

Dear Parent or Carer,

### **Swine flu update**

We wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the government and NHS advice about dealing with any cases of swine flu that there may be in your child's early years, childcare or playwork setting. Although we have seen a fall in the number of people with swine flu over the summer, we are planning for an increase of swine flu in the autumn. It is important to remember that most people with swine flu make a quick recovery at home.

We do not expect early years, childcare and playwork settings to close unless there are exceptional circumstances, as it is no longer effective in stopping the spread of swine flu in the community. The county council and health service are working closely to monitor the situation. You will be kept informed by your setting if there is any new advice. Your setting will also have procedures in place to deal with cases, but you should not expect to be notified. Please talk to your setting if you consider your child to be in the 'at risk' category and vulnerable to infections.

### **Vaccinations**

The government is planning to vaccinate everyone in the country, starting with those it considers to be most at risk of more serious complications from swine flu. More information on this and a list of 'at risk' groups can be found on the NHS website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). Children at school can expect to be offered the vaccination at school in the next few months. It is important that everyone gets vaccinated otherwise the virus may continue to spread and could become more serious.

### **What to do if you think you have swine flu**

If you or your child have flu-like symptoms such as a sudden fever, cough, a headache, sore throat, tiredness, aching muscles, sneezing, runny nose or loss of appetite you should contact the **National Pandemic Flu Service** on **0800 1 513 100** (open 8am until midnight every day) or via the website at [www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu](http://www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu). Callers or on-line users of the National Pandemic Flu Service will be directed to consult with their GPs if they have other underlying conditions or fall into the 'at risk' group.

If your child is diagnosed with swine flu they must stay at home until they have recovered and are free of symptoms.

## Flu friends

Everyone is encouraged to choose a 'flu friend' who can pick up medicine on your behalf if you have the virus. Flu friends can be a family member, colleague or neighbour. It is a good idea to find several flu friends if you can. If you are aware of someone who is isolated or vulnerable that may not have anyone to help them, think about offering to be their flu friend.

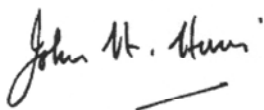
## Steps we must all take

Preventing the spread of germs is the single most effective way to slow the spread of illnesses such as swine flu. You should always:

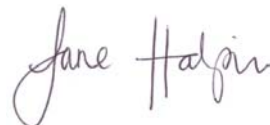
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible
- Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully
- Maintain good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to face or to other people
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product
- Make sure that children also follow this advice

If you want to find more information about swine flu please visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or telephone the swine flu information line on 0800 1 513 513. If you think you have swine flu contact the **National Pandemic Flu Service** on **0800 1 513 100** or via the website [www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu](http://www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu).

Yours sincerely,



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