



Classes suspended after student tests positive

FRESH CASES: Four students from St Thomas, three from Springdales infected by virus

Ritika Chopra/Rhythm Kaul
ritika.chopra@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: In a bid to quell fear among parents, The Shri Ram School (TSRS), Aravalli, (Gurgaon) on Wednesday took a call to suspend all classes for the next two days.

This decision makes the Aravalli branch the first swine flu affected educational institution in the National Capital Region (NCR) to close down because of H1N1 infection.

With Saturday and Sunday being regular weekly holidays, the school — which has two students infected with the virus — will only reopen on Monday.

Though the school did not report any new cases on Wednesday, the total count of affected students in the Capital

rose to 21 with four more students from St. Thomas School and three more from Springdales, Pusa Road testing positive for the influenza.

However, these along with St. Columbus School, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya and Sachdeva Public School, Pitampura, have steered clear of closing on the advice of state health department.

"We sensed a growing fear among parents and we have chosen to respond to that anxiety. We have taken our precautionary stance to another level and decided to close the school for the two days during which the premises will be sanitised thoroughly," said Mark Parkinson, director, The Shri Ram School.

While the school remains closed, the authorities have

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MARK PARKINSON
director, The Shri Ram School

urged parents to not visit "malls, restaurants and other public places and gatherings as a precautionary measure."

"We expect the parents to fulfil their part of the deal as well. They need to realise that the infection can be contracted from anywhere. So if the child brings back the infection from somewhere else then that



• Sardar Patel Vidyalaya was one of the first schools in the capital to report a swine flu case.
RAJ K. RAJ / HT PHOTO

defeats our effort of sanitising the school thoroughly," added Parkinson.

Parents are happy with the step taken.

"It is good that the school

authorities have declared holidays as I had thought of not sending my children for next couple of days," said Shalini Wig Wadhawa who has two children studying in The Shri Ram

School, Aravalli. Parents of children in other affected schools, however, are an anxious lot. Many have been making frantic calls to doctors, who are attributing this behaviour to lack of awareness.

"The kind of questions they ask, I feel more awareness needs to be created. I want to assure people that swine flu is like any other flu and isn't life-threatening for anyone apart from those who are immunocompromised," said Dr Rahul Nagpal, HoD paediatrics, Max Saket.