

Handbook on Prevention of Avian Influenza in Schools

The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 has caused a significant impact on our health, livelihood, economy and education as well as aroused grave concern of the world. With the selfless service of our frontline medical workers and the concerted efforts of all sectors, the “SARS” crisis is now over.

Nevertheless, in view of the recent reports of Avian Influenza cases in some countries and the possible resurgence of SARS, we should not become complacent. We must continue to be on the alert and reinforce personal and environmental hygiene. We have to remain vigilant to combat any possible spread of Avian Influenza or resurgence of SARS. We should step up the precautionary measures in personal, family, school and social aspects and set a good example of fulfilling our social and civic obligations in formulating contingency measures for schools. We should base our professional decisions on the benefits and learning needs of our students.

The Education and Manpower Bureau (the Bureau) compiled a Handbook on Prevention of SARS in Schools in 2003. As many of the measures in the Handbook are also applicable to preventing Avian Influenza, to facilitate reference by schools, it is modified to become this “Handbook on Prevention of Avian Influenza in Schools”. All relevant documents and advice previously issued have also been included. If your school requires assistance or has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your District School Development Section.

Education and Manpower Bureau
February 2006

1. Basic Principles – Student-centred, School-based, Professionally-led, Flexible

- 1.1 Schools should take all necessary precautionary measures to prevent Avian Influenza in school to protect students' health and take care of their learning needs. Following the principle of school-based management, schools should make school-based professional decisions taking into consideration their special circumstances as well as suggestions in this Handbook. In making important decisions, such as re-arrangement of school holidays due to class suspension, schools should obtain the consent of teacher representatives, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the School Management Committee / Incorporated Management Committee (SMC / IMC). Schools should submit details of the arrangement to the District School Development Sections of the Bureau for record purpose.
- 1.2 Schools should form a crisis management team to plan and manage matters relating to the prevention of Avian Influenza, such as briefings for staff members and students on knowledge about Avian Influenza, daily precautionary measures, contingency measures if staff members and students have contracted the disease, arrangements concerning class suspension and resumption, allocation of manpower and financial resources, information and data processing, setting up of a communication mechanism, participation of parents and contacts with parents, etc. All staff members, students and parents should be informed of the arrangements.
- 1.3 School leaders should keep abreast of the latest developments and pay attention to the online news and information of the Bureau and the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) (websites: www.emb.gov.hk and www.chp.gov.hk). School heads should remind their staff members and parents to browse the homepage for announcements of the Bureau. School should share their experiences with other schools, and to learn from each other and formulate effective policies. In the case of sudden, unforeseen events, school heads should exercise their professional leadership in taking proactive and flexible measures with reference to the suggestions of this Handbook.

