

### TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

#### **1. What is the advice for those travellers who arrive from or who have transited through mainland China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea)?**

Based on the Federal Government advice any student or staff member who has left, or transited through mainland China since 1 February, Iran since 1 March or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) since 5 March, is excluded from child care services, school or work for 14 days from the date they left mainland China, Iran or the Republic of Korea (South Korea). These students or staff members are also required to self-isolate from the community for a period of 14 days, as the COVID-19 incubation period can be as long as two weeks.

#### **2. Does this relate to employees who visited China, Iran the Republic of Korea in the last 2 weeks?**

Yes. Employees who have visited or transited through mainland China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) should also refrain from attending school for 14 days after their departure from China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). Affected employees are asked to contact their line manager or principal via phone/email, to advise of their departure date from China, Iran and The Republic of Korea and indicate the number of days they will be absent from school based on their departure date.

#### **3. Is Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Thailand, Singapore or any other country included?**

Those travelling from countries other than China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) are able to remain at school and attend work but should monitor for symptoms. If symptoms develop they should self-isolate immediately and seek medical assessment from their local health practitioner.

#### **4. Is the Federal Government allowing year 11 & 12 students, who due to their visa status were banned from entering Australia, to return to school under the new exemption announced by the Federal Government on 22 February 2020?**

Yes. The Department has been working closely with the Australian Government and NSW Ministry of Health to put in place strict measures to assure the health and safety of our students, staff and school communities. We have been establishing a clear process for NSW schools to manage the return of students in Years 11 and 12 from mainland China and further information will be provided shortly.

The Australian Government has advised that the relaxation on travel exemptions for Year 11 and 12 students will not pose a risk to the community. These students will be isolated for 14 days after they enter Australia before they will be allowed to attend school.

#### **5. Can Year 11 & 12 students currently in China make travel bookings to return to Australia?**

Only students enrolled at NSW schools and granted approval to travel from the Australian Border Force Commissioner will be allowed entry to Australia. This approval will be on a case by case basis and must be granted prior to a student making arrangements to undertake travel to Australia.

#### **6. Does this apply to staff and students who return from China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in the coming weeks?**

Yes, refer to question 1. This will remain in place until formal advice is provided to staff and schools that the arrangement is to cease.

#### **7. How should we advise students who are known to have travelled to China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in the last 14 days, arriving at school without an understanding of these changes?**

Schools are asked to contact the families of any students who arrive at school, who have travelled to China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) within the last 14 days, to ensure that they are aware of this advice.

Any students who has left, or transited through mainland China since 1 February, Iran since 1 March or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) since 5 March, is excluded from child care services, school or work for 14 days accordance with the advice from the Australian Government Chief Medical Officer. Refer to question 1.

The following information may assist you with your conversation with the family:

- You will have seen the news of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the news or radio. While this news can be upsetting for many people it is important that we work together to support those who have been in the impacted areas and take steps to minimise the spread of the virus to protect our community
- You must come and collect your child/children and they should not return to school until XXXXX date
- I will arrange for some learning materials to be sent home and will ask your child's teacher (using the word School Counsellor may not be helpful for them) to connect them to our student wellbeing program if you think that would be of benefit. (If they ask for counselling then offer that for them).

Translated parent information in Persian, Mandarin and Korean will be made available to schools.

#### **8. How does this advice apply to students in Before and After School Care if they are deemed to be a close contact?**

Students who have been in or transited through China, Iran from 1 March 2020 or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 5 March 2020 in the last 14 days must not attend Before and After School Care.

#### **9. Do students require a medical certificate to return to school?**

Where staff or students remain without symptoms during the 14 days self-isolation period after returning from China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea), they do not require a medical certificate to return to school after the 14 days. Schools should request a short note from parents/carers to explain the absence from school in the usual way.

If a staff member or student has become unwell within 14 days of returning from China, Iran and the Republic of Korea (South Korea), or if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 they will need a medical certificate confirming they are able to return to work or school.

#### **10. Are any students currently required to be excluded from school due to travel restrictions?**

Yes, the students currently excluded from school are those who:

- have been in or transited through China within the last 14 days
- have been in or transited through Iran within the last 14 days commencing 1 March 2020
- have been in or transited through the Republic of Korea (South Korea) commencing 5 March 2020
- are under medical assessment or
- have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 or
- have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection.

# SCHOOL OPERATIONS

## 1. How do the current travel restrictions affect DE International?

DE International is working with schools, homestay providers, families and carers of International students, the Department of Home Affairs and study tour operators to implement this advice. Any issues or concerns about the welfare of students on the international student program should be referred to DE International.

## 2. How does the current travel restrictions affect students in boarding schools?

For those students in boarding schools the Department asks that Principals work with their families to support the advice. If there are any issues please contact your Director, Educational Leadership.

