



Pandemic Flu and Virus Policy



Our School Federation shall follow all the appropriate recommendations and ongoing advice from worldwide health organizations, the Chief Medical Officer and appropriate government agencies, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and the Local Authority. The policy has been written using 'Guidance for Schools and Early Years or child care setting' June 2007 DCSF, 'Schools close for extended periods in a flu pandemic' November 2008 DCSF and Guidance for schools and other educational settings in providing advice about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19 February 2020.

Introduction

Pandemic flu or virus is different from ordinary flu as it occurs when a new virus emerges into the human population and spreads readily and rapidly from person to person worldwide. As it would be a new virus, no-one would have any immunity to it, and there is unlikely to be a suitable vaccine available. Everyone would be susceptible, healthy adults and children as well as those most susceptible to normal 'seasonal' flu. In comparison with seasonal flu, many more people could become severely ill, and more could die.

School to remain open

Both the national and local policy at present is for schools to remain open, even if they have a suspected case of virus in the school. This is essential to ensure continuity of learning for pupils, but also to ensure that the community remains working and is not absent from work due to unplanned child care responsibilities. The School may be advised by Public Health England to close, to which it will of course respond. It is expected that the Local Health Protection Team will liaise with the Headteacher at the school.

The decision to close remains a local decision for our school unless there are to be blanket closures, which will be decided at a Local Authority or national level. If the school considers closing it will first contact Children's Services Pandemic line, if available, or the Health Protection Agency, to discuss the situation and implications, before doing so. If a decision to close is made, it will be decided following a risk assessment process.

At the time of a pandemic the school will keep abreast of the current position through contact with the LA and Government notifications.

Threat of pandemic effecting our school

If there is the threat of a pandemic, then the situation will be reviewed. We shall ensure that all members of our school community are kept informed as appropriate, with a particular emphasis on the communication to parents and employees verbally, with text messages or email and through our websites so that advice is prompt and easily accessible. We will update our response to the situation regularly, in line with the emerging situation.

The symptoms of influenza are:

Most significant	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Cough and/or shortness of breath• Sudden onset of symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aching muscles• Sore throat• Runny nose, sneezing• Loss of appetite• Headache• Malaise (lethargy, listlessness)• Chills

At a time of a pandemic flu/virus

The symptoms of pandemic flu virus would probably be similar to those of seasonal flu, but they could be more severe and cause more serious complications. A key message during a pandemic should however be that, **in case of doubt, one should assume that an infection is pandemic flu, and act accordingly**. It is better that someone stays at home for a couple of days with what might turn out to be a normal cold than they go into work or school with the

early symptoms of pandemic flu and pass the flu virus on to other people. Our priority will be to do our very best to keep our community as safe as possible, within the available guidance from the relevant agencies, at the time.

Infectious period

People are most infectious soon after they develop symptoms, and remain infectious to some extent until the symptoms disappear. In general, adults can continue to excrete viruses for up to five days, and children for up to seven days, but occasionally longer. People must follow the quarantine advice given to them by public bodies – NHS 111, Public Health England.

Prior to the pandemic the school will

1. Refresh lists of contact details for staff and parents/carers.
2. Review plans for dealing with above average levels of staff absence.
3. Ensure adequate supplies of cleaning materials/PPE are readily available.
4. Ensure hand hygiene facilities are adequate and working properly. Consider the need to provide alcohol based hand sanitiser, if procurement possible, if soap and water are not available.
See Alcohol Sanitiser Risk Assessment.
5. Children have been taught to wash their hands properly and regularly. **See Appendix 1.**
6. Children will be taught to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing, with a tissue. Dispose of the tissue right away; as soon as they have used it. To wash their hands as soon as possible, if they have sneezed or coughed in their hands. Cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow if they do not have a tissue. Minimise contact between hands and mouth/nose.
7. Display 'general infection control posters' in the places where children work and wash their hands. The NHS posters used will be updated as appropriate. 'Catch it, bin it, kill it.'
8. Ensure that staff are all aware of the relevant procedures.