2. When the Hong Kong SAR Government has activated the Alert Response Level - - Day-to-Day Preventive Measures

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
2.1 Civic Education	<p>Everybody has a responsibility for preventing Avian Influenza</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Explain to all staff members and students the importance of hygienic measures in preventing the spread of contagious diseases, especially that of Avian Influenza. State the serious consequences if Avian Influenza is spread in Hong Kong. Emphasize that everyone in the community has a responsibility for preventing Avian Influenza. Staff members and students are required to seek medical	<p>For information on Avian Influenza, please refer to the web page of CHP and that of the World Health Organization (www.who.int) or (http://www.who.int/csr)</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>advice immediately if they develop fever and/or symptoms of respiratory infection. They should notify the school in case of diagnosis of suspected Avian Influenza infection involving themselves or their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include relevant topics on the prevention of contagious diseases /Avian Influenza in the learning activities. Adopt diverse learning modes to enhance the students' awareness and concern. Observation and discussion of real cases, if any, could be used to guide students to review and analyze related issues. Explore what to do and what not to do at the time of adversity for one's own benefit and that of others as well as the issue of evasion/acceptance of one's social responsibility. Moreover, students should be asked to practise good hygienic measures to avoid infection, and to help, care for and encourage those in need. They should also deliver the message to their relatives and friends. • Schools can also organize learning activities by making use of the information and resources of the CHP and the media to enhance the awareness of personal and environmental hygiene of students, staff and parents. • Schools can put up relevant posters and leaflets in conspicuous places and post information and statistics about Avian Influenza on a notice board, including the developments in other countries and DH's announcements and advice for the community. 	<p>/disease/avian_influenza/en/index.html</p>
<p>2.2 Parents' Participation</p>	<p>Home-school cooperation in preventing Avian Influenza</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should disseminate relevant messages to parents through seminars or newsletters and distribute to them leaflets or information such as the hotline numbers and websites of the Bureau and other organizations, e.g. DH, and remind them to keep personal and environmental hygiene. • Schools should call on parents to assist in preventing Avian Influenza. Schools should remind parents to take their children's temperature before letting them go to school every day if the situation warrants it. (The Bureau will inform schools of DH's recommendation if necessary). They should record the reading on a temperature record sheet, which should be signed and shown to school daily. 	<p>Annex 1: "Prevention of Avian Influenza – Checking Body Temperature"</p> <p>Form A: "Temperature Record Sheet"</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sick children must not be taken to school. If students have a fever or not feeling well, parents should not let them go to school and should seek medical advice immediately. • School should explain to parents in detail the symptoms of Avian Influenza and urge them to keep an eye on their children's health condition. If their children have a fever and other symptoms like muscle pain and malaise, chill, headache, diarrhoea, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath, they should not go to school and should seek medical advice immediately. • Schools should advise parents to avoid visiting places affected by Avian Influenza with their children and most importantly, to avoid contact with birds and their excreta. • In preventing Avian Influenza, schools can recruit parent volunteers through the PTA to assist in cleaning, disinfection and if necessary, checking of students' body temperature records. Students can be trained to look after themselves. Schools may also call on their school sponsoring body, SMC / IMC and PTA to provide additional support to them including human and material resources. To ensure a clean and hygienic learning environment for students, parents who have fever should not visit the school. 	<p>Updated global statistics on Avian Influenza is available at http://www.info.gov.hk/info/flu/eng/global.htm.</p>
<p>2.3 Precautionary Measures</p> <p>Personal Hygiene</p>	<p>Provision of a safe and hygienic teaching and learning environment for staff members and students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should follow the precautionary and contingency measures set out in Annexes 2 to 3. The measures cover both personal and environmental hygiene. Staff members, students and parents should be informed of the measures. They should also be reminded to adhere to the measures strictly. Prevention of Avian Influenza should start with the individual, the family and the school by carrying out the precautionary measures. • For maintaining good personal hygiene, all staff members and students should wash hands with liquid soap after using toilet; after coughing or sneezing; before and after putting on surgical mask; and avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth before hand washing. Do not share towels and utensils. 	<p>Annex 2: "Health Advice on Prevention of Avian Influenza in School"</p> <p>Annex 3: "Wearing Masks"</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>School should remind parents to urge their children to bring tissue paper to school. Staff members and students not feeling well should not go to school and should seek medical advice immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members and students with respiratory symptoms should wear surgical masks to reduce the chance of spreading the disease. They should not go to school and should consult a doctor promptly. Schools should keep a sufficient stock of surgical masks for emergency needs. • An adequate stock of thermometers should also be kept at school. For glass thermometers, they must be cleaned and disinfected after use (wash with cold water first; immerse in 70% alcohol for about 15 minutes and then wipe dry). For ear thermometers, the probe may be re-used (for the same person) by disinfection according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Should the situation warrant and upon the recommendation of DH, school should request parents to take their children's temperature before letting them go to school. If parents fail to do so, schools should take up the responsibility of taking temperature for these children. Those who take the temperature of students should take all necessary safety measures, such as wearing disposable gloves. Schools should also request all staff (including drivers and staff of school bus and nanny vans) to take temperature before they go to school. If they have fever, they must not return to school. • School should make use of assembly or class-teacher period to remind students to be aware of their own or their classmates' health condition. If they are unwell, they should inform their teachers or classmates immediately. • Do not share personal belongings, lunch boxes and drinks. All students and staff members should be advised to wash hand before meal and to use serving chopsticks and spoons at mealtime. • Maintain a healthy lifestyle – a balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest. • Do not touch live/dead birds, poultry and their excreta (Wash hands with liquid soap and water immediately after contact with live / dead birds or surfaces contaminated by bird droppings). 	<p>Annex 3: “Wearing Masks”</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
Environmental Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards. • Maintain good cleanliness and ventilation in the school hall and classrooms. Disinfection with 1:99 diluted bleaching solution (1 part 5.25% bleaching solution in 99 parts of water) should be conducted daily. Rinse the areas with water and wipe dry. Metal surface should be disinfected using 70% alcohol. Objects and equipment frequently touched by students, such as computer keyboards, should be wiped regularly with diluted household bleach and rinsed with water. Toys of students should also be soaked regularly in diluted household bleach before ordinary washing. • Windows should be kept open to ensure good ventilation. Air filters should be cleansed regularly if air-conditioners are used. • Tuck shops, lunch boxes and water dispensers should be kept clean at all times. School premises should be rid of mice and insects. Attention should be paid to the cleanliness condition of animals kept in school as well. • Toilets should be kept clean at all times. Cleaning should be conducted regularly. Liquid soap and disposable towels should be available inside toilets. Public towels should not be used. A notice should be posted to require staff members and students to use liquid soap for hand washing. • In organizing internal or external school activities, ventilation of the venue should be taken into account. Crowdedness should be avoided. Keep the windows open and use exhaust fans to improve ventilation under crowded conditions. • Keep the premises clean. Clean furniture and facilities with 1:99 diluted household bleaching solution regularly. Re-wipe with a towel soaked in clean water and wipe dry. • In cleaning areas contaminated with body fluids (e.g. vomitus, respiratory secretions, etc), use a 1:49 diluted bleaching solution of household bleach (1 part 5.25% bleaching solution in 49 parts of water). Rinse the areas with water and wipe dry. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
Other Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that common facilities such as staircases, lifts, lobbies, refuse collection chambers, canopies and ventilation fans are cleaned, disinfected and maintained regularly. • Schools should refrain from keeping live birds in school where possible and note that the Government has amended relative legislative Regulation and Ordinance to ban backyard poultry keeping activities in Hong Kong. The ban will come into force on 13 February 2006. • Schools should call the government hotline at 1823 for advice of handling sick, wounded or dead birds found in school premises. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will collect the birds for laboratory examination if deemed necessary. School must remember to disinfect the potential contaminated surfaces, e.g. floor, platforms, stairs, etc. with a 1:49 diluted bleaching solution (1 part 5.25% bleaching solution in 49 parts of water). • If the school premises are used by an evening school or hired to outsiders for activities, all those who enter the school premises are required to upkeep personal and environmental hygiene, and wear surgical masks if they have respiratory symptoms. All those who have fever or are ill should not enter the school. After the activities, the school premises and objects used need to be cleaned and disinfected. • Keep an up-to-date sick leave record of students and staff members and obtain their prior consent for the release of personal data, such as names and telephone numbers to CHP of DH for investigation and follow-up action. • School head and teachers should pay particular attention to the health condition of staff members and students. If illness is spotted, they should take their temperature. If a student or staff member is unwell while at school (including school bus drivers and school bus assistants), he/she should take a rest in an isolated and quiet place. Advise him/her to wear a surgical mask if he/she displays symptoms of respiratory infection or fever. His/Her family 	Annex 4: Safety Guidelines for Handling and Disposal of Dead Birds (website: www.chp.gov.hk ; Path: Guidelines and letters to institutions > Guidelines > Institutions and businesses > Livestock industry)

