



Protecting and improving the nation's health

Community school Influenza like illness – In season

HPZ : 205752

05 February 2019:

Re: Influenza like illness at Our Ladies of the Angels Primary School, Torquay.

Dear Parent/Guardian and Staff,

We are writing to you to let you know that a number of students and staff have been off sick with flu like symptoms.

Symptoms of influenza (flu) are: cough, heavy cold symptoms, sore throat and fever.

Flu is generally not a serious illness and most people who have flu make a quick recovery at home. However, it can cause serious illness in those with other health problems.

In order to reduce spread of infection it is important to keep children with any symptoms of flu-like illness away from school until they have recovered, are free of symptoms and have not had a fever for at least 24 hours. Good hand washing is also important to reduce the risk to others,

It is important that any child / staff or household contacts (such as grandparents or pregnant women) who fit into any of the “at risk” group list below have taken up their seasonal flu vaccine. If you believe you / your child or any household member fits into the list of “at risk” groups below and has not already had their seasonal flu jab, please ensure they visit the GP to get the seasonal flu jab.

The following are in an “at risk” group and eligible for flu vaccination:

- Those aged 65 years and over
- Those aged six months to under 65 years with chronic lung, heart, kidney, liver or neurological disease, or those who are immunosuppressed and those with diabetes mellitus
- Pregnant women
- Those resident long term in care homes
- Morbidly obese with BMI >40

In addition, in 2018-19, the following groups are also eligible for flu vaccination:

- All children aged 2-4 or in school years reception to year 5
- All primary school-aged children in former primary school pilot areas (with LAIV)
- Carers

If you / your child or a household member is

- **in an “at risk” group AND**
- **has NOT had their seasonal jab AND**
- **either develops symptoms of flu or has been exposed to someone who has symptoms**, you / they should contact their GP to discuss if treatment is necessary to prevent or reduce the severity of the illness. Antiviral medication is most effective if given within 48 hours of onset of symptoms or exposure to flu.

Children and fit adults under the age of 65 years who are not in one of the groups mentioned above are not offered the vaccine as part of the national programme and are not eligible to receive antiviral medication for preventative purposes. .

I have enclosed a fact sheet for your information. If you have any questions please either contact your GP or ring the Health Protection Team on:

0300 303 8162 Option 1 then Option 1

If you contact your GP about this, please have this letter to hand.

Yours faithfully

Steph Davis
Senior Health Protection Nurse
SW Health Protection Team
Public Health England