

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

Information for Parents

Updated 17 March 2020



The issue of coronavirus (COVID-19) is being reported on daily by the media and you are no doubt aware of the information that is available concerning this virus.

This fact sheet does not intend to replicate advice that is provided by official channels – please refer to these websites for the latest information:

www.health.gov.au

www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers

Catholic Education SA is in close contact with government and health authorities and we will keep parents updated.

Here are some typical questions being asked by parents/caregivers:

1. What should I do if my child is unwell?

If your child is ill or displays flu like symptoms, seek medical advice and do not send your child to school.

If you receive confirmation that your child or a member of your family has coronavirus (COVID-19) please notify the school as soon as this is known. The child will need to be picked up immediately if he/she is at school.

2. Are students from families who have recently travelled overseas allowed to be at school?

All people who arrive in Australia from midnight 15 March 2020 are required to self-isolate for 14 days. For more information go to the [Smart Traveller website](#).

3. What happens if my child or another child seems to display coronavirus like symptoms while at school?

While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other illness – not coronavirus. Nevertheless, if a child becomes unwell at school, the usual school routine of care, separating that child from their classmates and calling a parent/caregiver to collect them would be followed, if it is deemed preferable for the child to go home.

4. What will happen to my child's education if he/she is to be isolated for 14 days?

If a child is unable to attend school, we will work with you to ensure that we minimise the impact on their learning.

Latest updates will be provided at:
www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/alerts

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5. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in the school?

The school will communicate with families and follow the advice from relevant authorities, like SA Health. It is likely the school would close for at least 24 hours while it is cleaned, and health authorities trace virus contact between individuals. Health authorities will declare that the school has followed all expected protocols and allow the school to reopen.

The school will keep you informed during any closure period. Parents would be advised when students are able to return.

6. What education is happening about coronavirus at school and what can I do to help relieve any anxiety for my children?

Schools are encouraged to use [materials](#) that health authorities have available. Students are reminded about general health and the importance of handwashing and refraining from touching their face.

Here are some useful tips for talking to your child, depending on their age and level of understanding about coronavirus:

- Assess what they know already. Find out what they understand so you know where to start
- Don't dismiss or minimise your child's fear — validate their concerns. It is reasonable to be concerned because most have probably never experienced anything like this before
- Make your explanation age appropriate, provide facts, and keep it positive and calm. Tell them scientists and doctors are working on treatments. Reassure them that right now the risk of getting the coronavirus is low and if contracted most people only get cold-like symptoms and then they are immune
- Give them some control over what is happening. Teach the importance of handwashing and how to do it properly, remind them of their responsibility to protect others from coughs and sneezing.
- Make it an opportunity to learn. Talk about how our bodies fight viruses. Understanding the science can alleviate fears. Get them to do their own fact-checking on what they have heard at school.
- Remind children that no-one should be ostracised or bullied because they have been associated with the virus
- Do not make it a one-time conversation. Keep checking in to see if they need reassurance or if they have any new questions

Source: [ABC Online: How to talk to your children about coronavirus](#)

Catholic Education SA has a team developing a range of strategies to support students and schools at this time. A response team has been meeting regularly to prepare for the impact that coronavirus might have on Catholic Schools. We will keep you updated. Please be assured that we have the welfare of our students and staff as our focus.

If you have particular concerns about how your child is responding to information about coronavirus, please speak to your principal.

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