

## Questions and Answers H1N1

**Q1: BLISS and the Pakistani International School closed when students became infected with H1N1. Why has BESG not closed now that two cases have been confirmed?**

A1: It is not appropriate to comment on the situation in other schools. At the BESG, we believe that the isolated incidents of infection do not merit the closure of the school. The infection is present to a limited degree in the Ankara community, in general, so with isolated cases the children are no more at risk at school than in the general community.

**Q2: When do you intend to close the school?**

A2: According to our response plan the trigger for closure of the school is if the infection becomes geographically localised AND has entered school through staff, students, or immediate family of either group. This means that the relevant authorities must have determined the Ankara population to be significantly affected by the virus, as well as staff or students having been infected. If the spread of the infection is no longer isolated in nature and is prevalent across Ankara, then limiting contact between people, including students, both inside and outside of school is prudent.

**Q3: How many children have to be infected before you close the school?**

**How many children have to stay away from school before you close the school.**

A3: The trigger for closure of the school is if the infection becomes geographically localised AND has entered school through staff, students, or immediate family of either group. Therefore the closure of the school is not simply based on the number of children testing positive to H1N1 or absent. Other factors will be considered. We are fortunate that the pattern of behaviour of this virus has not changed over time, and that its impact in Turkey and in the school has occurred relatively late. We therefore have an opportunity to learn from others and will continue to review our position based on this information. Significant numbers of the school population including staff testing positive would of course be considered as a matter of urgency in Board decisions to close the school.

**Q4: Many children are not attending school because of fear of infection and therefore are missing lessons. What will be done for these children to catch up?**

A4: This depends on how many children miss lessons and for how long. Currently, the majority of children continue to attend the school. Should circumstances dictate a change we will evaluate what action should be taken accordingly. The school website has extensive lists of websites and information for students to continue to practice basic skills and extend their learning. All teachers regularly update their class pages with homework and spelling lists etc.

**Q5: What happens if a staff member becomes infected with H1N1?**

A5: If a staff member develops flu symptoms he or she will be required to remain at home until full recovery. To date no staff members have been required to remain at home for this reason. However, we have sent home members of staff whose children are infected with the virus.

**Q6: Why don't you test all classmates of a child that has tested positive for H1N1?**

A6: The BESG is not required by law to test classmates of children that have tested positive for H1N1. Furthermore the school has not right to impose this upon parents - each parent has the right to choose their own precautions for their child.

**Q7: have you had any contact with the Ministry of Health? What will your response be to them?**

A7: The Ministry of Health have not contacted the school. If they do the school will of course cooperate with their guidance and requirements to the fullest extent possible.