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>members should be contacted to take him/her home and seek medical advice. If the student is seriously ill, he/she should be sent to the Accident and Emergency Department of a nearby hospital if parents/guardians cannot be contacted. The person who takes care of the sick should take all preventive measures, such as wearing a surgical mask and disposable gloves, and wash hand with liquid soap after contacting the sick student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case of an unusual increase in absentees or a large number of absentees having symptoms of influenza, e.g. fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle pain and malaise, contact the staff or parents/guardians of absentees to ascertain the reasons for their absence. Inform the Central Notification Office for Infectious Diseases of the CHP and the District School Development Section of the Bureau immediately if the staff member / child was admitted to hospital for investigation of Avian Influenza. 	

3. When the Hong Kong SAR Government has activated the Serious Response Level –

All staff and students should strictly observe the above-mentioned personal and environmental hygienic measures.

Measures in Case of Staff Members/Students under Home Confinement

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
<p>3.1 Case Follow-up by DH, School & EMB</p>	<p>Staff members/students who have close contact with Avian Influenza cases are required to have home confinement*. They should follow the instructions provided by the DH, and should wear surgical masks and strictly observe personal and environmental hygiene during the confinement period. They should also watch out for symptoms suggestive of Avian Influenza.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take further steps in preventing the spread of Avian Influenza, the Government will introduce home confinement for people who have close contact with Avian Influenza patients. DH will issue a letter to the affected staff member/student, requiring him/her for home confinement. During the confinement period, the affected staff member/student cannot go back to school and DH will issue to them a medical certificate to cover the period of confinement. If the case turns out to be non-Avian Influenza, DH will inform the staff 	<p>*The duration of home confinement may vary subject to the most updated scientific information obtained from countries with human avian influenza infections. The Department of Health will advise on whom and for how long the confinement should take on a case-by-case basis.</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>member/student concerned as soon as possible and issue a letter to certify that he/she is no longer required to be confined. The leave during the home confinement should be treated as sick leave.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school should clean and disinfect the affected areas as specified by DH. All the students should be reminded to take precautionary measures accordingly. 	
<p>3.2 Letter to Parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school should issue the following letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Letter to staff /student required to stay at home for confinement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ State the reasons and remind them to keep close watch of their health condition. If any symptoms of Avian Influenza are noticed, consult a doctor promptly and notify the school and DH (A hotline number will be given to those put under confinement / surveillance in due course). ■ State the support to be provided to the student by the school during class suspension; state the arrangement made for the student on resumption of classes to sit for any tests and examinations conducted during the suspension period without prejudice. (2) Letter to all parents: <p>Inform all parents of the situation. Remind them to keep watch of the health condition of their children and consult the doctor if any symptoms of Avian Influenza are observed.</p> • If home confinement of staff members and students brings worries to other staff members and students, the school guidance teacher, school social worker and class teacher should provide them with counseling service. Students should be guided to sympathize with infected people and those under home confinement, encouraged to show love and care for others and stimulated to think of what they themselves can contribute in the situation. Schools should also encourage staff members/students to call students under home confinement to show concern for their physical condition, well-being and feelings. If necessary, the school may contact the District School Development Section for arranging psychological services. 	<p>Annex 5: “Sample Letter to Parent Whose Child is under Home Confinement/ Observation” and</p> <p>Annex 6: “Sample Letter to All Parents of School with Student/Staff Member under Home Confinement/ Observation”</p> <p>Adjustments can be made according to the actual situation at school’s discretion</p>

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To alleviate the impact on the affected student in respect of academic performance, the school should provide support for learning to the student during the home confinement period. For instance, learning materials or assistance can be provided by means of telephone, e-mail, fax or the school homepage with the help of his/her peer classmates or teachers. If the affected student has to sit for the public examination during the home confinement period, he/she should contact the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. 	Please see para. 6.3 for the hotline number and website of HKEAA

4. Measures in Case of Staff Members/Students Confirmed/Suspected of Avian Influenza Infection

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
4.1 Case Follow Up by DH, School & EMB	<p>Department of Health may advise suspension of all classes* in a school if there is a confirmed case of Avian Influenza reported among staff members or students. The date of patient onset of illness and the last date to attend school are critical to decide the exact commencement date of class suspension. Department of Health will liaise with school authority and EMB to initiate these suspension measures on a case-by-case basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The office management should strengthen the measures to ensure environmental hygiene. This involves disinfection of the whole school premises with a 1:49 diluted bleaching solution for the first time and thereafter with a 1:99 diluted bleaching solution daily. Rinse the areas with water and wipe dry. Maintain good ventilation. If the school premises are mechanically ventilated, ensure frequent air exchange with proper maintenance and cleaning of the system. School should discuss with teachers and parents ways to compensate for the loss of students' learning time. School should inform all parents of the situation. By doing so, their anxiety may be relieved. They should also be reminded to be alert to the health condition of their children. If any symptoms of Avian Influenza are noticed, they should seek medical treatment and inform the school and DH (A 	*The duration of class suspension will depend on DH's assessment of the situation on a case-by-case basis

