

## Swine Flu Contingency Plan

All settings should prepare plans for a flu pandemic as part of their general emergency planning, and should ensure these are shared with staff, and as appropriate, parents.

Think about emailing or printing your employees the official leaflet from [www.directgov.org.uk](http://www.directgov.org.uk)

The more your employees know about how to prevent infection, the more resilient your business will be. The key prevention messages are:

- always carry tissues
- use clean tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze
- bin the tissues after one use
- wash your hands with soap and hot water or a sanitizer gel often
- Or in short: **"CATCH IT, BIN IT, KILL IT."**

### **What should a setting have in place in case of a pandemic flu outbreak?**

- Clear policy in relation to who makes the decision to close the setting – either from advice from Government or reasons specific to the setting (e.g. too many staff off ill)
- Ensure media handling processes are in place and a lead spokesperson to correspond with the media has been identified, along with a back up plan in case of absence. Do not identify any individual children or parents in the media or correspondence.
- Make sure all staff are aware of media guidelines.
- Consider compiling a pool of parents / volunteers (who are CRB checked) who could be used to supervise children in times of significant absence.
- Settings should plan for remaining open during a pandemic and for possible closure.
- Ensure you have up to date details of staff and service users.
- Ensure you have a telephone tree in place if setting has to close suddenly.
- Clear policy directions to keep a sick child separate from others until collected by parents/carers.
- Ensure parents/carers are aware and adhere to the settings sick child policy.
- Clear policy relating to how you are going to remain open including systems to minimise the spread of infection if setting remains open during a pandemic e.g. hand-washing, disposal of tissues etc.
- Preplan; develop template letters, both for closure and reopening. (example letters can be found on the **DCSF** website and adapted to meet the needs of your own setting.)
- Ensure hygiene measures are in place to reduce the risk of infection
- Ensure you have purchased adequate cleaning supplies and reviewed your Health and Safety Procedures to provide a thorough cleansing

routine. (especially important prior to re-opening if setting has been closed.)

- Ensure that staff showing any signs of infection go home
- Policy and procedure in place for staff absence - must be clear to ensure staff know who to contact in terms of returning to work or other advice and support after being on sick leave with pandemic flu.
- Provide any information requested by the local authority (e.g. absence rates)
- Consider a reserve pot of money to sustain you for 1 week of closure including, staff wages, rent, Re-payment of **Free for 3 & 4** (if required to do so awaiting confirmation from **DCSF**), potential cost implication for cleaning premises in line with environmental health expectations etc.
- Does your contingency plan work? Have you tried it? Are there any gaps?
- Ensure staff are updated with any amendments to the contingency plan

## **Insurance**

- Relevant insurance cover re Loss of Revenue. (This should provide cover for the loss of gross revenue or additional expenditure incurred. You must ensure that your insurance shows a sum insured for Loss of Revenue. Standard terms and conditions apply. Contact your insurance company to find out more.)
- Do you have adequate cover in terms of parents claiming loss of earnings consult your contracts or insurers?
- Are you adequately covered under Health and Safety, fire, flood or criminal damage to the property?

## **Information Technology**

### **Are your office systems backed up on a regular basis?**

- Have you stored all your business services contact details on a database?
- We would also recommend you keep a paper copy on file incase you can not gain access to your computer systems.
- Ensure a text or emailing system is in place for communicating with parents.
- Plan and maintain effective communications with staff and families to keep them informed and dispel any rumours.
- Make sure that your website and telephone message correctly reflect any disruptions that may occur during the flu pandemic and that you are able to update these quickly. Agree timescales for reviewing and updating communications.
- If your website is maintained by an external person, check that they are able to action emergency updates on demand.

## **Contracts**

- Parents – time to review your contracts in terms of payment terms and condition to cover your business when closed under pandemic flu circumstances.
- Staff – review current legislation for sickness, carer and bereavement leave. For example - will your settings policy be to expect staff to come in to your setting even if you are closed to children? (for more help and advice on managing staff absence go to [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk))

## **Risk Assessment**

- Risk Assessment taking into consideration the below categories:-

### **Environmental**

What actions will be taken within the environment to reduce the spread of the flu virus? E.g. ensure surfaces are cleaned regularly with anti bacterial spray etc.

