child are in an "at risk" group, please contact your GP. If you contact your GP about this, please have this letter to hand.

Further information is available at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/) .

Yours faithfully



Shelagh Snape  
Health Protection Nurse practitioner  
North West Health Protection Team  
Public Health England