



SUMMARY

To outline the procedures for schools in the event of an avian flu epidemic in Hong Kong. The aim is to help effective schooling to continue.

1. GENERAL

Avian influenza

Avian influenza (H5N1) is a type of influenza A that mainly infects birds but occasionally affects humans. Avian influenza can be transmitted from birds to people, although transmission between humans, up to this moment, is very inefficient. The initial symptoms of avian flu are similar to those of other influenza viruses, including fever, generalised muscle pain, cough and sore throat. However, it is more likely to result in high fever, chest infection, respiratory failure, multi-organ failure, and death.

2. ALERT STAGE

Hygiene and good housekeeping

Students and Staff

- Droppings of infected birds and poultry may carry the avian flu virus, so avoid touching live birds or poultry or their droppings.
- If you have been in contact with live birds or poultry, immediately wash your hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water.
- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards.
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly with soap, and use hand dryer or disposable towel for drying hand.
- Build up good body resistance through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest.
- Reinforce hygiene and related health education matters through the regular programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE).

School management

- Normal cleaning operation shall be maintained and continued.
- Filling chlorine tablets into the toilet flushing water system shall be continued.

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- Pouring about half a litre of water and a teaspoonful of 1:99 diluted household bleach solution into each floor drain shall be executed every week.
- Deep cleaning of air-conditioning filters by disinfectant shall be carried out in accordance with the bi-monthly cleaning schedule.
- Ensure sink locations and toilets are provided with liquid soap, disposable towels or hand dryers.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and commonly shared items at least daily by using appropriate disinfectant (e.g. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 99 parts water for non-metallic or 70% alcohol for metallic surface). Leave for 30 minutes and then rinse with water.
- If places are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use disposable towels to wipe them away. Then disinfect the surface and the neighbouring area with appropriate disinfectant (e.g. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 49 parts water for non-metallic or 70% alcohol for metallic surface), leave for 30 minutes, and then rinse with water.
- Ensure good ventilation.
 - Keep air-conditioners well-maintained and wash the dust-filters frequently
 - Switch on any wall fan and exhaust fan to enhance air movement
 - Windows of classroom should be opened from time to time for better ventilation, but make sure that window and louver are not located on the same wall
- Keep sick leave records of staff and students. When there is an increase in the number of absentees:
 - contact the staff or parents/guardians of absentees to ascertain the reasons for their absence. Use MAZE to monitor students' attendance rates and patterns of absence precisely.
 - inform Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health when a number of absentees with similar symptoms are noted.
- Establish Emergencies Committee. Nominate one member of staff with oversight of buildings' facilities.

ESF actions

- Hold briefing session for Principals at Academic Committee (Working Group);
- Continue to purchase centrally and distribute chlorine tablets for flushing water units (BMD);
- Audit current provision of soap dispensers. Assess needs, based on one dispenser per two wash basins (BMD);
- Review need to introduce hand-sterilising liquid dispensers (BMD);
- Agree to offer influenza inoculations to all staff. To be costed (HRD) and paid for centrally, out-sourced and administered in schools;



- Cost the purchase of surgical masks and order, arrange distribution. 3 per day per member of staff = 36,000 units for two weeks and cost the purchase of protective cloth and eye shield for front line staff (BMD);
- Review provision of on-line learning, use of CLC and web-site in school (Principal + ICT co-ordinator/web-site manager).

3. SERIOUS STAGE (see detailed procedures booklet)

- Provide for storage of emergency supply (2 weeks) of surgical masks;
- Write again to parents, continue to communicate with students concerning the importance of hygiene measures;
- Introduce proforma, in school diaries, for daily self-monitoring of body temperature, self-recorded and counter-signed by a parent or carer.
- If any students or staff develop symptoms, they should:
 - consult their doctor promptly;
 - wear a surgical mask; and
 - rest at home and refrain from going to school
- Implement detailed procedures (ESF – specific).
- All cleaning works enacted in ‘alert response’ stage shall be continued with execution of enhanced cleaning.
- Cleaning to classroom table tops with appropriate disinfectant (i.e. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 99 parts water for non-metallic/ 70% alcohol for metallic surface) three times per day or as required shall be carried out.
- Cleaning to the touched surfaces, toys and commonly shared items daily by using appropriate disinfectant (i.e. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 99 parts water for non-metallic/ 70% alcohol for metallic surface), leaving it for 30 minutes and rinsing with water shall be carried out.
- Cleaning to communal telephone, computer keyboard and “mouse” after each use with a “morning mist” or similar wipe shall be executed.
- Spraying air-conditioning filters with “Virkon” disinfectant solution daily shall be carried out.
- Disinfection to surfaces which are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, first by removing the items with the use of disposable towels to wipe them away, and with appropriate disinfectant (i.e. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 49 parts water for non-metallic/ 70% alcohol for metallic surface), leaving it for 30 minutes and rinsing with water shall be carried out.
- Continuous cleaning throughout the school day of toilets, physical education equipment, door handle, push plate, grab bar and banister etc. shall be carried out.



