



Dear Parents/Carers

This letter is the latest information statement Public Schools NSW have received in relation to the Novel Coronavirus.

The NSW Ministry of Health and NSW Department of Education have recommended that any student who was travelling in China (including Hong Kong) over the past 14 days should not return to school or child care services this week, as the coronavirus' incubation period can be as long as two weeks.

Students who returned to Australia more than 14 days ago and have shown no symptoms are able to return to school this week.

There has been a small number of cases of confirmed Novel Coronavirus in New South Wales. In accordance with national public health guidelines, exclusions only apply for those who are a:

- Confirmed case of Novel Coronavirus – exclude until medically cleared
- Close contact of a confirmed case of Novel Coronavirus – exclude for 14 days since last contact with the confirmed case

Close contact is defined as living in the same household, 15 minutes face-to-face contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus in any setting, or sharing a closed space with a person with confirmed coronavirus for more than 2 hours.

The Ministry of Health has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia. Advice about not attending school would be provided to these close contacts by the Ministry of Health.

Consistent with current guidelines, staff and students who are unwell with respiratory illness should remain at home until symptoms resolve. In accordance with our current practice if any child becomes unwell we will implement our infection control guidelines and follow the advice provided by the Ministry of Health as appropriate.

Thank you for enquiring about this issue. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and take advice received from NSW Ministry of Health and NSW Department of Education to ensure we are responding to the situation appropriately.

Yours sincerely

B Hugo
Principal
29 January 2020



Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health and Medical Research

Sarah Mitchell
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 28 January 2020

UPDATED ADVICE AHEAD OF SCHOOL RETURNING

The NSW Government has today requested that children who have visited China in the last two weeks not attend school or childcare services until 14 days have lapsed from their date of departure from China.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard and Education Minister Sarah Mitchell said although the risk to children is very low, the NSW Government has taken this step as a precautionary measure.

"I've been advised that it's not medically necessary, but the NSW Government has acted in line with community expectations to ensure the safest possible environment for our students," Mr Hazzard said.

"The internationally recognised incubation period for the coronavirus is 14 days, so this is the logical timeframe to ask students to refrain from attending school. After this time, there is no risk.

"Advice about not attending school has already been provided to any close contacts of confirmed cases."

The Commonwealth Department of Health has confirmed that all passengers disembarking from planes from China are being given comprehensive information about coronavirus in both English and Mandarin.

NSW Health has been contacting passengers who were on the same planes as confirmed cases to provide appropriate advice and has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia.

Ms Mitchell said the Department of Education has issued guidance to schools and childcare services across NSW on protocols in the event of a child becoming sick.

"Although the risk remains very low for children, we believe it is the right thing to do to take this extra step and will continue to update the community with advice," Ms Mitchell said.

There are currently four confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in NSW. All cases had travelled to Wuhan, China or had contact with a confirmed case in China.

Parents with concerns can contact their local Public Health Unit on **1300 066 055** for advice or visit the dedicated NSW Health information page at:
www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx

Anyone who develops a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of travel to Hubei or contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus, should immediately isolate themselves from other people, contact their GP or local emergency department or call the healthdirect helpline **1800 022 222**.