

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS POLICY & PROCEDURE

This policy has been developed in accordance with advise provided through the HSE and will be updated when the advice changes

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff and relevant stakeholders.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy.

Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of Intent:

It is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls which reduce the transmission and spread of germs. We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses. There is an ongoing outbreak of a novel Coronavirus in China. Infections have been reported in other countries. This policy covers the Coronavirus and requires cooperation from parents, staff and management in its implementation.

What are Coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that can cause illnesses. Some of these illnesses are very mild, like the common cold, while others are more severe, like SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome).

Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

A “novel coronavirus” means a new type of coronavirus that has never been seen in humans before. The coronavirus recently identified in China is one of these. This new coronavirus is being named “2019–nCoV”.

Symptoms of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

It can take up to 14 days from exposure to the virus for the symptoms of this 2019-nCoV to appear.

Common signs of infection include:

- respiratory symptoms i.e. cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties,
- fever,
- in more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Treatment of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

There is no specific treatment for 2019-nCoV at present but the symptoms of the virus can be treated.

Protecting Children and Staff from novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

1. We will wash hands often with antibacterial liquid soap and water
2. When coughing or sneezing we will teach children to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue and practice this ourselves as adults. We will teach children to throw the used tissue away into a closed bin and wash their hands. We will practice this ourselves as adults. We will have tissues available but in the unlikely event we don't have tissues we will teach children to cough into their flexed bent elbow. We, as adults, will do the same.
3. We ask parents not to send children in if they have cold or flu symptoms.
4. We ask staff not to attend if they have cold and flu like symptoms

Exclusion

If the child or any member of their family;

- has not been in mainland China* in the last 14 days

AND

- has not been in contact with a person with novel coronavirus

AND

- has not attended a healthcare facility where patients with novel coronavirus are being treated in another country

Then no specific measures are needed.

If within the last 14 days

- the child or any member of the family has been in mainland China excluding Hong Kong and Macau

OR

- has been in contact with a person diagnosed with novel coronavirus

OR

- has attended a healthcare facility in another country where patients with novel coronavirus are being treated

AND

has developed symptoms suggestive of acute respiratory illness the child should

- **Stay at home**
- **Not go out to public places**
- **Not attend our setting**
- **Please phone the child's GP or emergency department for medical advice, rather than turning up in person**
- **Make sure that, when you phone, you mention your child's recent travel or exposure. These health services will arrange for them to get medical help**

If within the last 14 days

- The child or any member of the family has been in mainland China excluding Hong Kong and Macau

OR

- has been in contact with a person diagnosed with novel coronavirus

OR

- has attended a healthcare facility in another country where patients with novel coronavirus are being treated

AND

Where the child or family members are well and have no acute symptoms follow the advise below

If the child or family members have no acute respiratory symptoms

You (parent or guardian) are asked to phone your local Department of Public Health by phone for further advice.

For children who have been in mainland China* in the last 14 days and are well:

- there is no need for quarantine (the child does not need to be kept separate from others)
- The child can attend the setting as normal
- Watch out for symptoms of respiratory illness for 14 days. If the child develops any respiratory symptoms you should phone their GP or Emergency Department for advice. Tell the healthcare provider what symptoms the child has and that they have recently been in mainland China*.

For children who have been in contact with a person diagnosed with coronavirus in China or elsewhere, or attended a health care facility in another country where cases were treated

- Stay at home until parent/guardian has contacted public health and received advice.

Advice for staff/Adults working within our service

If any adult working in our service has been in mainland China (excluding Hong Kong and Macau) in the last 14 days, we advise that they make contact with their local public health department for further advice.

If they remain well, no specific measures are needed in the workplace. They will be advised by Public Health to watch out for any symptoms of novel coronavirus for 14 days from their return. The symptoms include cough, temperature and breathing difficulties.

For people with no symptoms, there is no need for them to stay off work or isolate themselves. There are no restrictions regarding work or other social activities.

If they develop symptoms within 14 days of return (fever, cough, breathing difficulties), then they should isolate themselves (stay away from other people) and contact their GP/Doctor straight away **by phone** for advice. They should inform their GP/Doctor of their recent travel history and of their symptoms.

If we have any concerns regarding the health of a child or a staff member we may request a letter from their medical advisor to confirm that they are well and do not require exclusion from the service