

24 January 2020

Dear Parents / Caregivers

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

I am certain that all parents / caregivers will be following the news closely regarding the emergence of the Novel Coronavirus outbreak originating from Wuhun China. This is a developing issue with information being updated regularly regarding the preventative measures being put in place.

It is expected that Education New Zealand will issue a response to the illness in the coming days. In the meantime, we wish to communicate with parents the measures that Elim Christian College is putting in place to mitigate the risk to our staff and students.

International students enrolled at Elim Christian College currently residing in China as of today's date 24 January 2020, will be informed their return to New Zealand must be delayed. This delay covers initially the next two-week period and could be extended further. A decision to return will be made based on the following:

1. There is potentially greater clarification from WHO (World Health Organisation)
2. They have heard a definitive update from us as a school
3. We have confirmed the homestay is still willing to host
4. When they arrive, they must then stand down for at least one week for an incubation period while securing a medical certificate from local professionals

If domestic students and families or school staff have travelled to China during the holiday break and are only returning to New Zealand from today's date 24 January 2020 onwards, we will make the same request that they delay their return to school until week two – 10th February. A decision to return will be made upon the presentation of a medical certificate from a local doctor. We would appreciate it if all families who have travelled to Asia during the holiday period would inform us, by confidential email: Raewyn.openshaw@elim.school.nz

In the meantime, we offer the following:

MFAT have update the travel advisory and this available from:

<https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/news/novel-coronavirus-wuhan-china>

The Ministry of health provides an overview of the situation at: Ref:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Where illness is suspected, WHO advises people follow basic principles to reduce the general risk of acute respiratory infections and these are like those required for the common cold or influenza. For more information on these, please see the MoH advisory above.

In particular at this stage:

WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers but is continuing to review the situation.

WHO advises people follow the basic principles to reduce the general risk of acute respiratory infection. These are:

- *avoid close contact with people suffering acute respiratory infections*
- *wash hands frequently, especially after contact with ill people or their environment*
- *avoid close contact with sick farm animals or wild animals*
- *people with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practice cough etiquette maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, wash hands.*

As always ,any and all travellers who become sick within a month of their arrival are encouraged to seek medical advice and contact Healthline (for free) 0800 611 116 or a doctor. It is important to mention recent travel to Wuhan and any known contact with someone with severe acute respiratory illness who has been in Wuhan.

Parents can expect an regular update as we receive information and recommendations from the Ministry of Education.

At the moment some schools are sending out general information and warnings. The info from the Ministry of Health is limited at this stage. We have not yet had any emergency service instructions but expect these shortly.

All families are to be reminded concerning the importance of general hygiene – especially washing hands with soap for 20 seconds, especially around meal-times, covering noses when sneezing (use disposable tissues and dispose of them appropriately). In any instance of cold, flu or raised temperature see a doctor or appropriate medical professional for review.

This is particularly important if you have recently travelled overseas anywhere or have been in contact with people recently in China. **Any children running a temperature should not attend school.**

Yours sincerely



Murray Burton MNZM
Principal