

Swine Flu Statement from Chief Medical Officer

The Chief Medical Officer has advised that swine flu continues to be a largely mild illness, and the Health Service has responded in a proportionate and timely fashion to the threat. There is no sign yet of any major change in the pattern or severity of the illness. On that basis, the CMO has confirmed that advice to schools of 26 August remains the best advice: individual school closures are now of limited benefit in stopping the spread of the disease.

However, it is essential that adults or children with flu-like symptoms should stay away until they are free of those symptoms.

There is now a vaccine available and distribution has begun. Parents of pupils with certain conditions need to be aware that their children (such as cerebral palsy and asthma) are being given a high priority for early access to vaccinations. It is for parents to decide whether their child should get vaccinated, but it is right that schools are aware of the programme and support the CMO's advice that children and staff in at-risk groups should respond positively when invited to get the vaccine.