



# Information for schools and pre-school settings including parents of students/children on novel coronavirus (COVID-19) v2.4 26.02.2020



There is an ongoing outbreak of a novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) that started in China. Infections have been reported in several other countries. Countries where COVID-19 is circulating in the community include **China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna.**

The HSE HPSC is monitoring the situation and updating its website [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) daily.

## 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 COVID-19

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 infection caused by the new coronavirus has being named “COVID-19”.

## Symptoms of COVID-19

It can take up to 14 days from exposure to the virus for the symptoms of COVID-19 to appear. These symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

## Treatment of COVID-19

There is no specific treatment for COVID-19 at present. But the symptoms of the virus can be treated.

## How to protect yourself and your children/students from COVID-19

1. Wash hands often with soap and water. Or use an alcohol based hand rub. [Teach children how to wash their hands](#) often with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub.
2. If you are [coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue](#). Throw the used tissue away into a closed bin, and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your flexed (bent) elbow. Have tissues available. Teach your children to do the same.
3. Avoid close contact with anyone who you know has cold or flu symptoms.

Check the [travel advisories from the Department of Foreign Affairs](#) prior to arranging travel abroad.

### **Advice for students/children**

If the student/child;

- has **not** been in China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, or the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna in the last 14 days  
AND
- has not been in contact with a person with COVID-19  
AND
- has not attended a healthcare facility where patients with COVID-19 are being treated in another country

**Then no specific measures are needed.**

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### **IF WITHIN THE LAST 14 DAYS;**

- the student/child has been **in China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, or the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna.**  
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

<b>If CHILD OR STUDENT IS <u>UNWELL</u> (fever, cough, shortness of breath)</b>
If your child/student develops symptoms of fever cough or shortness of breath your student/child should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Stay at home</li><li>- Not go out to public places</li><li>- Not go to crèche or school</li><li>- <b>Please <u>phone</u> the child's GP for medical advice, rather than turning up in person</b></li></ul> Make sure that, when you phone, you mention your student's/child's recent travel or exposure. These health services will arrange for them to get medical help

**IF WITHIN THE LAST 14 DAYS;**

- the student/child has been **in China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, or the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna.**  
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

<b>IF CHILD OR STUDENT IS WELL</b>	
<p>You (parent or guardian) are asked to visit the <a href="#">HSE website</a> and phone the HSE helpline for further advice: Callsave 1850 24 1850 Phone 041 6850300</p>	
<p><b>For children or students who have been in China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, or the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna. in the last 14 days and are well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is no need for quarantine (the child or student does not need to be kept separate from others)</li> <li>- The child or student can attend crèche or school as normal</li> <li>- Watch out for symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath for 14 days. If your child or student develops any of these symptoms you should <b>phone</b> their GP/Doctor for advice. Tell the healthcare provider what symptoms your child or student has where they have travelled.</li> </ul>	<p><b>For children or students who have been in contact with a person diagnosed with coronavirus or attended a health care facility in another country where cases were treated:</b></p> <p>You should phone your <a href="#">local department of public health</a> for advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- They should stay at home until parent/guardian has received advice.</li> </ul>

## **Advice for staff, volunteers and workers in pre-schools and schools**

Please see [Information on novel coronavirus COVID-19 for people who have come to Ireland from other countries](#) for further information.

If staff, volunteers or workers have been in China, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, or the Northern Italian regions of Lombardy, Piemonte, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna in the last 14 days, they should visit the [HSE website](#) and make contact with the HSE helpline for further advice: Callsave 1850 24 1850, Phone 041 6850300

**If they remain well,** no specific measures are needed in the workplace.

They will be advised to watch out for any symptoms of COVID-19 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 at home, 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.

*Guidance for Ireland is based on guidance from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization, and has been developed by the National Public Health Outbreak Response Team.*

*An Expert Advisory Group, which includes experts in Public Health Medicine, Infectious Diseases, Infection Prevention and Control and Virology has been established which provides expert scientific advice relating to novel coronavirus, including the review of current guidance.*