If a boarding student has been in or transited through China within the last 14 days or has returned from Iran from 1 March 2020 or has returned from the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 5 March 2020 appropriate steps must be taken to isolate the student while at the school. The parents should be contacted and reasonable attempts made for the student to be accommodated in an alternative location where possible. If it is not possible the student will need to remain isolated until the 14 days period has expired.

If a student develops a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath while at school they should be immediately isolated from other people. Infection Control guidelines should be followed. If available, give a mask to the student or staff member.

The parent or carer should be contacted and arrangements made for the student to receive medical assessment for the local GP or an emergency department as soon as possible. You will need to phone ahead so that ideally they can speak to the doctor and the practice can make appropriate preparations to protect others. The doctor can assess the situation and may recommend the person attend a nearby emergency department. If so, call ahead before attending the emergency department.

The school should report any suspected cases to the Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 and contact the local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 to provide details so that the Public Health Unit can follow up as necessary.

These arrangements are the same for any staff member.

## 3. Assisted School Travel Program

The Assisted School Travel Program unit is working to identify and support students in accordance with this advice.

## 4. Will this affect upcoming overseas excursions?

With the current COVID-19 situation, the safety of our students and staff is paramount and it is for this reason that all overseas excursions are required to be now placed on hold until further notice. If you have an excursion planned for later in the term you will need to make the necessary arrangement to cancel the excursion or consider rescheduling until later in the year. Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you have any questions or wish to have your travel plans considered please speak with your Director, Educational Leadership who will determine if it should be referred for further consideration.

## 5. Should schools continue with their plans for normal school activities and domestic school excursions?

Yes. Schools should continue to engage in formal planned school activities. As principal please work with your communities to address any concerns they may have in regards to planned school activities during this

time. There has been no advice that schools should cancel or discontinue with excursions or overnight camps, however there may be occasions when you make the decision that activities will be postponed or modified.

#### **6. How does this advice apply to students in Before and After School Care?**

Students who have been in or transited through China, Iran from 1 March 2020 or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 5 March 2020 in the last 14 days must not attend Before and After School Care.

#### **7. Are schools able to continue planned visits or school excursions to aged care facilities?**

Based on advice from NSW Ministry of Health we advise from 5 March 2020, schools should not visit aged care facilities until further notice to minimise the spread of respiratory infections, such as influenza and other respiratory viruses.

This does not apply to School Based Traineeships in aged care facilities. These can continue as normal.

#### **8. What if NSW Health advise that a student is considered a close contact?**

Any student who is considered a close contact by NSW Health will be advised to self-isolate for period of 14 days and means they should not be in before or after school care and should be at home self-isolating

#### **9. What do I do if a staff member or student presents with flu-like symptoms?**

If it is a staff member, you are to request that they leave school immediately to seek appropriate medical advice from their treating health practitioner. They are to remain away from the workplace until they have recovered from their illness.

If it is a student they are to be taken to the sick bay with appropriate staff supervision and where possible have staff maintain a distance of 1.5m. Contact parents to come and collect the student and seek medical advice from their treating health practitioner.

#### **10. Do I need to advise my students who attend Saturday School of Community Languages if there is any disruption to those programs or to make alternative arrangements?**

All notifications in relation to Saturday School of Community Languages is the responsibility of the Principal, Saturday School of Community Languages.

#### **11. If my school is non-operational for a short period of time due to a confirmed case do I need to advise or cancel external providers or community groups from utilising the school premises after hours?**

Yes, if the school is non-operational. It will be important for you to advise those groups until the school becomes operational.

#### **12. Are staff required to wear face masks?**

No staff should be wearing face masks inside schools or workplaces. According to NSW Health the only people required to wear masks are those with flu like symptoms. If you have flu-like symptoms or are not well you should not be at work.

#### **13. What do I do if I am unable to obtain hand-sanitiser?**

Where schools are able to provide hand sanitiser please do so but where there is a shortage of supplies and hand-sanitiser is not available hands should be washed with soap and water. Schools should be educating and promoting the importance of good hygiene practices.

# STUDENT ABSENCE

## **1. How is the school to record the absence of students who remain at home in accordance with the Department's request?**

Students who are absent due to this advice should be marked using the F code. The F code will not negatively affect attendance records.

If a student is diagnosed with COVID-19 the code to be used in this instance is M for the period they are absent due to the virus.

# COMMUNITY CONCERNS

## **1. What steps should schools take to ensure parents are aware of these arrangements?**

Schools must take all reasonable steps to advise parents of new requirements where appropriate. Parents can access information from NSW Health and the Department's website. If you have any concerns please contact your Director, Educational Leadership for advice and support.

## **2. How should we advise parents who wish to keep their children at home due to fear of contracting COVID -19?**

In line with the medical advice there is no reason why those who have not travelled should not be at school. The expectation is where students have not returned from travel to China, Iran or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) that students will attend school as usual.

## **3. What if a parent refuses to comply with the request and send their child/children to school?**

If a student who has been in China within the last 14 days or has returned from Iran from 1 March 2020 or has returned from the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 5 March 2020 attends school, appropriate steps must be taken to isolate the student while at the school. The parents should be contacted and asked to come and collect the student immediately.