- Mats, which have been soaked in a solution of 1:99 bleach solution, shall be placed at school entrance.
- High pressure water jet cleaning to external areas, including playground, carpark etc. shall be carried out daily.
- Weekly deep cleaning shall be arranged on Saturdays.

Plans for a continuous high-quality education

ESF actions

- Issue a good practice guide for on-line learning, especially the use of the Connected Learning Community (CLC) – PW;
- Each school to brief its CLC lead trainers – Principal;
- Each school to identify inactive users of the CLC & to develop a training programme to ensure that all teaching staff are able to maintain a home page for their class(es) – Principal;
- Set up Renaissance College hub for Phoenix staff/students - PW.
- Liaise with Examinations Groups (secondary):
 - CD and Exams Officers/Principals
- Liaise with QCA (primary) – AC and Principals.

For more information

Please visit the website of the EMB (www.emb.gov.hk), our own site (www.esf.edu.hk) and that of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health at www.chp.gov.hk or call the Department of Health's 24-hour Health Education Hotline at 2833 0111.

4. EMERGENCY STAGE

We will follow EMB's guidelines but will enact the plans for high quality, continuous education, as outlined previously.

Graham Ranger
18 November 2005



English Schools Foundation Emergency Procedures

Operational Procedures in the Event of an Outbreak of an INFLUENZA Epidemic in Hong Kong.

**November 2005
Revised January 2006**

Operational procedures will be regularly reviewed, and may be changed, in light of information provided by the Hong Kong Department of Health and the Education and Manpower Bureau.



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These procedures aim to minimise risk to staff and students and enable ESF schools to provide a continuous, high quality education for all students.

*(these procedures will be operationalised within 24 hours of the announcement of a Stage 2 **SERIOUS** alert)*



Premises Management

Schools will continue to be maintained and ventilated to the existing high standards. All cleaning will be conducted using Department of Health Guidelines and additional enhanced cleaning routines will be undertaken as a precautionary measure.

Cleaning

The enhanced cleaning routines will be maintained until further notice. Surfaces will be cleaned daily with freshly mixed 1:49 bleach solution. Cleaned items will be allowed to dry naturally or rinsed with clean water as appropriate.

Classroom tabletops will be cleansed with 1:45 solution of Milton, or bleach solution at a minimum of three times per day.

Communal telephones, computer keyboards and ‘mice’ will be cleaned after each use with a chlorox (or similar) wipe.

Bleach blocks will be placed in all lavatory cisterns.

Mats, soaked in a solution of 1:99 bleach solution will be placed at all school entrances.

Additional cleaners will be employed from 8.00am-3:00pm daily for each school - BMD.

Weekly deep cleaning will take place on Saturdays.

Deep cleaning to the school premises shall be carried out before the school resumes to normal operation after any school suspension imposed by EMB.

Additional cleaners will provide continuous cleaning throughout the day of bathrooms, PE equipment, door handles, push plates, grab bars and banisters.

“Virkon” mist treatment to large volume space in school, such as assembly hall, shall be carried out if needed.

Disposal of Masks, Wet Wipes and Paper Towels

Supplies of plastic bags will be available throughout the school for the safe disposal of worn masks.



Masks, wrapped in a plastic bag, wet wipes and paper towels must only be disposed of in lined and covered bins designated for this purpose.

Early Years Equipment (kindergartens and Early Years classes)

All non-essential equipment is to be removed from the classrooms and stored. Teachers may use any equipment as and when it is required. After use it is to be returned to a used equipment store for washing. Once washed it will be returned to the clean store.

Primary Equipment.

Class teachers should place equipment, books etc requiring washing on their carpet at the end of each school day.

P1 and P2 Education Assistants should clean pencils, felt pens, books etc as and when required using spray alcohol.

All older students (primary and secondary) should be encouraged to provide their own basic equipment (pens, pencils etc) for personal use and stored in a named pencil case. Communal equipment will be temporarily withdrawn. Older students should be encouraged to assist in keeping their classroom equipment clean.

Ventilation

Air conditioners may be used in conjunction with high levels of ventilation. When an air conditioner is in use the door and at least one window should remain open.