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>hotline number will be given to school in due course) When the suspension period is over, the staff members and students who are sick, especially those with symptoms of the respiratory infection, should still be discouraged from attending school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members/students having close contact with Avian Influenza cases are required to have home confinement according to the advise of DH. • Under special circumstances, schools may wish to continue suspending classes. DH and the District School Development Section of the Bureau should be notified. • After class resumption, the health condition of all the staff members and students should be closely monitored. DH and the District School Development Section of the Bureau should be notified immediately if there is an unusual increase in absentees or a large number of absentees having symptoms of influenza. All staff members and students should strictly observe the precautionary measures. 	<p>Annex 7: “Sample Letter to All Parents of School with Staff Member and Student Confirmed/Suspected to have Contracted Avian Influenza”</p>
<p>4.2 Setting up Communication Mechanism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective communication mechanism should be in place during the class suspension period. A list of the telephone numbers, fax numbers and/or email addresses of CHP of DH, the Bureau and school personnel should be prepared and distributed to staff and parents to facilitate prompt and effective communication when necessary. 	
<p>4.3 Support for Students’ Learning</p>	<p>Suspension of classes, not school; suspension of classes, not learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To arrange learning materials for students during the class suspension period, such as supplementary exercises and readers. • During the class suspension period, schools can provide learning materials and assistance to students through e-mail, school homepage, or any other effective ways. Schools can also disseminate to students information on other channels of learning support. Schools could make modifications and adjustments according to the needs of their students, and inform parents and students through effective means. Parents should be reminded to keep an eye on their children’s learning progress at home. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
4.4 Holiday Re-arrangement and Supplementary Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to alleviate the impact of class suspension on the learning of students, in principle, the number of days of class suspension except public holidays should be deducted from the annual school holidays. The number of days of class suspension should exclude those days originally covered during this period in the School Holiday List. Schools may consider deferring the commencement of school holidays, if necessary. • Taking into account individual school's special condition, schools may make school-based holiday re-arrangement with reference to students' learning progress and impact brought by class suspension on students. All decisions should be beneficial to students' study and supported with sufficient grounds. School should obtain consent from the SMC / IMC, the teacher and parent representatives and submit the details of holiday re-arrangement within one month after class resumption to their respective School Development Section for record purpose. At the same time, schools should, as early as possible, inform parents of the detailed arrangements and the starting and ending dates of the school holidays. 	
4.5 Arrangements for Test and Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should consider replacing the test and examination with formative assessment of students' performance. If schools intend to cancel the test and examination, they should obtain consent from teacher representatives, PTA and SMC / IMC. Schools should explain to parents that summative assessment is not the only way to evaluate students' performance and studies have shown that valuable feedback provided during formative assessment can effectively enhance student learning. • The anxiety of parents is understandable as the development of Avian Influenza is of grave concern to many people. Schools should exercise flexibility in handling students' leave applications. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
4.6 Staff on Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with their practical needs during class suspension period, schools should arrange for an appropriate number of staff to be on duty to handle school affairs and parents' enquiries. If necessary, schools should also arrange for staff to take care of those students who are not taken care of at home and have to come back to school. Self-learning materials such as readers, educational videotapes etc should be provided. Staff members on duty should take precautionary measures and must be particularly cautious in the prevention of infection. 	
4.7 Preparation for Class Resumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before resumption of classes, schools should notify parents of the arrangements for resumption of classes. Parents should be requested to take proper precautionary measures in the household like taking their children's body temperature before letting them go to school every day, urging their children to observe personal and environmental hygiene (e.g. bring tissue paper and surgical masks to school etc.). The Bureau has provided schools with a sample letter to parents. Schools should edit or revise the sample in accordance with their situations and provide parents with relevant information before resumption of classes. 	Annex 8: "Sample Letter to Parents on Resumption of Classes"
4.8 Arrangements for the First Day of School after Class Suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should contact school bus operators to ensure that normal services will be provided on the day of class resumption. Schools should also ask the drivers and assistants of school buses and nanny vans to take their temperatures every day before they return to school. In case of fever, they should not drive/get on the bus/van, and should inform their schools and the parents at once, so that alternative arrangements could be made. Schools should distribute the 'Health Advice for Driver, Crew and Operational Staff of Public Transport on the Prevention of Influenza' issued by the Transport Department to drivers and assistants of school buses and nanny vans and request them to follow the guidelines strictly. Schools should contact caterers to ensure that normal lunch arrangement will be provided on the day of class resumption and remind relevant parties to pay particular attention to sanitary conditions. Schools should make appropriate re-arrangements of examinations/tests/activities originally scheduled to take place during the period of class suspension. Schools should also pay attention to arrangements 	Annex 9: "Health Advice for Driver, Crew and Operational Staff of Public Transport on the Prevention of Influenza"

