

Dear Families,

I feel that it is timely to update parents/carers on the school's position on managing the children's health during the increasing prevalence of the coronavirus (COVID - 19). There is a lot of speculation and advice in the media that is creating mixed or confusing messages. The school's actions are dictated by the Department of Education who, in turn, is advised by the Department of Health. This means that I can't preclude parents or children from the school because they have been overseas (particularly Bali). There are strict and clear parameters around exclusion and self-quarantine set by the state government on advice from the Health Department. Private companies may set their own rules about self-quarantining, that differ from the wider community, as is their prerogative.

As the situation regarding the COVID-19 continues to change, the Education Department has established plans and a planning team to support principals and schools. It is important that as a school community we apply common sense, factual information and a practical approach to COVID – 19.

I want to share with you a number of key points:

- a) We all need to continue to remind students of **basic hygiene guidelines** for good health.
- b) It is important for students to attend school **unless they meet the Department of Health guidelines**.
- c) We need to be aware of the Health Department current guidelines of **who cannot attend school**.
- d) **Awareness of the general symptoms of COVID- 19** are important to note.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS AGAINST COVID-19?

- Frequently washing your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand gel;
- Refraining from touching mouth and nose;
- If coughing or sneezing, covering your nose and mouth with a paper tissue or flexed elbow;
- Dispose of the tissue immediately after use and perform hand hygiene; and,
- **Avoiding close contact with anyone if you, or they, have a cold or flu-like symptoms** (maintain a distance of at least 1 metre).

WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL

Students or staff **cannot attend school** and need to self-quarantine if they have:

- a) left or transited through **mainland China** in the last 14 days, they must isolate themselves for 14 days from the date of leaving mainland China;
- b) left or transited through **Iran** on or after 1 March, they must isolate themselves for 14 days after leaving Iran;
- c) left or transited through the **Republic of Korea**, on or after 5 March, they must isolate themselves for 14 days after leaving the Republic of Korea;
- d) if returned on or after 11/3/20 from **Italy** self-quarantine for 14 days
- e) been informed by public health authorities that **they have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus**, they must isolate themselves for 14 days after the date of last contact with the confirmed case.

COVID-19 symptoms

Most people infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age: people over 40 seem to be more vulnerable than those under 40. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

People with COVID-19 may experience:

- fever;
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue; or
- shortness of breath.

For additional information please refer to this link; https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus

I trust this information is of assistance and we will provide further regular updates in the coming weeks.

Kind regards

Shane Doherty

Principal.

March 12 2020