

GATEWAYS SCHOOL: PANDEMIC FLU POLICY

Pandemic flu is a natural event which is high risk and will affect millions of people worldwide. Pandemic flu occurs when a new influenza virus, to which people have no immunity, emerges and starts spreading as easily as normal influenza and is able to

- Infect humans
- Spread efficiently from person to person
- Cause significant illness in a high number of those infected

This policy outlines the procedures in place at Gateways School to prevent and control the spread of Pandemic Flu. It applies to all staff, pupils and outside contractors and is aimed at preventing the spread of influenza during a pandemic.

Gateways School will take proactive steps to protect its pupils and staff in the event of an outbreak. All staff and pupils are encouraged to engage in good hygiene practises with particular attention taken when washing, using soap and water provided.

Gateways School is committed to providing information to pupils, parents and staff about the nature and spread of infectious diseases including symptoms and signs to watch for as well as the steps to take in the event of an illness or outbreak. It is the aim of Gateways School to strive to operate effectively and ensure that all essential teaching is continuously provided and that staff and pupils are safe within the workplace.

Symptoms

The symptoms are broadly the same as ordinary flu but may be more severe. The typical symptoms are:

- Sudden fever
- Sudden cough
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Chills
- Aching muscles
- Limb or joint pain
- Diarrhoea or stomach upset
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Loss of appetite

Any staff or pupil who is suffering from any of these symptoms will be advised to stay at home or if falling ill in school must go to the School Nurse who will, contact parents to arrange prompt collection. The pupil will be supervised in the isolation of the Health Room. They should only return when fully recovered.

Recommended infection control measures

Pandemic flu is spread from person to person by close contact.

- Infected people can pass the virus to others when coughing, sneezing or even talking at close distance
- You can catch the virus by direct contact with an infected person e.g. if you shake or hold their hand then touch your mouth eyes or nose without washing your hands

You can also catch the virus by touching objects e.g. door handles, light switches that have been touched by the infected person.

To help reduce the spread of pandemic flu Gateways School will promote good hygiene practice, washing hands regularly especially after coughing, sneezing and blowing nose. Any person with flu symptoms will be advised to stay at home until a full recovery is made.

Advance planning

Gateways School will

- ensure that staff are all aware of the relevant procedures
- ensure that all contact details for staff, pupils and parent is up to date
- review plans for dealing with above average levels of staff absence
- ensure that hand hygiene facilities are adequate and working properly
- check procedures for isolating a child who falls ill during the day until their parents can collect them
- ensure that there is sufficient stocks of tissues, paper towels and soap
- ensure that adequate supplies of cleaning materials are readily available and ensure that the contract cleaners have a contingency plan in place and there are procedures for regular cleaning of hard surfaces and washrooms

Disaster Team

In the event of a pandemic flu outbreak, a Disaster Team will be designated to monitor and coordinate events and promote safety through infection control. The team will be made up of

- Chair of Governors
- Headmistress
- Deputy Headmistress
- Head of Prep
- Business Manager
- Assistant Headmistress

- External Relations
- Registrar
- Health and Safety Officer
- Head of ICT
- Maintenance Team

The role of the team includes but is not limited to

- Coordinating the response of the school during an outbreak
- Making any key decisions relating to a flu pandemic helping identify essential processes and personnel in the event that the school has to close
- Coordinate the implementation of new policies and procedures in the event of an outbreak
- If required, coordinate with external agencies in the event of an outbreak

The team will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are informed of any developments.

School closure

The Headmistress, in consultation with the Governing Body, will ultimately be responsible for deciding when to close and re-open the school if the need arises. In the event of the school having to close, the Headmistress will make the decision and staff will be informed. Parents will be informed via SchoolComms and telephone.

Other responsibilities

External Relations will be responsible for contacting parents and staff if the school is to be closed by e-mails and text messaging via SchoolComms, radio announcements and a message posted on the home page of the website. The person responsible for this should be fully prepared and should consider testing the plan that is put in place. The school will also draft template letter to parents regarding the closure and re opening of the school.

The Deputy Head will be responsible for arranging cover for teaching staff.

The Business Manager will be responsible for arranging cover for support staff and the on going routines of the school

The Headmistress and the Health and Safety Officer will be responsible in keeping up to date with Government guidance and the latest pandemic flu situation.

This policy and its procedures is whole school and includes out of school care.