The following information may assist you with your conversation with the family:

- You will have seen the news of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID -19) on the news or radio. While this news can be upsetting for many people it is important that we work together to support those who have been in the impacted areas and take steps to minimise the spread of the virus to protect our community
- You must come and collect your child/children and they should not return to school until XXXXX date
- I will arrange for some learning materials to be sent home and will ask your child's teacher (using the word School Counsellor may not be helpful for them) to connect them to our student wellbeing program if you think that would be of benefit. (If they ask for counselling then offer that for them).

# REPORTING SUSPECT OR CONFIRMED CASES

- 1. All suspected and confirmed cases should be reported to the department's Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523.**
- 2. What is the difference between a close or casual contact?**

A person will be advised by NSW Health if they are a close or casual contact. Staff should not be making those determinations for themselves.

- A close contact is someone who has been face to face for at least 15 minutes, or been in the same closed space for at least 2 hours, as someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 when that person was infectious.
- A casual contact is someone who has been face to face for less than 15 minutes, or been in the same closed space for less than 2 hours, as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 when that person was infectious.

Staff should speak to their line managers if they have queries or concerns and line managers are able to seek advice and clarification on this by contacting the Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523.

## RESPONDING TO A CONFIRMED CASE

- 1. What support will be provided to students unable to attend school?**

Contact should be made with students to check on their welfare while they are unable to attend school. If a student is distressed the issue should be referred to the School's Wellbeing team who can arrange for appropriate support to be provided.

- 2. Will the School need to provide educational material to students unable to attend school?**

Yes. Schools should provide learning materials to students who unable to attend school due to self-isolation. If students are unwell there is no expectation that they should complete school work.

- 3. Will the school be notified if there is confirmed case of the virus?**

Relevant protocols, as advised by the Ministry of Health, will be followed. The decision to inform the school and any members of the school community will be made case by case, depending on if there has been close contact with any person(s) at the school.

- 4. What are the protocols and procedures for school cleaning following a confirmed case of COVID-19?**

Schools will be thoroughly cleaned in accordance with NSW Health protocols before school resumes operation

- 5. How does this advice apply to students in Before and After School Care?**

Students who have been in or transited through China, Iran from 1 March 2020 or the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 5 March 2020 in the last 14 days must not attend Before and After School Care.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD

## 1. How does this advice apply to students attending Early Childhood centres?

This advice also applies to staff and children who attend early childhood education and care services.

Any student who is considered a close contact by NSW Health will be advised to self-isolate for period of 14 days and means they should not be in before or after school care and should be at home self-isolating

## 2. If I think there is an outbreak of COVID-19 or a respiratory illness at my Early Childhood service, who do I need to report this to?

Services are encouraged to seek advice from their local public health unit when they suspect an infectious disease outbreak is affecting their service, including outbreaks of COVID-19 or respiratory illnesses.

Report outbreaks of infectious disease to:

- Your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055
- The NSW Regulatory Authority

## 3. How do I report to the Regulatory Authority?

Notifications about coronavirus must be made by services to the Regulatory Authority via NQA ITS or by contacting the Regulatory Authority directly (Email: [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au) or Phone: 1800 619 113).

## 4. How does the COVID-19 outbreak affect the payment of childcare fees?

Under the National Law and Regulations, the Department does not have the power to intervene in operational decisions of individual services. The payment and provision of fees is a commercial decision for each early childhood education service to determine, in accordance with their policies and procedures. Should you have concerns about how your service is charging you, you should discuss this with your service in the first instance. If your concerns are unresolved, you can discuss this with NSW Fair Trading, through [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au) or 13 32 20.

## 5. What if I have a question about the Child Care Subsidy?

Please contact the Australian Government Department of Human Services

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

# WAIVERS

## 1. If my service is impacted by the current coronavirus outbreak, which National Quality Framework (NQF) requirements can I get a waiver for?

You can apply for a waiver for any NQF staffing requirements, including ratio and qualification requirements.

## 2. What is the process for getting these waivers?

Submit an application for a temporary waiver through NQA ITS and provide all relevant information. If you have problems completing the process, call the Early Childhood Education Directorate on 1800 619 113. The Department will expedite waiver applications related to the coronavirus situation and the application fee will be waived.

The Department will assess waiver applications, case by case, and by considering all individual circumstances. This includes how the service can uphold the health, safety and wellbeing of children should a waiver be granted.

**3. How will the Department waive fees for these waivers?**

On NQA ITS, the application fee must be paid to submit a waiver application. The Department will then refund the application fee.

**4. If another service is affected by the coronavirus outbreak, can I accept additional children looking for education and care?**

Yes. Please submit an application through NQA ITS to increase your service's maximum numbers to offer emergency placement to these children. The coronavirus outbreak will be considered as an exceptional circumstance in the application.