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>concerning the teaching practicum of teacher trainees of teacher education institutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before resumption of classes, schools should seek assistance of parent volunteers in preparing for class resumption such as guiding, in the initial stage of class resumption, students to wear surgical masks and wash their hands regularly. For the safety of students, parent volunteers should be reminded to measure their own temperatures and ensure that they have no fever before going to the schools. • On the first day of class resumption, class teachers should find out how students spent the time during class suspension and show concern for their health and their families as well. Students can be invited to set health rules in class. They should be advised to keep good personal and environmental hygiene all the time. They should also be reminded of the proper way to wear surgical masks and wash hands. They should stay at home if feeling ill. • Unless proper arrangements have been made, it is undesirable to gather lots of students in the school hall for holding assembly. The central public address system or the class-teacher periods can be used to explain to students the importance of personal and environmental hygiene in the prevention of contagious diseases. The serious consequence of the spread of Avian Influenza in the community should be stated and prevention of the spread being the social responsibility of every citizen should be emphasized. Staff members and students should also be encouraged to seek immediate medical advice, and notify the school in the case of suspected and confirmed Avian Influenza infection involving themselves or their families. • On the first day, it may not be necessary to stick to the timetable. Schools can use self-made materials to explore with students issues on the prevention of contagious diseases / Avian Influenza through diverse learning modes and activities. Through the learning activities, schools can increase the knowledge and awareness of staff members and students of the issues, guide students to reflect on, analyze and explore what to do and what not to do at the time of adversity for one's own benefit and that of others as well as the issue of evasion or acceptance of one's social responsibilities. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<p>Moreover, schools should ask students to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene, and to help, care for and encourage those in need. They should also deliver the message to their relatives and friends.</p>	
4.9 Student Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When classes first resume, school guidance teachers, school social workers and class teachers etc. should pay due attention to the behaviour and performance of students, especially those having recovered from the disease and those having been put under home confinement. Attention should also be given to other students. Teachers should counsel students with mental or psychological stress or emotional problems. • Schools should counsel students, guide them in empathizing with infected persons and those put under home confinement, encourage them to care for other people and stimulate them to think of the contributions they can make in the current situation. Schools can organize service-with-love teams to help lower form students to keep good personal and environmental hygiene or recruit hygiene ambassadors to improve the sanitary conditions of the school. Schools can disseminate good practices to create an atmosphere of unity, care and sympathy. 	

5. Others

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
5.1 Administrative Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep an adequate stock of liquid soap, paper towels, bleaching solution, thermometers, etc. • Set a timetable and assign manpower for cleaning and disinfection. School should select the most suitable time and effective means for cleaning. Mobilizing voluntary support from parents and community is most desirable. • Set up contingency measures to ensure smooth operation of school. • Schools could decide arrangements for internal examinations, test, activities, school bus, lunch etc. according to their situation. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate cleaning and disinfection of the school premises and to enable students to have sufficient time for hand-washing, schools may adjust the normal timetable. Schools may flexibly adjust the timetable provided that such adjustment is after careful consideration, fully justified and takes into account the safety and learning of students. The arrangements should be agreed to by their teacher representatives, PTA and SMC / IMC. The respective School Development Section should be notified for record purpose. • Used masks and disposable towels etc. should be placed inside litter bins with covers. Litter bins should be emptied and cleaned properly and regularly. 	
5.2 Public Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, chairs, floor, windows, doors in school halls or classrooms serving as examination centres and lifts, corridors, toilets and passages used by candidates should be cleansed and disinfected daily using 1:99 diluted bleaching solution. Rinse the areas with water and wipe dry. • Invigilators responsible for the examinations should take up their duties as scheduled. Teachers feeling unwell should inform their school well in advance for arrangement of deployment. In case of enquiries and/or difficulties, schools should contact the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) at 2239 2761 for assistance. 	Please also see para. 6.3 for the website of HKEAA
5.3 Guidelines for Parents	<p>Guidelines should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising parents to pay attention to the Bureau's announcements related to Avian Influenza. • Arrangements of the school, including examinations, tests, internal and external activities, lunch and school bus etc, during class suspension period • Arrangements for parents who are unable to look after their children during the class suspension period, e.g. whether parents are required to escort their children to and from school, lunch arrangements and whether students are required to wear uniform, etc. • Advice on the measures of preventing the spread of Avian Influenza. 	

Measure	Details	Remark/ Annex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact telephone number so that parents can report to school immediately if their children or family members have contracted Avian Influenza. 	

6. Support/ Enquiries

6.1 Department of Health

Central Notification Offices for Infectious Diseases of DH :

Telephone number: 2477 2772
 Fax number 2477 2770

Department of Health hotline : 1872222

Department of Health 24-hour
 pre-recorded health education hotline : 2833 0111

Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health website: www.chp.gov.hk

6.2 Education and Manpower Bureau

Respective District School Development Section of the school

Education and Manpower 24-hour pre-recorded hotline : 2891 0088

Education and Manpower Bureau website : www.emb.gov.hk

6.3 Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

Hotline : 2239 2761

Website : www.hkeaa.edu.hk

Prevention of Avian Influenza

Checking Body Temperature

If the situation warrants and upon the recommendation of the Department of Health,

- ☞ Parents should check the body temperature of their children every day and write down the details on the record sheet provided by school, before letting them go to school.
- ☞ The normal range of body temperature varies from person to person and can be influenced by many factors such as age, time of a day, temperature of surroundings, physical activities, part of body measured, the type of thermometer used, etc.
- ☞ For practical purposes, body temperature would be taken normally through ear or mouth. Oral temperature reflects body temperature better but ear thermometer is useful as a screening tool.
- ☞ The accuracy of different thermometers may vary slightly. Please refer to the instructions on the use of the thermometer before taking body temperature. Usually, the normal range of body temperature for different age groups is listed out in the instructions of ear-type thermometers.
- ☞ Normal reference range of ear temperature quoted in some of the ear-type thermometers is listed below for information:

	°C	°F
Age 3-10	36.1-37.8	97.0-100.0
Age 11-65	35.9-37.6	96.6-99.7
- ☞ If oral thermometer is used, body temperature at or below 37.2°C (99.0°F) is considered within the normal range. Oral temperature exceeding 38.0°C or 100.4°F warrants prompt medical consultation.
- ☞ If children's body temperature is higher than the normal range, parents should re-check their temperature after eliminating possible environmental causes and allowing the child to rest for 15 - 30 minutes. Parents should not let their children go to school if their body temperature persistently exceeds the normal range.

