

Ref: 004/20

30 January 2020

## Memorandum

To: Diocesan Directors; Principals of RI and PJP Schools; ACSP; CCSP; Federation of RI and PJP Schools NSW/ACT

From: Danielle Cronin, Director of Education Policy

**Subject: Novel Coronavirus – Updated Advice**

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**FOR ACTION: PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS ADVICE TO YOUR STAFF AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES**

Further to yesterday's communications on the Novel Coronavirus:

Late yesterday afternoon Professor Brendan Murphy, Australian Government Chief Medical Officer, advised that while most Novel Coronavirus infections are spread by those showing signs of the disease there is now some evidence that a very small number of patients yet to show signs of the disease may also be infectious (*see attached media release*). His advice is to take a highly precautionous approach to prevent the spread of the disease.

The Australian Government Chief Medical Officer's advice is as follows:

- People who have been in contact with any confirmed Novel Coronavirus cases must be isolated in their home for 14 days following exposure;
- Returned travellers who have been in Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province, other than for seeking individual medical care.

Due to this new information we are updating our advice for staff and students who have visited Hubei Province:

- Any student or staff member who over the last 14 days has visited the province of Hubei in central China is excluded from school and should not return to school or child care services for a period of 14 days after leaving Hubei Province, as the Novel Coronavirus' incubation period can be as long as two weeks.

We appreciate the complexity that changes in advice can have in the management of your schools and thank you for your leadership at this difficult time.

The NSW Departments of Health and Education still recommends that any student or staff member who was in China, including Hong Kong over the past 14 days should not attend school or child care services for a period of 14 days after leaving China, as the coronavirus' incubation period can be as long as two weeks.

As per previous advice students and staff who returned to Australia more than 14 days ago and have shown no symptoms are able to return to school.

NSW Health has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia. Advice about not attending school would be provided to these close contacts.

Catholic Schools NSW continues to work closely with the Ministry of Health to monitor and respond to the unfolding international Novel Coronavirus situation.

In accordance with normal protocols staff and children who are unwell with respiratory illness should remain at home until symptoms resolve. Schools should continue to follow infection control guidelines.

The school should report any suspected or confirmed cases of Novel Coronavirus to their Diocesan office (Systemic Schools) or Catholic Schools NSW (RI and PJP Catholic schools) 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.

We have also updated our FAQs for your internal use (*attached*) and also included a draft message you can use with your school community. This message for your community will be translated into Mandarin and we will have that to you later today.

Should you have any questions in the meantime, please contact your Diocesan office (Systemic Schools) or Catholic Schools NSW (RI and PJP Catholic Schools).

CSNSW will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep you up to date on this matter.

**We ask that you communicate this advice to your staff and school communities as soon as practicable.**

If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact Gerard Delany from this office on 0412 151 953 or via email, [gerard.delany@csnsw.catholic.edu.au](mailto:gerard.delany@csnsw.catholic.edu.au). **As advise yesterday, there will be another teleconference for diocesan directors and/or their delegate and heads of RI and PJP schools or their delegate at 10am today. Meeting details and calendar invite was sent out separately yesterday.**

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Danielle Cronin  
**Director Education Policy**  
**Acting Chief Executive Officer**  
**Catholic Schools NSW**