

Wednesday 29th January, 2020

Updated Advice: Coronavirus

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We have received the following advice from Brad Hazzard, Minister for Health and Medical Research, and Sarah Mitchell, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning;

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**.

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