Health Advice on Prevention of Avian Influenza in School

Avian influenza

Avian influenza (H5N1) is a type of influenza A that mainly infects birds but occasionally affects humans. Avian influenza can be transmitted from birds to people, although transmission between humans, up to this moment, is very inefficient. The initial symptoms of avian flu are similar to those of other influenza viruses, including fever, generalised muscle pain, cough and sore throat. However, it is more likely to result in high fever, chest infection, respiratory failure, multi-organ failure, and death.

Prevention of avian influenza in school

Students and staff:

- Droppings of infected birds and poultry may carry the avian flu virus, so avoid touching live birds or poultry or their droppings.
- If you have been in contact with live birds or poultry, immediately wash your hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water.
- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards.
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly with soap, and use hand dryer or disposable towel for drying hand.
- Build up good body resistance through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, avoid too much stress, and passive smoking.
- If any students or staff develop symptoms, they should :
 - consult their doctor promptly;
 - wear a surgical mask; and
 - take rest at home and refrain from going to school.

School management:

- Ensure sink locations and toilets are provided with liquid soap, disposable towels or hand dryers.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces, toys, and commonly shared items at least daily by using appropriate disinfectant (e.g. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 99 parts water for non-metallic or 70% alcohol for metallic surface). Leave for 30 minutes and then rinse with water.
- If places are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use disposable towels to wipe them away. Then disinfect the surface and the neighbouring area with appropriate disinfectant (e.g. 1 part of 5.25% household bleach in 49 parts water for non-metallic or 70% alcohol for metallic surface), leave for 30 minutes, and then rinse with water.
- Check students' temperature records and make random spot checks on students' temperature
- Ensure good ventilation
 - Keep air-conditioners well-maintained and wash the dust-filters frequently

- Switch on any wall fan and exhaust fan to enhance air movement
- Windows of classroom should be opened from time to time for better ventilation, but make sure that window and louver are not located on the same wall
- Keep sick leave records of staff and students. When there is an increase in the number of absentees:
 - Contact the staff or parents/guardians of absentees to ascertain the reasons for their absence
 - Inform Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health when a number of absentees with similar symptoms are noted.

For more information

Please visit the website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health at www.chp.gov.hk or call the Department of Health's 24-hour Health Education Hotline at 2833 0111.

Centre for Health Protection

November 2005

Wearing Masks

Wearing masks properly offers satisfactory protection against respiratory tract infections. People with symptoms of respiratory tract infections and those who care for patients with these symptoms should wear a surgical mask to reduce the chance of spread of infection.

Points to note :

1. Wash hands before wearing and after taking off a mask.
2. Follow the instructions on the package carefully, if available.
3. In general, when wearing a surgical mask, the following should be noted :
 - The coloured side of the mask faces outwards, with the metallic strip uppermost;
 - The strings or elastic bands should be positioned properly to keep the mask firmly in place;
 - The metallic strip should be moulded to the bridge of the nose;
 - The mask should be fitted snugly to cover the nose, mouth and chin.
4. Avoid touching the mask once it is secured on your face. If you must do so, wash your hands before and after touching the mask;
5. When taking off the mask, avoid touching the outside of the mask as this part may be covered with germs;
6. After taking off the mask, put the mask into a rubbish bin with a lid;
7. A surgical mask should be discarded after use. Replace the mask immediately if it is damaged or soiled.
8. Wearing a mask is not the only way to prevent respiratory tract infections. Other personal hygienic measures should also be observed and people are advised to maintain healthy lifestyle to build up body immunity.

Safety Guidelines for the Protection of Personnel in Handling and Disposal of Dead Birds

To minimize the chance of getting an infection from dead birds, members of the public who discover dead birds should try not to handle and dispose them by themselves.

They should inform the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department via telephone number 28680000 if the dead bird is found in a public area.

Where the dead bird is found in the private area, property management personnel should handle and dispose the carcass according to the following guidelines:

Guidelines for Handling and Disposal of Dead Birds Carcasses

* Before handling the carcasses, please prepare the following necessary materials:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Disposable waterproof rubber gloves | 5. Household bleach solution |
| 2. Surgical mask | 6. Disposable absorbent towels |
| 3. Disposable plastic apron | 7. Tough plastic bags |
| 4. Bucket of Water | |

A. Personal Protection

1. Avoid direct contact with the carcass, blood and body fluid discharged from the dead bird.
2. Staff should cover hand wounds with waterproof bandages before handling the dead bird.
3. Staff should wear disposable waterproof rubber gloves and surgical masks. Disposable plastic aprons should be worn when splashing or contamination of clothing is expected.