At lunchtime and after school, air conditioners should be switched off, with barred windows and doors opened to ensure high levels of ventilation.

Air conditioner filters will be cleaned daily using 1:49 bleach solution.

Tabletops and Consumption of Food

EAs or class teachers are required to wipe tabletops using 1:45 Milton solution prior to break and lunch.



Visitors

Casual Visitors

In addition to normal security routines all casual visitors, tradespersons and contractors will be required to wash their hands and put on a mask prior to entering the building. Wipes and masks, and facilities for their safe disposal will be provided for this purpose. Contractors working in the building for any length of time will have their temperature taken prior to entry.

Parents and Regular Visitors

Parents and regular visitors are required to wash their hands on arrival and before entering will be asked to confirm that they meet our entry criteria. If they are unable to meet points 2 and 3 they will be asked to wear a mask in order to enter.

School Entry Criteria

- 1 I am in good health, my temperature is normal, and I do not have any cold, cough or flu-like symptoms.
- 2 I have not visited a Flu infected area outside of Hong Kong during the last ten days.
- 3 I do not reside in an area with a high incidence of Flu.
- 4 To the best of my knowledge I have not been in contact with any person suspected, or confirmed to have Flu. **(Persons meeting this category must not enter the building.)**

Personnel Matters

All staff and regular contract staff are expected to promote and maintain the highest levels of personal hygiene.

It is expected that all staff will continue to work normally provided that they meet the ESF entry criteria.

Special leave may be granted to women who are pregnant and staff who have a medical certificate advising against work at this time due to an existing medical condition or low immunity.



The EMB encourages staff to wear surgical masks; it will be left up to the individual staff member's discretion, with the exception of points 2 and 3 of the ESF Entry Criteria.

Random temperature checks will be conducted daily for both staff and students.

When reporting to work, staff should comply with the entry requirements.

School Health Entry Criteria

1 I am in good health, my temperature is normal, and I do not have any cold, cough or flu like symptoms. (Staff temperature cards/thermoscan thermometers will be available daily at the school entrance.)

2 I have not visited a Flu infected area outside of Hong Kong during the last ten days. *

* Staff will be expected to only undertake essential travel during serious/emergency alert periods. Staff will be required to wear a mask in school for seven days on return.

3 I do not reside in an area with a high incidence of Flu. *

*(Staff who fall into this category will be required to wear a mask at all times within the school.)

4 To the best of my knowledge I have not been in contact with any person suspected, or confirmed to have Flu.

i Staff members who have come into direct contact with a **suspected** Flu case are required to self-quarantine until the case is confirmed or otherwise. (Usually seven days.)

ii Staff members who have come into close* contact with a **confirmed** case of Flu are required to inform the school, ESF Centre (HR Director) and the Department of Health immediately. Staff must comply with Department of Health quarantine requirements and should not report for work for ten days. A medical clearance certificate is required before returning to work.

*Close contact means having cared for, having lived with, or having direct contact with respiratory secretions and body fluids of a person having Flu. (Hong Kong Department of Health.)



Special Arrangements For Contract Staff.

All contract staff are expected to fulfil the School Health Entry Criteria.

Pastoral Support

The incidence of Flu is impacting on the emotional health of Hong Kong residents. Pastoral support for staff is available within each school, and guidance information is available for private counselling. – John Barker.

Students

Priority will be given to familiarising students with enhanced hygiene routines and encouraging pupils to develop independent skills in this area.

Every effort will be made to ensure that schools continue to operate in a manner that enables the students to feel safe and secure. During this period their health and welfare remains paramount. This will mean at times personal hygiene and health education (including pupils emotional health) may have priority over academic matters.

It is inevitable that Flu will place some restrictions on our day-to-day operations but these will be minimised wherever possible.

General Matters

The following activities are suspended until further notice:

Whole school assemblies.

Inter-school sport.

After school activities.

Extra curricular activities including residential visits and local visits.

Assemblies



Students Returning To School

It is important that students return to school well rested and in good health. In organising travel plans, parents are requested to take account of the implications of jet lag and possible contact with Flu.

Documentation

Prior to students returning to school parents are required to complete a proforma to signify that the student has returned to full health (Appendix A).

Students may not be readmitted to school unless this form is completed and signed by the parent or designated carer.

This document may be downloaded from the school website and should be given to the class/form teacher on the first day that the student returns to school.

Daily Temperature Check

Parents are required to take their child's temperature each day before sending them to school and record it on the student's temperature card. The student must bring this card to school daily in the school diary. A student should not attend if their temperature is 37°C or above, 37.2°C for children in kindergartens (oral temperature reading).

