



EPSOM

COLLEGE

From the Headmaster

STEPHEN R BORTHWICK BSc CPhys FRSA

1 May 2009

Dear Parents,

Re: Possible Flu Pandemic

As you will be aware from the press coverage there is the possibility of a flu (swine) pandemic affecting the UK. The public health advice we have had suggests that this will not become a pandemic for at least 6 to 8 weeks based on the small number of currently infected people.

In 2005 Epsom College set up a Flu Epidemic Committee and the College reviewed its plans to ensure that if there was ever a pandemic flu outbreak the College would be well prepared. The Flu Committee consists of the school doctor, Dr Tim Richardson, two governors, who are both senior local general practitioners, and the Bursar.

I am writing to inform you that the Flu Committee met today to discuss and further update the College's plans should pandemic flu occur in this country. At the meeting the school doctor was able to fully appraise the College on the local NHS plans that are being put in place by Surrey Primary Care Trust following a Public Health briefing session he attended yesterday.

The College is seeking support from parents and:

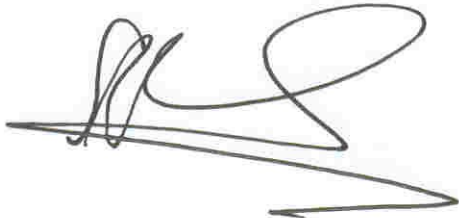
- Parents will be asked to keep any pupils away from school if they are showing signs of any flu-like symptoms and a sudden high temperature (over 38°) and the College would ask that medical advice is sought from the family's general practitioner.
- Any day boarders or weekly boarders presenting with these symptoms at school will be sent home and parents will be expected to look after their children in the home environment. Where possible, they will have had swabs taken before being sent home and given appropriate advice and prescribed treatment if recommended by the Health Protection Agency.
- Full boarders will be sent to stay with their guardians until they are advised by a doctor that they are well enough to return to the College. Those pupils who could not be sent home immediately will be cared for in the medical centre by trained medical staff.
- We would ask that all those parents who live outside the UK ensure that their child has a UK based guardian who could take care of them off-site if the school is forced to close or if their child becomes unwell.

What is most important in preventing the spread of flu is encouraging your son or daughter to use a disposable tissue to cover their mouth and nose if they are coughing or sneezing. The tissue should be binned immediately and they should swiftly wash their hands to reduce the risk of spread by both droplets and hand-to-hand contact. Tissues are distributed in all classrooms in the school.

The College Flu Committee will be monitoring the situation very closely in collaboration with the Surrey Primary Care Trust and the Health Protection Agency. There are daily updates from the Department of Health which are received by the school doctor and the Flu Committee will reconvene if necessary.

Further guidance issued by the Department of Health can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or telephone number 0800 1 513 513 to listen to the latest information. If you have any further concerns please do not hesitate to contact the medical centre on 01372 821199 or via e-mail on san@epsomcollege.org.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.