B. Handling and Disposal of Dead Bird (not to be tested further for Avian Influenza)

1. Cover the dead bird with disposable absorbent towels soaked with 1 part household bleach in 4 parts water for 15 mins.
2. Wrap the dead bird with the absorbent towels and remove any other body fluid discharged from the bird at the same time.
3. Dispose the dead bird into a tough black plastic bag.
4. Remove and put the used gloves and apron into the same black plastic bag as inner bag before tying up securely.
5. The tied up bag with dead bird should then be placed into another tough black plastic bag as outer bag and tie up securely again (double bagged). Then wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or clean hands with disinfection items containing 70% alcohol.
6. Remove the surgical mask and dispose into rubbish bin with lid, then wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or clean hands with disinfection items containing 70% alcohol.
7. The securely sealed up dead bird bag should be disposed of into a refuse bin as domestic waste.
8. Wash hands thoroughly again afterwards with soap and water or clean hands with disinfection items containing 70% alcohol.

C. Disinfection of Environmental Surfaces

Mop the potentially contaminated environmental surfaces e.g. floor, platform, stairs etc. with diluted household bleach (1 part household bleach in 49 parts water)

D. Additional Precautions

1. Take a shower immediately when splashed by potential infectious materials.
2. All accidents e.g. prick or cut arising from handling of the dead birds must be reported to the supervisor and medical consultation should be sought as soon as possible.

**Sample Letter to Parent
Whose Child is under Home Confinement/ Observation**

(Schools may adapt the content according to their circumstances)

<Date>

Dear Sir / Madam,

The Department of Health has confirmed that a person having been in close contact with your son/daughter, <Name of student> (P/S __ student of this school), has contracted/is suspected of having contracted Avian Influenza. To prevent the spread of the disease in the school campus, the Department of Health has requested your son/daughter to stay away from school for home confinement/observation for __days, with effect from today, for safety purposes. We would also like to advise you to keep your son's / daughter's physical health condition in view and consult a doctor promptly if any symptom of respiratory infections, in particular fever, is noticed. Please inform us (Telephone No. _____) and the Department of Health (Telephone No. _____)(A hotline number will be given to those put under confinement/ surveillance in due course) in case your son/daughter might have come down with the disease.

If the suspected case turns out to be non-Avian Influenza, the Department of Health will inform your son/daughter as soon as possible to resume schooling.

We will do our best to provide support to your son/daughter to ensure that his/her learning progress will not be adversely affected during the home observation period. If your son/daughter misses any test and examination scheduled during this period, we will arrange a re-sit of the examination for him/her after he/she resumes school and assessment will be made as usual.

In case of enquiry, please contact Mr/Ms <Name of class teacher>, Class Teacher of your son/daughter at <School's telephone number>.

Yours sincerely,

<Signature of School Head>

Principal, <Name of school>

**Sample Letter to All Parents of
School with Student/Staff Member under Home Confinement/ Observation**

(Schools may adapt the content according to their circumstances)

<Date>

Dear Parents,

The Department of Health has confirmed that a person having been in close contact with a student/staff member of this school has contracted/is suspected of having contracted Avian Influenza. To avoid the spread of the disease in the school campus and to ensure the health and safety of our students, the Department of Health has asked the student/staff member concerned to be under home confinement/observation. At the same time, we have taken measures to strengthen the sanitation and disinfecting work in the school campus in accordance with the advice of the Department of Health. Parents do not have to worry about sending their children to school.

If the suspected case turns out to be non-Avian Influenza, the Department of Health will inform the concerned student/staff member as soon as possible that he/she can return to school.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents and students again to take the following precautionary measures to prevent respiratory tract infections :

- Build up good body immunity by having a proper diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, reducing stress and avoiding smoking
- Maintain good personal hygiene, and wash hands after sneezing, coughing or cleaning the nose
- Maintain good ventilation
- Avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation
- Consult a doctor promptly if you develop symptoms of respiratory infections, in particular, fever

If you want to know more about Avian Influenza, please call 2833 0111 (24-hour Health Education Hotline of the Department of Health).

Yours sincerely,

<Signature of School Head>

Principal, <Name of school>

**Sample Letter to All Parents of School with Staff Member and Student
Confirmed/Suspected to have Contracted Avian Influenza**

(Schools may adjust the content according to their circumstances)

<Date>

Dear Parents,

We were informed on <Date> that one of our students/staff members was confirmed/suspected to be suffering from Avian Influenza.

To avoid further spread of the disease by those who might have been infected, we have decided to suspend classes from tomorrow for ___ days tentatively, from <Date> to <Date>. This is to ensure that all our staff members and students are free of the disease, given the incubation period of Avian Influenza. If the suspected case turns out to be non-Avian Influenza, the Department of Health will inform EMB to arrange class resumption as soon as practicable. We would also like to advise you to consult a doctor promptly if your son/daughter has any symptom of respiratory infections, in particular fever, during the suspension period. Please inform us (Telephone No. _____) and the Department of Health (Telephone No. _____) (a hotline number will be given to school) if any such symptom is detected. The duration of class suspension is subject to change according to the advice by the Department of Health. We will inform you of any change the situation warrants.

We will, in collaboration with the Department of Health, continue to monitor closely the physical condition of our staff members and students. A talk will be held in the school hall at <Time> on <Date>, in which parents and teachers will be given advice on health matters as well as up-to-date information of the incident.

