

Background

While the Department of Health advises that the risk of transmission in Australia remains low; they are monitoring the situation and we are acting on their advice to take any necessary precautions for schools and our staff.

The Department of Education, Catholic Education Western Australia, and The Association of Independent Schools of WA will continue to respond as a collaborative team to advice from the Department of Health and provide updated advice to schools and staff as appropriate.

Current position

Students

- a) Students who have been in the Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving the Hubei Province, other than for seeking individual medical care. They are not able to attend school, school events, day care centres or residential colleges.

Parents/carers should notify their school that the student will be away for the isolation period and confirm the date in which they were last in the Hubei Province of China.

Schools should record the absence as a Reasonable absence (code R) and record the date the student was last in the Hubei Province of China.

A medical certificate is not required for the student to return to school.

- b) Students who have returned from (including travelled through) mainland China (excluding the Hubei Province) or Hong Kong are being asked to stay at home until 14 days after leaving mainland China or Hong Kong.

While the risk of the virus spreading is low, this 14 day exclusion is a precaution to ensure the safest possible environment for children. After 14 days, if the student has no symptoms they may attend school.

Parents/carers should notify their school that the student will be away for the exclusion period, and confirm the date in which they were last in mainland China or Hong Kong.

Schools should record the absence as a Reasonable absence (code R) and record the date the student was last in mainland China or Hong Kong.

A medical certificate is not required for the student to return to school.

- c) If a student has been informed by Public Health authorities they are a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus, irrespective of whether they have developed symptoms, they cannot attend school, school events, day care centres or residential colleges until their local public health unit informs them that it is safe for them to do so.

Parents/carers should notify their school, and schools should record the absence as a Reasonable absence (code R). Evidence from the public health authority is required for the student to return to school.

- d) Where parents/carers are concerned and choose to keep their child at home – the principal should consider these situations on a case by case basis and record the absence appropriately.

Any student who is not attending school due to implications of the novel coronavirus will be counted at student census on 14 February.

Staff

- a) Staff who have been in the Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care.
- b) Staff who have travelled from, to or through mainland China or Hong Kong are asked to monitor their health, and be referred to the [Department of Health website](#) or the healthdirect helpline on 1800 300 243 for more information on the virus and its symptoms. These staff should attend work, unless they display symptoms.
- c) If a staff member has been informed by Public Health authorities that they are a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus, irrespective of whether they have developed symptoms, they must also be isolated in their home for 14 days following exposure, and cannot return to work until their local public health unit informs them that it is safe for them to do so.

Staff who have been in the Hubei Province or been in contact with a confirmed case (a and c above) are not required to take leave and instead may arrange to work from home during this period.

- d) Some staff may be concerned and should seek medical advice in regard to their situation and accessing leave.

Parents/carers, contractors, visitors and volunteers on school sites and at school events.

The following applies to all parents/carers, contractors, visitors and volunteers on school sites.

- a) People who have been in the Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care. They are not able to visit schools, attend school events, day care centres or residential colleges.
- b) People who have travelled from, to or through mainland China or Hong Kong are asked to monitor their health, and be referred to the [Department of Health website](#) or the healthdirect helpline on 1800 300 243 for more information on the virus and its symptoms. These people are able to visit schools, school events, day care centres and residential colleges unless they display symptoms.
- c) People who have been informed by Public Health authorities that they are a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus, irrespective of whether they have developed symptoms, they must also be isolated in their home for 14 days following exposure, and cannot attend sites until their local public health unit informs them that it is safe for them to do so.

Travel

School and work related travel to China -by staff and students is not to proceed until further notice.

Support and advice

Parents/carers, students and staff should be referred to the [Department of Health website](#) or the healthdirect helpline on 1800 300 243 for more information on the virus and its symptoms.

The WA education coronavirus support centre has been established to provide coordinated support across Department of Education, Catholic Education WA, and Association of Independent Schools of WA.

The support centre may be contacted by principals for education advice, via email on coronavirussupport@education.wa.edu.au .

Summary for staff and students

Scenario	Students	Staff
a) Person has been in the Hubei Province	<p>Must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care.</p> <p>Marked as Reasonable Absence (code R) with date last in the Hubei Province in the comments.</p>	<p>Must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care.</p> <p>May arrange to work from home and is not required to take leave.</p>
b) Person has been in (or through) mainland China or Hong Kong	<p>Is requested to not attend school for 14 days after leaving mainland China or Hong Kong.</p> <p>Marked as Reasonable Absence (code R) with date last in China or Hong Kong in the comments.</p>	<p>Staff member to attend work, but to self-monitor for symptoms and seek medical advice where required.</p>
c) Person has been informed that they are a close contact of a confirmed case	<p>Must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care.</p> <p>Marked as Reasonable Absence (code R) with date last in the Hubei Province in the comments.</p>	<p>Must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province other than for seeking individual medical care.</p> <p>May arrange to work from home and is not required to take leave.</p>
d) Person has not been in China or Hong Kong, is not identified as having been in contact with a confirmed case, and has no symptoms – however is concerned (eg pregnant teacher, teacher with a heart condition)	<p>Should seek their own medical advice.</p> <p>Marked as an absence as determined by the principal.</p>	<p>Should seek their own medical advice.</p> <p>May access leave entitlements.</p>