

INFLUENZA POLICY

SEASONAL INFLUENZA

This is a highly infectious viral illness. People with influenza are able to spread the infection easily to others and symptoms can last for one to three weeks.

The symptoms include:-

- high temperature, over 38C or 100F
- widespread muscle and joint pain
- severe headaches
- vomiting and diarrhoea
- sore throat, cough and a runny nose

Most people start to recover after one week and will have needed to stay in bed through the worst of the symptoms. People who have other medical conditions may develop complications as a result of influenza which can then lead to serious illness, e.g. pneumonia.

SWINE FLU

Swine Flu is the name given to a new strain of influenza. It is known as H1 N1 influenza and this virus continues to circulate. Most cases are generally reported to be mild with only patients who have existing health problems becoming seriously ill. The symptoms experienced are listed above.

INFLUENZA/SWINE FLU VACCINATION

All girls at Queen Margaret's School are offered the influenza vaccination yearly and this is given, with parental consent, just before the autumn half term, to enable immunity to develop in time for the commencement of the winter influenza season. The school Medical Officer wishes to encourage all girls and staff to have this yearly vaccination to prevent an epidemic outbreak at school. The influenza vaccine which is organised and overseen by the World Health Organisation now includes protection from Swine Flu, the H1 N1 virus. The vaccination gives good protection (70-80% reliability) and lasts for one year

INFLUENZA EPIDEMICS

The threat of an influenza epidemic continues every year. The school Medical Officer, Dr Sarah Butlin and Senior Sister, Glenda Swinglehurst will keep the school's management and governors informed of any changes in advice from the Local Health Authority or government. In the event of an influenza epidemic, the school website would provide up to date relevant information.

QM has a tradition of excellence in caring for girls, but should an influenza epidemic be experienced, girls displaying symptoms would be sent home or to their UK guardian. Girls who are ill and can not return home will be isolated and cared for at school. Health Protection protocol dictates that no person with symptoms of influenza should travel on public transport or air flight, thus parents would be asked to collect their daughter from school.

Girls who become ill with influenza at home must remain isolated until symptoms subside and not return to school until fully recovered. Parents are asked to contact the school Medical Centre 01904 728810 prior to sending their

daughter back to school following influenza/swine flu infection or suspected influenza symptoms.

Medical Centre
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