To reduce the spread of pandemic flu virus at the time of an infection being present in the school:

Children

1. Wash their hands regularly.
Children should be asked to wash their hands each time they come into the classroom:
 - first thing in the morning
 - following a visit to the toilet
 - After being outside to play.
 - before eating, snacks or dinner
 - before leaving school
2. Cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing with a tissue. Dispose of the tissue right away; as soon as they have used it. To wash their hands as soon as possible, if they have sneezed or coughed in their hands. Cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow if they do not have a tissue.
3. Minimise contact between hands and mouth/nose.
4. Tell an adult if they feel unwell.

Staff

1. Require children to follow advice on reducing the spread of pandemic flu virus.
2. Require children to clean their hands after carpet work; or get them to sit on chairs instead of carpet work (as carpets can cause cross-contamination).
Avoid bringing children together in large groups in enclosed spaces. Whole school assemblies will be suspended. Worship will take the form of class assemblies unless the weather permits an outside assembly on the field.
3. Wash their own hands regularly and thoroughly.
To wash hands before eating, after touching objects such as tissues or surfaces soiled with saliva or nasal secretions. Staff should report a shortage of hand-washing facilities in classrooms/toilets/toilets. They should be well stocked with soap and paper towels where used.
Cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing and coughing. Dispose of the tissues straight away. Staff should tie up the bag in the bin if it becomes full and replace the bin liner.
4. Ensure tissues are available in all rooms used with children.
5. Ensure that where there is no soap and water available, children have access to hand sanitiser, preferably alcohol based sanitiser.

6. Observe children closely. All children with respiratory illness or any of the symptoms given above must be sent home.
7. Remove soft toys from the reach of children.
(Store them out of sight.)
8. Provide children with their own equipment where possible. As far as possible, you should suspend the use of communal items especially those prone to frequent hand and mouth contact (e.g. pencils, wind musical instruments).
9. Teaching assistants to wash communal equipment as appropriate.
10. Sick staff must stay at home. Staff are asked to notify the headteacher or other teacher in charge before 8 am if they are not able to work due to sickness. Staff feeling ill during the day should get a message to the headteacher or office as soon as possible. They should be sent home. Staff should only return to work once completely recovered.

Caretaker and Cleaners (SLT to monitor)

1. Clean frequently touched surfaces at least daily.
Door handles, light switches, telephones, taps, bannisters and tables in particular.
2. Use the normal warm water, detergent and disposable cloths.
(Keep detergents, disinfectants and cleaning products out of reach and sight of children.)
3. Bins to be lined with plastic bags. Each classroom, teaching room, hall and office area should have a bin and be supplied with spare bin liners. These should be emptied each day.
4. Ensure tissues are available in all rooms - classrooms, teaching rooms, hall and office area.

First Aiders, Office staff, SLT

1. Send sick children home.
2. If a child should fall ill arrange for the child to use a separate sick area, at Tibberton the Year One room where the door can be shut, at Hindlip the garden Room, away from other children to help prevent spread of the infection. The windows will be opened for ventilation. The patient will be encouraged not to touch anyone. If the child/patient requires use of a toilet they will be asked to use the disabled toilet. Soft furnishings will have been removed where necessary and replaced with hard chairs. The child should always be supervised (this can be done from the corridor area). The member of staff should not sit/stay within two metres of the child unless the child needs assistance in which case the member of staff should wear a disposable apron and surgical face mask. (Gloves are not essential, though wearing gloves might be useful to remind the member of staff not to touch their own face during contact with the child. They are however no substitute for hand-cleansing, which should be carried out frequently, and always before and after contact with a symptomatic child).
3. In an emergency we will call 999. Notify parents immediately for child to be taken home and advise parents to seek advice from NHS 111. All sick children should be collected from school by an adult.
4. Remove 'personnel protective equipment' in a standard manner.
To begin with, you should remove the apron, and then remove the surgical mask from your face, avoiding touching the front of the mask (by using the tapes). If you have worn gloves, you should remove them first, by turning them inside out in one single motion, then remove the apron and the mask.
5. All used 'personnel protective equipment' should be placed in the closed medical bin. After disposing of the 'personnel protective equipment' in the bin, you must wash your hands with soap and water.

Parents – through verbal advice or letter

Keep sick children at home. Sick children should stay away from school until they no longer have symptoms, to prevent spreading the infection to others.