It is an EMB requirement that a child's temperature is continued to be taken and recorded on non-school days.

Random temperature checks on students, staff and visitors will take place from time to time at school using a thermo scan thermometer according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

On arrival at school students will use a liquid soap wash. Having wiped their hands pupils will proceed to the yard or the classroom as usual. Should a student not have their temperature record card the class/form teacher will use a thermoscan thermometer to record the temperature.



Masks

The EMB encourages pupils to wear disposable surgical masks to school, although we are not making this mandatory. Should parents wish their child to do so, it is their responsibility to provide the masks and it is important that the child is taught to wear a mask properly.

(Parents may wish to consider that there is evidence that soiled, frequently handled and misfitting masks are a health hazard in their own right.)

- 1 Pupils should be provided with three masks per day. One should be worn to school and disposed of at lunchtime. A fresh mask should be worn after lunch until the student returns home. The third mask is a spare, or for use after a PE lesson.
- 2 Students' masks must be named on the mask exterior.
- 3 Parents must teach their child to wear, change and dispose of masks hygienically.
- 4 Masks must be sealed in a polythene bag and only disposed of in the designated covered bins.

The school nurse will provide masks for any students found displaying cold/cough symptoms and/or have a temperature. Parents/carers will be expected to collect unwell children from school immediately. Students should not return until they have fully recovered.

Teachers/EAs will supervise all primary school students' hand washing (with liquid soap and paper towels) prior to snack, lunch and after breaks. Students will be encouraged to maintain the highest standards of personal hygiene, washing hands frequently and always after using the lavatory. Liquid soap, paper towels and wet wipes will be freely available in classrooms for use.

Cooled water and paper cups will continue to be available throughout the school. Teachers will continue the normal routine of ensuring that students are encouraged to drink regularly. Parents should ensure their child has an additional named water bottle for the lunchtime 'drinkstop.'

Students are not permitted to share snacks, lunch or water bottles.



Parents are advised that the EMB believes students should avoid busy and crowded venues after school. This may have an impact on some after-school programmes.

Parental Support

Parents should not send their child to school if they are feeling unwell, have a temperature or have cold/cough symptoms.

Parents should collect their child promptly from school if requested to do so by the school nurse.

To avoid rumour and misinformation, the school should be advised immediately of the reason for any students' absence.

Parents must advise the school if a case of Flu is suspected within the family's household.

Home Confinement (Quarantine)

Parents are advised that it is a Health Department requirement that all household contacts of confirmed or suspected Flu patients are required to undergo home confinement for monitoring and treatment up to a maximum of ten days.

In these circumstances a home/school programme will be provided for the student, including telephone/e-mail support (see Appendix B for guidance on using the ESF Connected Learning Community).

Classroom Routines

Teachers will adjust classroom routines to fully accommodate health and welfare routines. Each teacher in discussion with their pupils will establish a set of health and hygiene routines.

Aspects of health education relating to Flu will be taught regularly, at the discretion of the class teacher/tutor/PSE teacher. Priority will be given to maintaining known routines and building a climate of confidence and security.

Students' emotional health will be constantly monitored: parents will be contacted if a student appears distressed or overly anxious.



APPENDIX A



School
Logo/
Name

Student's Health Condition

This proforma must be completed and returned to the class/form teacher on the day your son/daughter returns to school after absence due to suspected influenza, contact with persons believed to be suffering from influenza or its symptoms.

Name of student _____

Class/Form _____

Student's recorded body temperature on the day of return to school from absence because of flu-like symptoms _____

Specific reasons for absence (*please specify if the student has been out of Hong Kong in the last 7 days, and if so, where*)

Date(s) of absence from school _____

I authorise my son/daughter to return to school having taken a body temperature reading and witnessed the body temperature. This is recorded in the student's diary.

Signed: _____ Name: _____



APPENDIX B

Guidelines on how to use the Connected Learning Community (CLC) to support distance learning in the event of a school closure

The CLC offers you a much more precise and manageable way of supporting students during a school closure, than a conventional web site. The purpose of this paper is to advise you on how you should set up your CLC to:

- Broadcast information to students and parents
- Communicate with students
- Manage students' learning
- Distribute resources to students
- Collect work from students

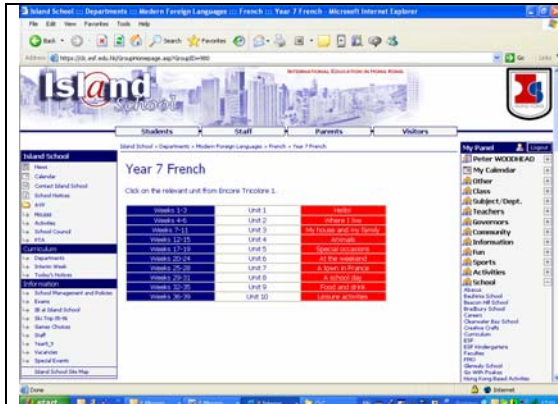
Your school's CLC has the capacity to support a separate learning community for each class in the school. Because the CLC is linked to Maze it is relatively easy to populate each class's learning community with the right students and teachers. When a student logs into the CLC they will automatically be presented with their learning communities

Essential preparation for a closure.

