

Coronavirus

Dear parents,

The following advice from the NSWDET is provided for your information,

Doug Meaney

Principal

Jan 29, 2020

With students returning to school next week, parents of children who have had contact with a confirmed case of novel Coronavirus are being urged to keep their children at home and monitor for symptoms.

NSW Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerry Chant explained that any child who has been in contact with a person confirmed as having novel coronavirus must not attend school or childcare for 14 days after the last contact with the infected person.

“14 days represents the internationally recognised incubation period for the disease,” Dr Chant said.

“After this time the child is considered not to be at risk of infection.”

Students who have travelled to Wuhan and Hubei during the school holidays can return to school but should be carefully monitored for symptoms of coronavirus infection.

“The most common symptom is a fever,” Dr Chant said.

“Other symptoms include, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath.”

Anyone who exhibits these symptoms should be isolated immediately from other people and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If you develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of travel to Hubei or contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus, you should immediately isolate yourself from other people. Contact your GP or your emergency department or call the healthdirect helpline 1800 022 222 and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard explained that NSW 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,” he 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 <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

NSW Department of Education has issued guidance to all NSW Schools, which included information to guide school staff in the event of a child becoming sick.

Coronavirus – Response to Parent Enquiries – Schools

Dear parents,

The NSWDET has sent the following draft for schools to respond to parent enquiries about the coronavirus. I have produced the draft response for ALL parents to avoid the need for any of you to send emails. Should you have any further concerns please contact me,

Yours faithfully
Doug Meaney
28 January 2020

Thank you for your email/enquiry.

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.

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