Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Recently a primary aged student was diagnosed with Influenza B. The child is home recovering and will return to school when fit to do so.

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by the Influenza A or B (or rarely C) viruses. It is highly infectious. Influenza is a notifiable disease and therefore we are alerting our families, even though we are currently in what is known as ‘Flu Season’ in Australia (between May and September).

**How influenza is spread:**
Influenza virus is spread when someone with influenza coughs or sneezes, producing airborne droplets that come into contact with the mucous membrane (the thin moist lining of many parts of the body such as the nose, mouth, throat and genitals) lining the nose, throat and mouth of another person. Droplets can be spread through the air. Infection may also be spread by contact with hands, tissues and other articles soiled by infected nose and throat discharges.

**Symptoms include:**
- rapid onset of fever
- headache
- sore throat
- muscle aches
- fatigue
- cough
- sneezing
- running nose

Most people recover within a week, although the cough and fatigue may last longer. Influenza is much more serious than the common cold. It can lead to pneumonia (lung infection or inflammation) and other complications, and even death, particularly in:

- people aged 65 years and over
- pregnant women
- young children
- people with chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.

**What Parents/Carers can do to help:**
- keep sick children at home until they are completely recovered, so they do not pass illness onto their peers.
- it is not too late for children to have a flu injection as we are yet to see the peak of the influenza season.
- Remind students that good cough, sneeze and hand hygiene are important in preventing the spread of flu. Wash, wipe, cover, don’t infect another.

Look after yourself and one another!

Kind Regards,

Beck Truran
Head of Primary
24/8/15