



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref: EDB(SDCT)3/PRO/10/1/1

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27 January 2020

To: Supervisors / Principals of All Schools

Dear Supervisor / Principal,

**Extension of Chinese New Year Holidays**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) issued a letter to all schools to inform that the Government has decided to raise the response level of the “Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance” to the Emergency Level. A copy of the letter issued by CHP is enclosed at the Appendix for your reference.

In view of an increase in the number of confirmed and suspected Novel Coronavirus infection cases and the increasing risk of the spread of the virus in crowded environment in a short period of time as many people travel abroad and visit relatives during the Chinese New Year holidays, the Education Bureau (EDB) announced that all schools (including kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and special schools) will extend their Chinese New Year holidays to February 16 (i.e. class resumption on February 17) to safeguard students' health. For details, please visit the following webpage.  
(<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/25/P2020012500583.htm?fontSize=1>)

The extension of the Chinese New Year holidays is a preventive measure. During the holidays, schools should implement the following administrative arrangements:

- (i) During the original scheduled school days, schools should keep their premises open. They should arrange sufficient staff to be on duty to look

after students who have to go back to school otherwise they would be unattended at home, and handle school affairs and parents' enquiries.

- (ii) To make good preparation for class resumption during this period, e.g. preparing for cleaning and disinfection items to cater for the needs of individual students. In addition, schools should thoroughly clean the premises to ensure a clean and hygienic environment, as well as strengthening health education.
- (iii) To activate the established school-based contingency plans (please refer to EDBC No. 9/2015 for details), adopt contingency measures during the extended Chinese New Year holidays and make various arrangements, including school lunch provision, bus services, examinations, tests, etc.. Schools should also cancel the scheduled activities inside and outside school and make appropriate re-arrangements. Parents and students should be informed accordingly.
- (iv) To remind parents to avoid letting their children go to crowded places. Although the original period of Chinese New Year holidays is extended, students should stick to their travel plan and return to Hong Kong as scheduled and those gone to the Mainland for holiday should come back as early as possible to reduce the risk of infection. Notwithstanding the above, in view of the incubation period of virus, school staff and students should be back to Hong Kong not later than their original Chinese New Year school holiday and stay at home as far as possible. They should keep a close watch of the health condition and consult a doctor at once if feeling unwell.
- (v) Schools can provide learning materials to students through emails, school homepages and other effective means, including online resources from Hong Kong Education City and other educational websites to facilitate students' self-learning at home.
- (vi) Since the epidemic outbreak in Wuhan and other cities on the Mainland is still developing, we have suspended and postponed students' exchange programmes on the Mainland organized by EDB. Schools should also make similar arrangements for the self-arranged exchange activities on the Mainland to safeguard students' health.
- (vii) During the extended Chinese New Year Holidays, schools should cancel all the activities inside/outside schools to reduce the risk of infection. However, if schools would continue the planned overseas visit to other countries (not to Mainland), schools should assess the risk, including the safety of the places to be visited, the number of students participated in the activities, the crowd management and arrangement to avoid crowds, and consulting parents. For updated information on the countries / areas

with reported cases of novel coronavirus infection, please visit the relevant webpages on CHP's website (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html>).

We will continue to maintain close liaison with relevant government departments including the CHP, and to inform schools of the latest information and relevant measures on infectious diseases. For enquiries, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers / Senior Services Officers.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Cynthia CHAN)  
for Secretary for Education



本署檔號 Our Ref. : (84) in DH CDB/9/12/6 Pt.2

January 25, 2020

Dear Principal / Person-in-charge,

**“Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance” Raised to Emergency Response Level**

The Centre of Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health writes to inform you that the Government has decided to raise the response level of the “Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance” to the Emergency Level, based on the assessment that the risk of health impact caused by the novel coronavirus (nCoV) on the local population is high and imminent.

In Hong Kong, the CHP has enhanced surveillance since 31 December 2019. As of 25 January 6pm, five cases of nCoV infection were confirmed. Information on the number of cases reported in countries/areas is available on the designated webpage: [https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics\\_of\\_the\\_cases\\_novel\\_coronavirus\\_infection\\_en.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf).

In view of the latest situation, schools and organisations are advised to heighten the prevention and control measures against infectious diseases. Sources of infection could come from staff, visitors or students (especially those having active symptoms). To prevent transmission of respiratory tract infections, it is of prime importance that children or staff with fever (oral temperature higher than 37.5°C, or ear temperature higher than 38°C), regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should wear a mask and consult doctors promptly if they have fever/respiratory symptoms, and inform the doctor of their travel and exposure history.

It is also important to measure and record students' body temperature properly. Please refer to Section 2.3 of the ‘Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools /Kindergartens /Kindergartens-cum-Child Care Centres /Child Care Centres’ published by the CHP for detailed



information on monitoring of body temperature, which can be accessed at:

[http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guidelines\\_on\\_prevention\\_of\\_communicable\\_diseases\\_in\\_schools\\_kindergartens\\_kindergartens\\_cum\\_child\\_care-centres\\_child\\_are\\_centres.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guidelines_on_prevention_of_communicable_diseases_in_schools_kindergartens_kindergartens_cum_child_care-centres_child_are_centres.pdf)

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, please kindly remind your students and staff to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and add water to the U-traps regularly to ensure environmental hygiene.
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative.
- Cover mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly.
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

The following health advice should be taken when travelling outside

Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province where community transmission of novel coronavirus is occurring. If it is unavoidable to travel to Hubei, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with

- symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
  - Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
  - If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
  - After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.

We would also like to remind you to reinforce temperature screening in schools, kindergartens and child care centres after school resumption. ***Schools should actively check the body temperature of all students every day when they arrive at school so as to identify students with fever. Staff should also check their temperature before work every day and staff with respiratory illnesses or fever should refrain from work. This additional measure should continue until further notice by the CHP.***

Please draw the attention of the students and staff in your school to the above. Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK Chuang)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health