August 18th, 2014

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We have had a confirmed case of Influenza A in one of our classes. Influenza, or flu, is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.

There are three main types of influenza virus that cause infection in humans - types A, B and C – and many sub-types or strains. Influenza can occur throughout the year but influenza activity usually peaks in winter.

People with suppressed immune systems are at high risk of contracting influenza. Symptoms include:

- fever and chills
- cough, sore throat and runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches, joint pains, headaches and fatigue (feeling very tired)
- nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea (more common in children than adults).

Some symptoms may last for more than a week. Some people may also experience very mild symptoms, particularly if they have some immunity from a previous infection or vaccination.

Seek immediate medical advice if the illness quickly becomes worse or if any of the following occurs:

- shortness of breath or rapid breathing
- chest pain
- confusion or sudden dizziness
- persistent vomiting.

At school we remind children to cover their face when coughing or sneezing and to throw away their used tissues in the bin. They are also told to wash their hands frequently to avoid spreading bugs.

The NSW Health Department, on its website, advises parents that if their child shows symptoms of influenza to keep them home until they are well. The website says you should wait at least 24 hours after the fever has gone before sending them back to school to avoid infecting others.

It also advises parents to seek medical attention if they believe their child or any other family member may be suffering from influenza.

Thank you for your support in this matter,

Michael Punch
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL