

KINGSGROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

3-6 Campus, Kingsgrove Road
KINGSGROVE NSW 2208
Phone: 9150 9097

www.kingsgrove-p.schools.nsw.gov.au

K-2 Campus, Caroline Street
KINGSGROVE NSW 2208
Phone: 9150 9254

Email: kingsgrove-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au



16 March 2020

UPDATED INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS ABOUT COVID-19 FORMERLY REFERRED TO AS NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (NOVEL CORONAVIRUS) 15 MARCH 2020

Dear parents and carers

As you are aware the World Health Organisation has declared COVID-19 a pandemic. The situation in regard to COVID-19 continues to evolve with an increasing number of countries having sustained community transmission. In Australia the majority of COVID-19 cases are returning travellers or close contacts of cases, but there is evidence of limited community transmission in some states including NSW.

Efforts are now focused on considered actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community and protect those who are likely to experience more severe disease such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions. These steps are also essential to reduce the demands on the health system so that it can function effectively.

The department has been planning and operating in accordance with its pandemic plan to support the safety and wellbeing of staff and students.

This is part of the government-wide strategy to 'flatten the curve' of confirmed cases so that our health services can meet the needs of those who require care when they need it.

The situation is evolving quickly and the Department of Education will continue to respond to the advice from NSW Health as they receive it.

Three actions that can be taken to help manage the spread

1. Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly.
2. Sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, disposing of the tissue straight away and then washing your hands.
3. Students to stay home if they are unwell.

Schools have a vital role to play in reinforcing these messages with students and through the community. We are now being asked to implement some proactive measures. These are sensible measures to protect our staff and communities while maintaining our essential services across early childhood, schools and further education.

NSW Education is in discussion with NSW Health throughout every day. At this point, case numbers and transmission of the virus in NSW remains low compared to other countries. Our strategy to date is working.

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Operational Guidelines For All Staff And Schools

Stay home if you are sick

The health and safety of our students and staff is paramount. If students are unwell with respiratory illness, they should remain at home until symptoms resolve and, where appropriate, seek advice from a medical practitioner (and call ahead first). Remember to also clean your hands thoroughly for at least 20-seconds with soap and water and cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.

Support Good Hygiene In Schools

Schools are reinforcing good hygiene throughout their school community.

Social Distancing

A phased social distancing strategy will be implemented from today, Monday 16 March 2020, to support ongoing school and corporate operations. In the first phase of its social distancing strategy, the department will take a number of practical measures to support wider NSW Health containment strategies. Support resources will come out shortly to assist schools and workplaces with implementation.

School Assemblies

From Monday 16 March 2020, schools have been asked to look at alternative ways to communicate with students and parents other than through school assemblies. Kingsgrove Public School will not be holding any school assemblies, this includes morning lines and messages and stage based assemblies. The Easter Hat Parade and our K-6 Principal Award Assembly or activity will not proceed.

School Excursions

All school excursions and incursions will be cancelled until further notice. The Stage 2 Woolworths excursion to be held on Tuesday 17 and Tuesday 24 March will not go ahead. The Kindergarten Toy incursion scheduled for 31 March 2020 has been postponed.

Activities and Events

All major Arts, Sports and Initiative activities and events will temporarily be ceased until further notice. This includes whole school sporting events and inter-school events.

- PSSA - awaiting information on whether PSSA will proceed. Parents and carers will be informed once the school has received information.
- Cross Country carnival will be postponed.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Please be advised that the upcoming Parent/Teacher interviews, scheduled for the week beginning Monday 24 March, have been cancelled.

Updated International Travel Restrictions

On 15 March, the Government put in place new measures for people arriving in Australia. Individuals must self-isolate for a period of 14 days on arrival to Australia, including returning Australian citizens and residents. You are also required to self-isolate if you have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 or if you have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection. The Australian Government now advises all Australians reconsider their needs for overseas travel at this time. Regardless of the destination, your age or health, if overseas travel is not essential, you should consider carefully whether now is the right time to travel.

Ms Fermanis
Principal