

1st May, 2009

Dear Parents,

Influenza A H1N1 (aka Swine Flu)

We are keeping the situation under close review and will advise parents as and when there are any developments which will affect the day to day running of the school.

Our priority at the moment is to maintain and enhance levels of personal and organisational hygiene, and we would appreciate your support in reminding your children about hand washing, dealing with coughs and sneezes, use of tissues etc. If your child develops flu-type symptoms, please keep him/her at home and contact your doctor for advice.

We are preparing our virtual learning environment (VLE) to use as a teaching and communication medium should the school have to close. We shall send you more information about procedures in due course if necessary.

In the mean time, parents who have not yet done so must register with the VLE. Doing so will allow us to send you emails about school closure and other urgent messages, and lesson notes for your children. You will also have access to curriculum resources, other information and a home-school communication channel, all of which will be essential should the school close. Registration instructions were sent to you some time ago; if you have any difficulty with this procedure please email (from the email address which you want to register) mlewis@sthelenscollege.com and Mr. Lewis will provide assistance. We will send a test email to all parents early next week; if you do not receive this email by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, please email the school office to let us know.

It is also essential that we have up to date contact information, so if your address, telephone number (including mobile) or email address has changed and you have not notified the school, please do so immediately.

Child Care Vouchers

As an independent school, our Foundation Stage is inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate rather than Ofsted. Technically, as the childcare companies require Ofsted registration, this means that our parents have not been entitled to use childcare

vouchers in part-payment of school fees, although they can use them to pay Funtasia fees.

However, Mrs. Dennington has been in discussions with a number of the childcare voucher companies and several have agreed that St. Helen's parents may now use their vouchers in part-payment of Nursery and Reception school fees. With immediate effect, we can now accept, in part-payment of Nursery and Reception school fees, child care vouchers from Care 4, All Save, Busy Bees and Sodexo. Accor should be available to use as of the end of next week, and we have an application in with 'You at work'.

Please email Mrs. Dennington (finance@sthelenscollege.com) if you would like to use vouchers from any other company, and she will enquire about registration.

Yours faithfully,

D.A. Crehan

G.R. Crehan