Yours sincerely,

<Signature of School Head>

Principal, <Name of school>

Sample Letter to Parents on Resumption of Classes
(Schools may revise the content according to the school situation)

<Date>

Dear Parents,

1. The ___-day class suspension will be over by < DATE>, counting from the first day the staff member/student of this school confirmed/suspected to have contracted Avian Influenza took his/her sick leave.
2. During the class suspension period, our school has thoroughly cleaned and disinfected the school premises. We will urge all staff members, including tuck shop workers and school bus drivers, and students to step up precautionary measures to ensure personal hygiene and environmental hygiene of the school. We will also request our staff, including drivers and workers of school bus and nanny vans, to take their temperature before going to school. If they have fever, they must not return to school. Parents need not worry about sending their children to school. Nevertheless, we understand parents' concern about the development of Avian Influenza and will be flexible in handling students' leave applications.
3. It is everybody's responsibility to combat Avian Influenza. We call on you to cooperate with us in providing your child a safe learning environment apart from stepping up hygiene in the household. Please pay attention and follow the following measures strictly:
 - 3.1 Pay attention to the physical health condition of your child. He/She should stay away from school and consult a doctor immediately when sick.
 - 3.2 Take your child's temperature before he/ she goes to school every day. Fill in the record sheet (Form A) and sign your name on it. Your child should return the completed sheet to us daily.
 - 3.3 To prevent infection, please urge your child to wear a facemask and bring tissue paper to school for wiping hands every day.
 - 3.4 After the resumption of classes, you are requested to notify our teacher, Mr/Ms <Name of Teacher> at <Telephone number> immediately in case of any of the following situations to facilitate our prompt action in taking contingency measures and inform the EMB :
 - (a) your child is confirmed/suspected of having Avian Influenza; or
 - (b) any person in close contact with your child is confirmed/suspected of having contracted Avian Influenza.
4. On the first day of class resumption, we will arrange special programmes/ activities to increase

students' knowledge and concern on the prevention of Avian Influenza. Besides, we will take measures to avoid overcrowding. We will open all windows and turn on exhaust fans to improve ventilation. Staff members and students will be asked to wear facemasks if necessary.

5. Starting from the first day of class resumption, lunch provision and school bus service will resume. We have distributed to all school bus and nanny van drivers and workers the “ Health Advice for Driver, Crew and Operational Staff of Public Transport on the Prevention of Influenza” provided by the Transport Department.
6. The examination/ quiz/activities originally scheduled during the class suspension period will be postponed to _____(date)/ cancelled.
7. In providing your child a safe learning environment, we need the support and cooperation of parents in addition to our efforts. For the sake of your child and others, we hope that you can follow the measures mentioned in paragraph 3 strictly. We also hope that you can support us by taking up voluntary work at our school, such as guiding our students to wear masks, to wash and wipe their hands properly and cleaning the school premises etc. For the safety of students, parent volunteers should be reminded to measure their own temperature and ensure that they have no fever before going to schools. If you are interested, please contact our teacher, Mr/ Ms <Name of teacher> at <Telephone number>.

(Signature)

School Supervisor/Principal

According to the advice from Department of Health, drivers, crew and operational staff of public transport companies are advised to take the following precautionary measures at their workplaces to minimize the risk of contracting and spreading influenza:

During normal daily life

1. **Maintain good personal hygiene**

- Wash hands^{Note 1} frequently, especially in the following situations:
 - before touching eyes, nose and mouth, if there is a need to do so;
 - before handling food or eating;
 - after sneezing, coughing, cleaning the nose and going to toilet;
 - after handling dollar notes or coins; and
 - after touching public installations or equipment, such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs.
- Cover the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and wash hands immediately with liquid soap afterwards.
- If you develop respiratory symptoms or fever, you should consult doctor early and take sick leave if necessary.

2. **Wear a surgical mask**

- The following people are recommended to wear a surgical mask:
 - people who have symptoms of respiratory infection or fever, and
 - people who care for person with respiratory infection or fever.

3. **Ensure good ventilation inside train/vehicle/vessel compartments**

- Ensure the air-conditioning system is well maintained. Clean the air filter frequently.

4. **Keep train/vehicle/vessel compartments clean**

- Wash/wipe compartments with a diluted household bleach solution (1 part household bleach mixed to 99 parts water) regularly and pay attention to the cleaning of seats, handrails, safety belts and buckles and air inlet/outlet inside compartments. Then rinse with water and wipe dry.
- If cleaning vomitus, use a diluted household bleach solution (1 part household bleach mixed to 49 parts water). Rinse the area with water and wipe dry.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment e.g. gloves when carrying out cleansing works.

When novel influenza case has been reported locally

Additional measures to the above

1. **Wear a surgical mask**

- The following people should wear a surgical mask:
 - people who work in crowded or poorly ventilated places; and
 - people suffering from respiratory symptoms who are on their way to see a doctor.

2. **Ensure good ventilation inside train/vehicle/vessel compartments**

- Keep windows open as appropriate and where possible to maintain good ventilation, including the driver/captain's cabin^{Note 2}.
- For enclosed compartments or where air-conditioning is necessary, the fresh air inlet volume should be adjusted to the maximum level.

3. **Keep train/vehicle/vessel compartments clean**

- Step up cleansing and pay particular attention to the cleaning of seats, handrails, safety belts and buckles and air inlet/outlet inside compartments.
- Assign responsible staff to monitor cleansing works for vehicle/vessel compartments at termini/piers in between departures^{Note 2}.

4. **Service attitude**

- If a passenger with key symptoms of influenza is on board the train/vehicle/vessel compartment:
 - please advise that passenger to wear a mask (if the passenger is not wearing one) in a friendly manner; and
 - if situation warrants, assist to call for ambulance service or the Marine Police (if in outlying island) for conveyance of the patient to the hospital.

Note 1: Rub hands with 70% alcohol solution to disinfect them when hand washing facilities are not available.

Note 2: Not applicable to train.



November 2005