### **Organisational**

What actions will be taken within the setting to modify behaviour and practice to help reduce the spread of the flu virus e.g. policy for sick children etc?

### **Individual Behaviour**

What action will be taken at the level of the individual to restrict the spread of the flu virus e.g. staff member staying home if ill?

### **If my setting has to close when can we re-open?**

If closed, a decision to re-open the setting after seven days should be based on an assessment of the information that has arisen about the occurrence of further illness in the setting. The setting can be re-opened if there is no evidence of further spread. In addition, the setting can be re-opened earlier if the probable case is not due to swine flu.

	To reduce transmission from a symptomatic individual to healthy/susceptible people	To reduce the risk of healthy/susceptible people becoming infected.
Environmental (action taken to alter the immediate environment)	<p>Policy to be implemented re sick child. Try to isolate child with nominated staff member ensuring staff member's safety. (door to isolation room left open, PPE equipment</p> <p>Staff member to sit/stay within one metre of child unless assistance is required.</p> <p>PPE equipment to be worn – disposable apron, surgical face mask. Gloves not essential as long as hand cleaning is carried out frequently. (can be used as a reminder for staff member not to touch their own face whilst with the child)</p> <p>PPE equipment to be removed and disposed of in line with the Department of Health procedures.</p> <p>Consideration for child to wear a mask (may not be practicable)</p> <p>Isolation room to be cleaned thoroughly with warm water, detergent and disinfectant.</p>	<p>Provide signage reminding people of the sign and symptoms of flu and steps that can be taken to minimise risk of infection.</p> <p>Easy access to hand hygiene facilities</p> <p>Consider the use of alcohol gel hand rubs these to be available on entry to setting for any user/visitor</p> <p>Increase environmental cleaning to clean surfaces frequently touched by hands e.g. door handles, light switches, taps etc. (if you use an outside contractor check their contingency plans)</p> <p>Provide waste bins for contaminated tissues.</p> <p>Minimise the amount of soft furnishings and other objects that could potentially become contaminated and are difficult to clean.</p> <p>Discourage the sharing of pencils, crayons during a pandemic. Encourage wiping and cleaning of hands and objects when passing around objects or toys.</p> <p>Children to sit on chairs rather than carpet (carpets can cause cross-contamination)</p> <p>Suspend the use of communal items e.g. musical instruments.</p>
Organisational (measures taken to modify the	Training for staff and parents/carers on the signs and symptoms of flu. (handout	Training for staff and parent/carers on the signs and symptoms of flu. (handout government leaflet)

<p>organisation/pattern of daily life)</p>	<p>government leaflet)</p> <p>Policy and procedures in place in relation to a sick child/staff member.</p> <p>Policy and procedure for staff must be clear to ensure staff know who to contact in terms of returning to work or other advice and support after being on sick leave with pandemic flu.</p> <p>Staff to be regularly updated with amendments to the contingency plan.</p> <p>Preplan; develop template letters, both for closure and reopening.</p>	<p>Minimise frequency of interactions e.g. staggering lunch breaks or reducing the number of people in enclosed places.</p> <p>Reduce face to face meetings wherever possible and only undertake essential travel.</p> <p>Utilise the use of the phone or email system.</p> <p>Identify individuals who may be at particular risk of the effects of flu and re-deploy where contacts are minimal.</p>
<p>Individual (actions taken at the level of the individual to modify behaviour.</p>	<p>Good hygiene practice to be adhered by all in the setting.</p> <p>Policy in place for sick/unwell member of staff.</p>	<p>Good hygiene practice for everyone in the setting. Children to be encouraged in an age appropriate way.</p> <p>Reinforcement of this message during the session and by posters for correct hand washing procedures and disposal of tissues to be displayed.</p>

To assist you with this you must keep in contact with the Health Protection Agency, and the Local Education Authority. For more information on Swine Flu visit:-

The Government website: [www.directgov.uk](http://www.directgov.uk)

NHS Direct Site [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Gloucestershire County Council [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)

The Health Protection Agency website contains more information on relevant issues, including explaining the difference between avian, pandemic and seasonal flu [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)