



COVID-19 Parent Letter 3 13.03.2020

While the Department of Health advises that the risk of transmission in Western 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 current focus is on preparation in advance of COVID-19 and precautions that can be put in place to slow its transmission.

Western Australians should remain alert, but not be alarmed.

It is important that as a school community we apply a common sense, factual and practical approach to COVID-19.

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) left or transited through **Italy**, on or after 11 March, they must isolate themselves for 14 days after leaving **Italy**. People who left or transited through Italy prior to 11 March, should monitor symptoms and seek medical attention should they feel unwell; and
- 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.

Students or staff who have been tested for COVID-19 should follow the advice of the Department of Health and stay away from school whilst awaiting results.

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

Parents/carers and staff **should notify their school** or line manager if the student or staff member will be away for the isolation period and confirm the date in which they were last in mainland China, Iran, the Republic of Korea or Italy, or have been advised by the Department of Health to isolate.

A medical certificate is not required to return to school. Schools will need to record the student absence as a Reasonable absence (code R).

WHO CAN ATTEND SCHOOL

Students or staff who have travelled to or transited through other countries (excluding China, Iran, Republic of Korea and Italy) can attend school. If students or staff display symptoms (see information below) they should not attend school and seek medical advice. All returned travelers who have travelled in or transited through "higher risk" countries or a country considered to pose a "moderate risk" of transmission in the last 14 days should self-monitor for symptoms and immediately isolate themselves if they become unwell.

Higher Risk	Moderate Risk
<i>Must isolate for 14 days prior to attending</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mainland China• Iran• Republic of Korea• Italy	<i>Can attend school, but self-monitor</i> All other countries

The most up to date list can be accessed at: <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-covid-19-countries.htm>

Will my school close if there is a confirmed staff or student case?

If a WA school has to close due to a confirmed case, it will be on advice from the WA Health Department's Chief Health Officer.

The Chief Health Officer may, **if there has been a positive COVID-19 test result** in your school community, close your school temporarily while assessment and tracing of exposure is conducted. A thorough school clean will then be carried out to make the school safe for the return of students and staff.

In this situation the Department of Education, AISWA, or CEWA will work with individual school principals to provide direct advice and support regarding the closure process and communication.

The Department of Education is developing materials to support schools to maintain continuity of student learning in the event of school closures. The first priority is online resources for Year 12 ATAR courses. SIDE materials and additional support for Connect will also be available. Further information will be provided in future updates.

Important information about COVID-19 Testing from the WA Chief Health Officer, Dr. Andrew Robertson

Employers should not send their staff or students to be tested for COVID-19 to either COVID Clinics or GPs unless they are currently experiencing symptoms and meet the testing criteria.

To be eligible for testing people must:

- be currently experiencing symptoms such as fever, cough or sore throat; **AND**
- have returned from overseas travel in the last 14 days; **OR**
- be currently experiencing symptoms, and be a contact of a confirmed case; **OR**
- be currently experiencing symptoms and believe they have been in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.

There is no point testing someone if they do not have symptoms. This uses valuable resources – personal protective equipment and pathology testing supplies – that are in short supply world-wide and need to be used responsibly for those patients who meet the criteria.

Employers should not send their staff to COVID Clinics or GPs for medical clearances or certificates. We implore Western Australians to be vigilant, but not alarmed.”

Additional COVID-19 information, including FAQs is available at:

https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus

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.

As you would understand, this is a constantly evolving situation. The school will continue to send out updates to parents/carers as they come to hand. I will continue to number and date the updates, so please take note of this when reading them. I apologise in advance that you may feel inundated with the updates as they may become daily.

A snapshot of what is happening in each state is attached for your information.

Yours sincerely,
Shane Doherty
Principal