

Dear Parents and Students,

I would like to inform you that, unless instructed otherwise by government directive, Pechersk School will re-open on Monday 23rd November following the period of imposed quarantine. School bus transport and catering services will operate as normal. We very much look forward to the return of our students and the resumption of classes. Let me thank everyone again for their understanding and support in working with the distance learning plans we have put into place during this period.

Now that school will re-open it is essential to remain diligent with regards best public health and hygiene practices. Although there were no confirmed cases of H1N1 in our community during this time it is obvious that the virus has, indeed, made its way to Eastern Europe and Ukraine. The fact that this virus has arrived is not unexpected as, per reports from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO), this is the world's first pandemic in 41 years. The impact of the pandemic on educational institutions has varied throughout the world, from closures of several weeks to business as usual.

As H1N1 has now arrived, it is critical that we all become more familiar with the illness and put into practice those measures which, as practical as possible, limits its spread. The following two websites from the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control are excellent resources:
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm> http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently_asked_questions/what/en/index.html

It is also most important during this time that the school and families takes a sensible, well-informed approach when dealing with illness at home and in the community.

It is clear that, for the vast majority of people, H1N1 does not pose a threat different from the regular cold and/or flu season and, if infected with H1N1, full recovery can generally be expected within a week. Following the World Health Organization steps outlined below is the best approach when dealing with H1N1, seasonal flu or other respiratory illnesses.

What should you do if you think you have the illness?

If you feel unwell, have high fever, cough or sore throat:

- stay at home and keep away from work, school or crowds. Please do not send your child to school or visit the campus until 24 hours after the signs of fever have disappeared. If your child has suspicious flu-like symptoms, please report this to the School Doctor immediately. After being sick for more than 3 consecutive days, students must bring a Medical Certificate to school confirming that the child may return to school. These requirements also apply to our staff at school.
- rest and take plenty of fluids;
- cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing and, if using tissues, make sure you dispose of them carefully. Clean your hands immediately after with soap and water or cleanse them with an alcohol-based hand rub;
- if you do not have a tissue close by when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth as much as possible with the crook of your elbow;
- use a mask to help you contain the spread of droplets when you are around others, but be sure to do so correctly;
- inform family and friends about your illness and try to avoid contact with other people;
- if possible, contact a health professional before travelling to a health facility to discuss whether a medical examination is necessary.

If your child remains absent, please call the appropriate divisional office and report the reason so accurate records can be maintained during this time. As necessary, further H1N1 updates will be sent via email and posted on the PSI website at www.psi.kiev.ua.

As always, your support and feedback are most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director

5th November 2009

Dear Parents and Students,

In this update I would like to outline the schools' position on contingency planning in the event that PSI remains closed for the full period of three weeks mandatory suspension of classes and educational activities made by the Cabinet of Ministers on 30th October.

Firstly, it is important to understand that the resolution from the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Order of the Ministry of Education and that of the Kyiv City *Rada* fully apply to PSI and other private national and international schools in Ukraine. As such we remain in compliance with the government's directives and await instructions on re-opening our school when it is considered appropriate.

As I wrote yesterday there is no further indication from government of changes to the original order on the period of closure or clear information on how and when schools will know about re-opening. **Under these circumstances I must advise parents to prepare and plan accordingly for a three week school closure at PSI.**

Until the planned re-opening date of Monday 23rd November the school will continue to serve PSI students with a distance learning programme which, we hope, will become more sophisticated in ensuring good progress with our learning plans for all students.

The school is unable to guarantee, of course, that this period will not be extended or that there are no further periods when classes are suspended by government order once school does re-open.

If we receive authorisation to open the school before Monday 23rd November, you will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity. In the event of an early re-opening of school we understand that some families will not be 'in country'. It may be possible to give consideration to those in this situation through continued short term distance learning methods of assigning work and 'make up' time upon return. Please note that there are currently no plans to add Saturdays or holidays as re-scheduled school days to compensate for this period or future periods of closure. It is, therefore, important that we maximise the opportunity provided by our distance learning initiatives.

I hope this provides some useful guidance on how to proceed with your individual family arrangements. Again, please remain in contact with teaching staff and communicate any important changes to your travel plans during this period to the school.

Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

With best regards,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director

Wednesday 4th November

Dear Parents and Students,

As of today the situation remains unchanged regarding the temporary suspension of classes at PSI. We anticipate staying closed until further notice by order of the government and city council. I understand that this makes each family's planning difficult for the coming days and weeks. However, there is no indication of any change in the closure status of public and private schools in Kyiv at this time.

