



## **ADVICE TO MERCY COLLEGE PARENTS ON (INFLUENZA H1N1) SWINE FLU**

Dear Parents,

You will have no doubt seen media reports about the first confirmed case in Western Australia of Swine Flu. New measures are now in place across Australia to reduce the transmission of the virus within schools. Health experts advising the Australian Government have recommended a period of exclusion from school following international travel to effected countries.

I am asking parents to follow the advice in the interests of our school community.

The five countries of concern are **Mexico, United States, Canada, Japan and Panama**. If someone in your family or someone who is living with you has recently returned or arrived from these countries, I would ask you not to send your children to school for a period of seven days. This applies even if there are no signs of influenza or ill health.

**Please advise the school office if this applies to your family.**

The WA Health Minister has stated that schools may be closed or partially closed in the event of a confirmed case of Swine Flu for a member of staff. It is hoped that the precautionary measures of voluntary exclusion for a period of seven days will avert this from accruing.

Health authorities have advised that children with signs of respiratory illness (fever, coughs or runny nose) should not attend school. **Measures that can be taken to ensure good general health is to encourage good hygiene practices such as covering your mouth when coughing, proper hand washing routines and disposal of tissues.**

For further information about Swine Flu please call the Influenza Hotline on 180 2007 or visit the Department of Health website [www.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.health.wa.gov.au). The list of countries of concern can be found on the Department of Health and Ageing website [www.healthemergency.gov.au](http://www.healthemergency.gov.au).

Thank you for your cooperation. Working together with these precautionary measures will assist us to prevent the spread of the virus.

Yours Sincerely

Ms KELLIE BUSHER

SCHOOL NURSE