



DIRECTOR GENERAL

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X **Date:** 7 January 2014
Action Required: X **Ref:** DES 02/2014
To: All Heads of Sections
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Subject: Peak Influenza Season

Due to the fact that we are now entering the peak influenza season, it is best for **All Offices** to be reminded of preventive measures to be taken. Standard practices outlined below will prevent many types of infectious diseases occurring in schools.

1. Staff with influenza-like illness (fever and chills with cough or sore throat, and (i.e. including) any of the following: headaches, runny nose, aches and pains, diarrhoea, vomiting and nausea) should stay at home pending their doctor's certification.
2. Officers are encouraged to maintain good hygienic practices in order to avoid spreading influenza, such as to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or coughing or sneezing into their upper arm or sleeve if a tissue isn't available), frequently washing hands with soap and water, or using alcohol wipes when soap and water are not available.
3. Access to adequate hand washing facilities is to be ensured; hand washing with soap is to be promoted and facilitated regularly; all cloth towels are no longer being recommended and disposable paper towels are to be provided instead. Regular hand washing is the best way to rid any person of germs and alcohol gel or wipes should only be used when regular hand washing is not possible.
4. Tissues are to be disposed of properly. Since the influenza virus can survive temporarily outside the body, transmission can also occur from freshly contaminated objects, e.g., handkerchiefs, tissues or by hand to hand contact.
5. Frequently-touched surfaces are to be cleaned regularly with detergents, as well as when they become visibly soiled.

George Borg
Director General
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