1. Ensure that the school has up to date information on how to contact you in an emergency.
2. Ensure your sick children are collected by an adult.
3. Provide children with disposable tissues.
4. Provide your child with their own pencil case to limit the use of communal resources. This will reduce contamination through the use of communal items such as crayons.
5. Not allow your children to wear rings or bracelets as they can interfere with any hand washing.
6. Encourage children to wash their hands regularly and cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing and coughing whilst at home and at school.

7. Teach your children to cough/sneeze into the crook of their elbow if they do not have access to tissues.

Staff absence

The school will endeavour to stay open whilst advised to do so by the Local Authority. Staff (both teaching and teaching assistants) will be asked to work flexibly to enable this. It may be necessary to put classes together if staffing levels are reduced during the day, if staff need to leave unexpectedly due to illness. The school will normally avoid classes being taught together, to restrict cross contamination. Classes may be supervised by teaching assistants for longer periods of time than usual. The school will endeavour to ensure that it has at least one member of staff for each class, at least one member of staff available to the office and at least one member of the SLT available to manage the school. The school will endeavour to replace sick teaching staff where possible. Where the school can not provide appropriate supervision for each of its classes the school will inform the Local Authority that it is going to close. A closure may only effect one or two classes at a time.

School closure

Depending on the duration of the pandemic and its severity, it could mean school being closed for an extended period of several weeks (at worst, closures could last up to a term during a pandemic wave but it is more likely to be no more than four weeks). We will provide, so far as is possible in what is bound to be a very difficult situation, some level of education for our children through the school website.

In the event of the school being closed to children, staff will still be expected to report for work, assuming they themselves are fit for work. The Headteacher will decide whether staff need to come into school or can work from home. The Headteacher, in consultation with governors and staff, will take into account, among other factors (including the well-being and family needs of staff), how and where staff can best support the school's approach to remote learning.

The school cannot aim to provide the full and balanced curriculum that we normally offer at school, nor will we fully offer personalised learning. We will endeavour to give parents straightforward advice on how they can support their children's learning while the school is closed. This may include a menu of home learning activities to supplement the topic information and knowledge organisers available on our websites, to inform their work. In addition children will be able to access Maths homework books and Times Table Rock Stars. We will be able to suggest reading lists and websites which will offer children some interaction with learning.

Parents will be welcome to contact staff through the office email address, office@tibberton.worcs.sch.uk or office@hindlipfirst.worcs.sch.uk. Staff will use the school telephones to answer any parent queries as soon as possible. Parents are advised to support their children in activities and mark work alongside them.

After a pandemic wave

If the schools is closed for an extended period, the school will work hard on activities to help children catch up on education that they have lost during the pandemic. (DfE would expect to issue further guidance on this towards the end of the pandemic when the circumstances, and the impact of the closures, would be clearer.) Even if there has not been a school closure, a significant number of students will have missed out on at least some days' schooling as a result of illness or being unable to get to school. The school will identify the children affected and coordinate the delivery of appropriate activities and support.

Changing circumstances and guidance

We recognise that guidance and both the local / national picture can change RAPIDLY, sometimes with a lag of official guidance filtering down to school settings. We remain committed to keeping abreast of changes and developments to allow us to do our very best to keep our response as fluid as possible and our community as safe as possible. Procedures would then be adapted accordingly following a dynamic risk assessment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Tibberton and Hindlip Staged Response document
Alcohol Sanitiser Risk Assessment

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Remember:

Washing your hands is the single best way that you can help stop spreading germs that cause illness with coughs and sneezes.

How to wash and dry your hands with soap and water

- 1 Wet your hands with warm water, then add soap.
- 2 Rub in the soap, while you count to twenty.

Make sure you rub the soap into:

- the backs of your hands;
- the backs of your fingers;
- your finger-nails;
- your finger-tips;
- the skin between your fingers.

- 3 Rinse your hands under running water.
- 4 Dry your hands with a disposable paper towel or a hot-air blower.

[If you are wearing any rings or bracelets, remove them before washing your hands. If you have any cuts or scratches, cover them with a clean dressing]