

Update on the coronavirus outbreak

Dear Families

You will be aware of the emerging outbreak of novel coronavirus. Cases have been reported predominantly in the city of Wuhan, in the Hubei province of China, as well as in other Chinese cities and in other countries, including at least one confirmed case at the time of writing in Victoria, Australia.

The Australian Government has advised that there is no cause for alarm with respect to the coronavirus and that the risk to the Australian public remains relatively low.

The Department of Education and Training has consulted with Victoria's Chief Health Officer and Department of Health and Human Services to provide the following advice to schools and local communities:

We would like to remind all of our families that everyone can protect against infections by practising good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with a tissue, or cough into your elbow, dispose of the tissue into a bin and then wash your hands afterwards. Wash your hands regularly, after using the toilet, and before eating.

Exclusion of well children from school who have travelled to Wuhan, China, or any other areas where there have been reported cases is **NOT** required, unless the following applies:

- the child is a confirmed case of novel coronavirus; or
- the child is a close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the past 14 days.

If you think you or your child may meet one of the above criteria, please contact the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss further actions via phone: 1300 651 160.

For parents or children who experience flu-like symptoms **AND** have recently travelled to Wuhan City, Hubei province, or had close contact with a confirmed case:

- seek medical advice for any children in your care who experience fever and respiratory symptoms (including but not limited to cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, body aches or fatigue) **AND** have recently travelled to Wuhan City or had close contact with a confirmed case in the 14 days before of the onset of illness. Call ahead to notify the medical practitioner of recent travel; and
- contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160. Teachers will need to also inform the Department of Education and Training by making an IRIS incident alert. The Department of Education and Training will ensure appropriate support is provided.

The Department of Health and Human Services has developed a factsheet for schools and their families, see attached.

Warm regards

James Whitla