

14 March 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) CEWA EDUCATION POSITION Update 14 March 2020

Dear Parents

I am very aware that there is concern amongst our school community at the moment regarding the **COVID-19 Virus** and the health of students. Please let me reassure you that the safety and wellbeing of every one of our students, staff and parents at Infant Jesus School is our highest priority. I need to emphasize to the community, the information and directives sent to me, as the principal of Infant Jesus School, are disseminated to the staff and parents immediately. I will continue to do this as required.

The Leadership Team have been proactive in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus at our school and have been extremely vigilant on all levels. As communicated previously, we are working closely with CEWA support staff and following the advice of the Department of Health in dealing with risks posed by COVID-19. Infant Jesus School is taking all reasonable measures to prevent the spread of the virus at school.

It is important to acknowledge that it can be normal to feel worried or anxious about this situation, parents and children alike. If your children are worried about this virus, you can help them by providing reassurance and perspective – it is unlikely that they will get sick, but if they do, they will go to the doctor. Most children have mild symptoms and feel well again soon.

Also, remember to speak to your children about increased handwashing, covering their mouth when coughing, sneezing into their elbow and general good hygiene practices will help them feel empowered in this time. We have been reminding the students about good hygiene practices at school assemblies and in the classrooms. Additionally, we have placed posters in the toilets to remind students to wash their hands and we will continue to do this daily, particularly before they eat.

Please keep in mind that as leaders of our school communities, we have an important part to play in promoting good hygiene and public health messages, with our students and families, that will help contain the spread of this virus and protect those in the community who are at the greatest risk. The Infant Jesus School Cleaners do an outstanding job at keeping our school clean. They take pride in the work they do. With the current focus on hygiene they are being extra vigilant ensuring the classrooms (desks, tables, doors etc) /toilets etc. are cleaned thoroughly.

Further to the above, the Infant Jesus School staff have also been pro-active and have been wiping down student desks and chairs regularly.

As mentioned in previous conversations, if you're planning to travel overseas, please see me, or a member of the Infant Jesus School Leadership Team, to discuss your obligations as parents within our community. I would take this opportunity to sincerely thank the parents who have already made contact with me or one of the Assistant Principals. If parents choose to proceed with travelling overseas, they will be required to follow through with what has been communicated previously.



At this stage there has been no directive from our Executive Director regarding 'school closures'. However, if this does become the situation you will all be advised immediately. In preparation for this directive, an *Infant Jesus School COVID-19 Virus Response Team* has been formed and they are currently in the process of devising a Response Plan, if we're advised of a confirmed COVID-19 Virus case at Infant Jesus School, or, if I am advised to close the school.

The plan will also include preparation of educational material to be disseminated to all students during their time away from school. I believe our school is well set up to enable this to happen. The Response Plan will be disseminated to all parents if required.

As a Catholic community, we can extend our prayers for all of those impacted in Australia and abroad and show care and support for all members of our community. Much like the flu that affects many people each year, it is not out of the question that people we know may be ill with symptoms caused by COVID-19, and if so, it is important that we offer them our support, while we follow advice from health authorities.

Speaking with students about COVID-19.

It is important to ensure we provide factual information without fuelling further anxiety. Here are some points to keep in mind when responding to children and young people.

Help children and young people to think critically about the information they are hearing and seeing and reassure.

Build news and media literacy to separate fact from fiction. Put in perspective and provide reassurance – it is unlikely that they will get sick and if they do they will go to the Doctor. Most children have mild symptoms and are well again. Doctors are working on finding a solution.

Remain calm.

Remember that children and young people pick on both your verbal and non-verbal cues. They take on board how you are reacting to the situation. As adults manage your own fears and anxiety to give children a sense of safety

Make yourself available to listen and answer questions.

It is often most helpful when asked a question about the virus and what may happen to start with finding out what the child or young person already knows. Listen to their concerns and acknowledge the feelings they are expressing.

Be developmentally appropriate.

Don't volunteer too much information, as this may be overwhelming. Instead, try to answer the child or young person's questions. Do your best to answer honestly and clearly. It's okay if you can't answer everything; being available is what matters.

Empower children and young people with what they can do

Hygiene strategies such as increasing hand washing, using sanitizer if soap and water aren't available, catching their coughs by covering their mouth, etc.

Avoid language that might blame others and lead to stigma

Remember that viruses can make anyone sick, regardless of a person's race or ethnicity. Avoid making assumptions about who might have COVID-19.

If you would like to talk to your children about the virus, here are some useful resources:

How to talk to your kids about coronavirus

<https://www.nbcnews.com/better/lifestyle/how-talk-your-kids-about-coronavirus-ease-their-fears-ncna1129851>

This is a comic for children explaining the coronavirus

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>

A 4-minute animated clip for children on coronavirus

<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

For the latest information on the virus, preventative measures, or what to do if you or your child become sick, please visit:

https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus

For information on who should or shouldn't attend school, please refer to:

<https://www.cewa.edu.au/novel-coronavirus-update/>

In conclusion, I reiterate what I have stated previously. We, including all staff, are taking this situation very seriously and are doing everything possible to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students, staff and parents in our community. Thank you for your support during this very difficult and challenging time.

Regards



Paul Hille
Principal
Infant Jesus School

It's very important to remember that this kind of virus can affect

ANYBODY

It doesn't matter where you come from or what country your parents are from.



AND DON'T FORGET!

There are a LOT of helpers out there who are working to protect you. It is NOT your job to worry.



