



**Children's Services Directorate
Health & Safety Update 9th June 2009**

SWINE FLU - UPDATE

Although all seems quiet with regard to media coverage of the swine flu virus, it has continued to infect people throughout the UK and the [Health Protection Agency](#) count as at 8th June was in excess of 600 confirmed cases in the UK.

The first IW case has been confirmed, and that was a visitor to the Island who is now recovering well.

The emphasis is still on **hygiene** to reduce the virus spread and all educational establishments should now have plans in place to, or already be improving cleaning, decontamination and hygiene regimes. It would therefore be appropriate to ensure you have some stock of anti bacterial cleaners, wipes, disinfectants, clean cloths and disposable gloves.

It is essential that hand wash soap is available in washrooms and toilets at all times. The advice on hand hygiene will likely increase soap usage so ensure you keep available some replacement stock.

RISING TEMPERATURES

Most establishments will be affected by the rising temperatures especially through the next couple of months and it's over this period I'll get a number of calls for advice.

There is no legal upper limit for working temperatures; however there is a duty on employers to ensure the safety of staff and visitors by considering those things that might cause harm, including temperature, by assessing risk. Some guidance is available to help us with this.

Guidance for educational establishments - Average temperatures of 23°C with swings up to 27°C during the day in classrooms are acceptable. However, continuing to teach in temperatures exceeding 27°C is not advisable as this will increase the risk of staff and students to heat related illness. Also neither staff nor students will work well in such temperatures.

Teaching staff should be vigilant in identifying deterioration in young person's behaviour and health in hot conditions and where possible make appropriate improvements.

The opening of external fire doors as a means of reducing temperature is acceptable where the risk to occupants through heat exposure is high. For security reasons do ensure these doors are closed when the room is not occupied, even for a few minutes. Fans are acceptable in classrooms but this presents additional risks which need to be carefully considered before using them especially for the very young.

Appropriate level of hydration is an important factor that must be considered necessary during hot weather, and staff should remind young persons of this.

Food, particularly meats, should be kept cool, and appropriate arrangements should be considered for the storage of some packed lunches and all uncooked ingredients brought into school by pupils for Food Tech classes for example.

Information to parents about suitable packed lunches may also help. For further information go to website: <http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk> then go to 'Packed Lunches' and 'FAQs'.

Learning outside the classroom is a good option to get children out of a hot stuffy room and into a cooler and more appealing environment, but you must still consider significant risks ie effects the sun.

With regard to educational visits where packed lunches are taken, arrangements should be made to keep these cool. Once again parents can be advised on safer food alternatives that will be less likely affected by heat.

PE PUBLICATION – BAALPE GUIDANCE

Some while ago I offered schools a discounted publication 'Safe Practice in Physical Education...2008'. Unfortunately I was unable to complete the exercise and I now recommend that you obtain the publication yourselves via the following link:

<http://www.afpe.org.uk/public/publications.htm>

Paul Chapman, Lead Officer, Health & Safety, Childrens Services Directorate.
Email: paul.chapman@iow.gov.uk Tel: 822050 Fax: 533854