- Create a learning community for each class in the class
- Populate this with the students and teachers
- Set the access rights to group members only
- Ensure your Maze data is up to date especially email addresses
- Make every member of staff and student a member of the school's CLC homepage
- Ensure all students have been allocated a file space in the CLC

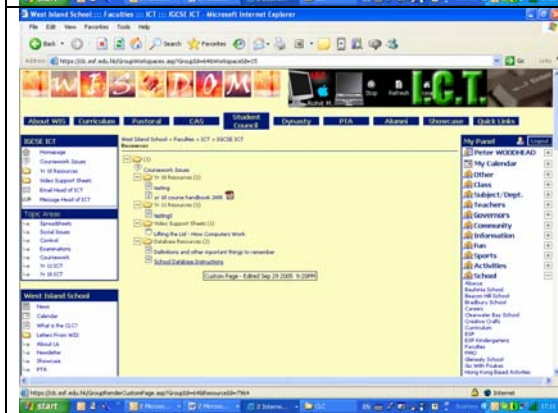


How to create a learning community for a class



Home Page

The middle section is a web page which can be easily edited by the teacher and used to broadcast information about work schedules to students and parents.



Resource Folder(s)

Teachers can create any number of folders to store and distribute resources to their students. Files can easily be uploaded from any laptop or desktop.

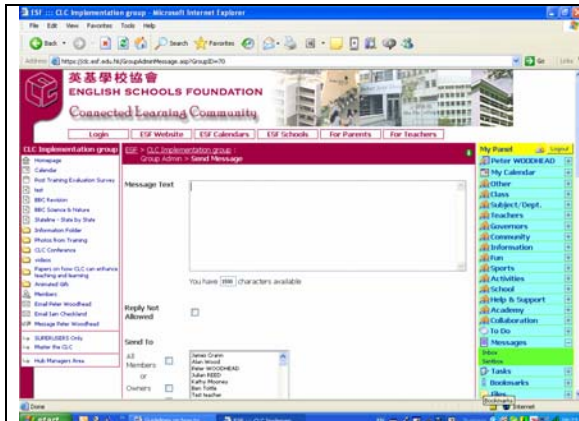


Forums

Teachers can create a Forum with any number of topics. Only students in the class can access the Forum, which can be used to give advice to students about work in progress or by students to support each other

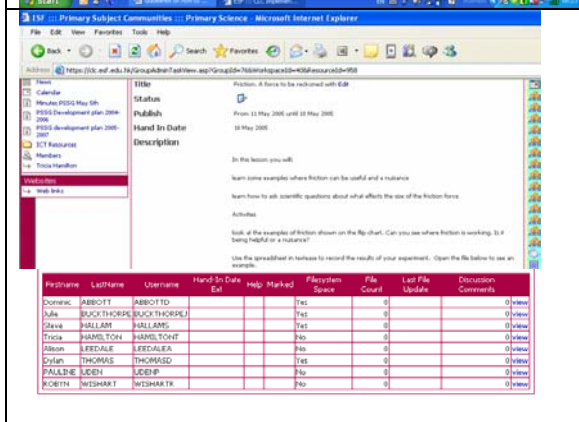


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One way Messages and Email

Teacher can send a one way message to either all the students in the class or just selected students from the class. Alternatively teachers can send an email to students in the class but this does depend on email addresses in Maze being up to date



Setting Tasks

These can be used for assignments or projects and assigned to students in the class. A Task includes a **task description, links to files and a forum** for discussion between students. Students can submit work to a task and the **Task Register** keeps a record of the work completed by each student. There is also an option where students can request help from the teacher

Staff Training

While many staff have been trained many will have not used the CLC to support student learning, so a first step is to keep a record of who will need training in the event of closure. You will need to allocate some time on the first day of a closure for training using colleagues who are already experienced to train others. There will also be a set of training material on the CLC.

Peter Woodhead (e ref)

UPDATE

This circular is updated by the Education Development Director.

CONTACT

Please contact the Education Development Director for any questions on this circular.