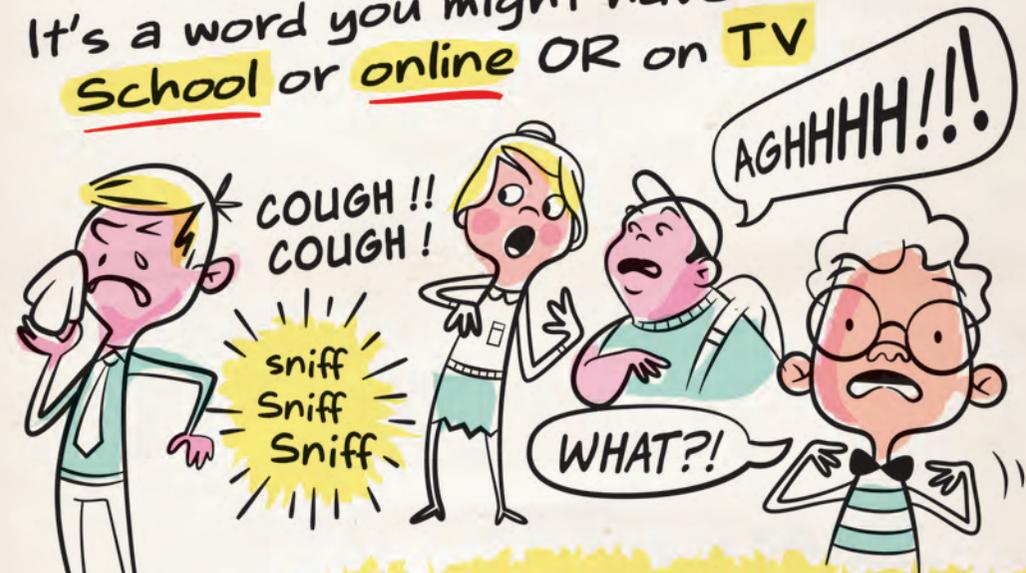
But seriously though...

PLEASE wash your hands!

ALL ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

INSPIRED BY MALAKA GHARIB/NPR

It's a word you might have heard at School or online OR on TV



CORONAVIRUS!

Just because someone coughs or sneezes, it doesn't mean they have Coronavirus



Hey wait a minute ... What is that?

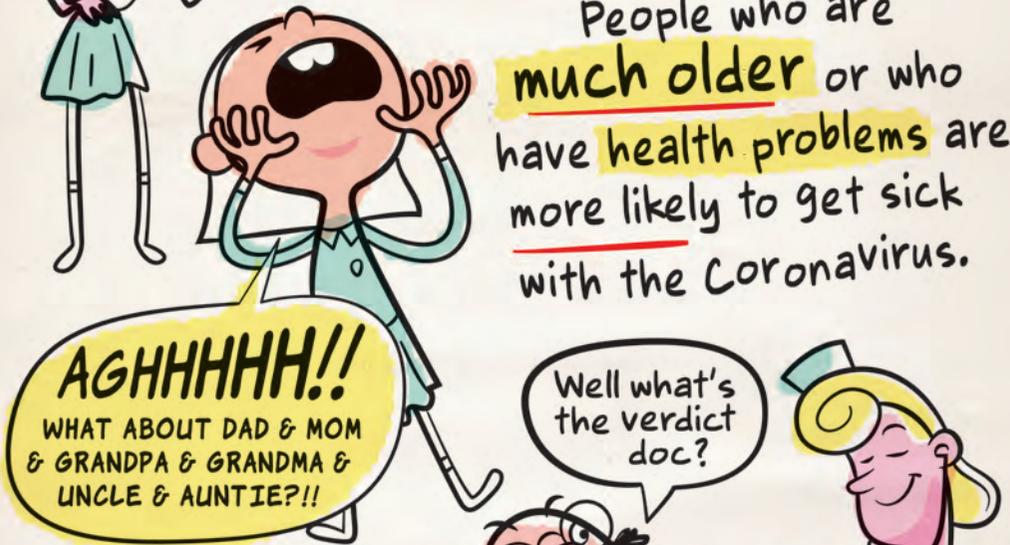


Most people who have caught the coronavirus have had a **mild** case. **AND...**

There aren't a lot of cases in **kids**. If kids do get the virus, it tends to be **very mild**.



People who are **much older** or who have **health problems** are **more likely** to get sick with the coronavirus.



If anyone gets sick and feels like they might have coronavirus, they can **immediately** call their **doctor** & get help.

There are **SOME** things **you can do** to protect yourself, family and friends from getting sick.

1 WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN

- * USE SOAP AND WATER.
- * WASH FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS. IF IT HELPS SING THE **ABC'S** WHILE YOU DO IT - THAT'S ABOUT 20 SECONDS.
- * WASH AFTER USING THE BATHROOM OR BEING IN PUBLIC SPACES (LIKE THE **BUS** OR **PLAYGROUND**.)



2 SNEEZE INTO YOUR ELBOW

- * CORONAVIRUS SPREADS THROUGH **LITTLE DROPLETS**.
- * IF YOU SNEEZE INTO YOUR ELBOW, YOU CAN PREVENT DROPLETS FROM GOING INTO THE AIR AND INTO YOUR **HANDS**.



3 AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE

- * **DON'T TOUCH YOUR NOSE, DON'T TOUCH YOUR MOUTH, DON'T RUB YOUR EYES.**
- * THESE ARE THE PLACES WHERE **THE VIRUS** CAN ENTER OUR BODIES.