Teaching and support staff continue to work on planning and work preparation for classes and we are communicating successfully through different media with students and parents. Your exemplary patience and overwhelming support is appreciated during this difficult period of disruption to our children's learning. The many constructive suggestions and positive feedback we have received is also acknowledged. We hope to be able to continue working successfully with all PSI students until we eventually re-open.

Tomorrow morning I shall be writing to all families again to give advice on planning ahead for the coming weeks.

Until then please continue to work with our teachers on any aspect of your child's daily assignments.

With best regards,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director

Dear Parents and Students,

During the course of today our staff has been in contact with all families to establish communication links and inform you of the arrangements for the setting, completion and handing in of work assignments during this week's school closure.

Our staff has also been working on planning and preparing appropriate work plans and learning materials to send home. The objective is that students should be provided with a reasonable degree of teaching and learning if school is closed for an extended period. A reasonable level of education means that objectives have to be realistic. In the event of school closures for an extended period of time, though we would hope to provide as broad a curriculum as possible in the circumstances, we cannot aim to provide the full and balanced curriculum that would normally be offered at PSI. This will also affect the amount of personalised learning that can be provided at this time. However, students should be able to expect support with some remote learning activities, taking account of students' special educational needs as far as possible. Wherever possible we are trying to ensure that work assignments are appropriate for the student's level and require minimal parental guidance.

Today we have made great progress to ensure that any extended period of absence does not seriously affect your child's education. Making sure we have your correct contact information is critical to ensure we can work in partnership with families during this period. If you have not received an email or phone call from school, please contact your child's homeroom teacher to ensure that we have your correct phone, email and address information.

Our remote/distance learning options are, of course, also highly reliant upon students and parents having access to a computer. Should parents have any difficulty being able to access work being sent home, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

Should you require any advice or support from your child's homeroom or subject teacher, please do not hesitate to write or phone for assistance. We shall try to respond as quickly as possible to your enquiry.

For those families who are currently not in Ukraine we ask that your child attempts to complete as much work through online communication as possible. Upon school re-opening there will be arrangements made for your child to 'make up' any missed work without penalty.

We will continue to update you on further school plans with our distance learning arrangements in due course.

With best wishes,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director

Monday 2nd November 2009

Dear Parents and Students,

Further to my earlier email message sent out to the PSI community announcing the school's temporary closure I would like to reassure families that we will be making regular contact to update you on the steps we are taking to provide continuity of learning for your child. Please check your email and the school website regularly to keep in touch with communication and distance learning arrangements being organised by PSI teaching staff. A further bulletin summarizing today's developments will be sent out this afternoon.

For families who require information on the upcoming CEESA tournaments being held later in the week, here is an extract from a joint letter prepared by PSI and KIS to CEESA schools involved announcing the cancellation of the events which were to be held in Kyiv.

"We regret to inform you that the forthcoming CEESA Cross Country and Football competitions scheduled in Kyiv between the 5th and 7th November must be cancelled. This joint decision made by PSI and KIS has been enforced as a result of the mandatory measures introduced by the national government and city council to restrict the spread of H1N1 strain of influenza within Ukraine. On Friday 30th October Ukraine's Prime Minister announced that all schools will be closed for a period of three weeks and all educational activities be cancelled during this period. The legal advice we have received confirms that the government's order applies to international schools in Ukraine.

Given the increased likelihood of H1N1 infection reported within the country it is a necessary and responsible decision to minimize the risks posed to visiting students and staff from other CEESA schools. In a climate of uncertainty and potential risk we consider the decision to cancel the tournaments as unavoidable at this late stage of planning. Understandably, we know the disappointment that will follow, the lost opportunity for success and participation and also the financial costs that will be incurred. To all schools, families and students affected we extend our sincere apologies."

Please note that this decision does not affect the planned HS Boys' Football Tournament which will be held in Helsinki. Organizing staff will provide further details to participating students and their families later today.

With best regards,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director

Saturday 31st October 2009

Dear Parents and Students,

I regret to inform you that school will remain closed after the Fall Break until further notice. This follows the Prime Minister's announcement that all educational establishments in Ukraine cannot open next week in order to control the spread of the H1N1 flu virus.

Under these circumstances students must not attend school until an announcement is made that PSI can re-open. This is likely to be a minimum of at least one week. The school will actively monitor the situation to establish when, and under what circumstances, this can happen.

The school administration regrets the inconvenience this causes to families on return from vacation. Measures will be taken to ensure that communication with parents and students continues during the coming days. Teachers will make preparations to minimise disruption to our students' learning through various measures which will include online instruction. Details of this will be forthcoming shortly from the school.

We will, of course, keep families informed through email contact and our website.

Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Steven Calland-Scoble
Director