

Updated information about COVID-19 (formerly referred to as Novel Coronavirus) for schools to consider using when communicating with parents & caregivers

Dear parent or caregiver,

The NSW Department of Education is working closely with the NSW Ministry of Health in response to the unfolding international COVID-19 (formerly referred to as Novel Coronavirus) situation.

Further travel restriction

Effective 1 March 2020 the Federal Government has issued a travel ban on foreigners coming to Australia from Iran. Only Australian citizens and permanent residents coming from Iran will be allowed entry to Australia, and from 1 March they are required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days after departing Iran consistent with the restrictions for those entering from China. Additionally, Australians have been advised NOT to travel to Iran.

Updated advice from the NSW Government for parents and affected staff regarding COVID -19 is:

- Any student or staff member who has been in, or transited through, mainland China (not just Hubei province) or has been in Iran is excluded from work, school or child care services for 14 days from the date they left mainland China or Iran (as the COVID-19 incubation period can be as long as two weeks).
- Any confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded until they are medically cleared to return.
- Close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded for 14 days since last contact with the confirmed case.
- Students and staff who have returned to Australia from mainland China or Iran more than 14 days ago and have shown no symptoms are able to return to school.

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

Consistent with current guidelines, students who are unwell with respiratory illness should remain at home until symptoms resolve. In accordance with the NSW Department of Education's current practice, if any student becomes unwell, the school will implement infection control guidelines and follow the advice provided by the NSW Ministry of Health as appropriate.

Maintaining good hygiene standards is an important way to reduce the risk of acquiring and spreading respiratory infections. Parents and caregivers are asked to promote good hygiene, including handwashing with soap as [handwashing](#) is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of germs that cause respiratory disease.

The NSW Ministry of Health has [advice and resources about COVID-19 in English](#) and [Chinese](#).

The NSW Department of Education will continue monitoring the COVID-19 situation and provide parents and caregivers with updated information about the virus.