



Brussels, 5th March 2020
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UPDATE 05/03/2020

Communication regarding the outbreak of COVID-19 disease

This communication should be considered as a summary of the former communications regarding the outbreak of COVID-19. So, it cancels and replaces them. We are in regular contact with the relevant services of the European Commission and we have received several updated information published by these services. This summary contains all the important and relevant information as of today and will be regularly updated in the future. New items/pieces of information will be indicated by 'NEW' above the first paragraph of the item and will be in *italics*.

We have taken various measures to better protect all members of the Schools Communities and with which you are expected to comply. As communicated before, it is only for the following areas that precautionary measures by the European schools are to be put in place. These areas, as of today, are China, Hong Kong, Macau and the lockdown area in Italy: Bertinico, Casalpusterlengo, Castelgerundo, Castiglione d'Adda, Codogno, Fombio, Maleo, San Fiorano, Somaglia, Terranova del passerine, Vò.

- (I) Any children returning from such areas, as well as children whose close family members have returned from these areas should be admitted to the European schools only 14 days after their return date and on the condition that the whole family remains asymptomatic. Further instructions for the admissions will be issued in due time.
- (II) Any member of staff working in a European school should avoid travelling to such areas and, if they do so, they should also only return to work after 14 days have passed since their return date. Again, further instructions for the admissions will be issued in due time

IMPORTANT: The same rules will apply for any area that the Italian authorities define as a red area in the future.

The Italian government has issued a decree that slightly adjusts the '**yellow**' areas, where certain restrictions apply. These include Lombardy (including Bergamo, Lodi and Cremona, where heightened surveillance applies), Veneto, and Emilia Romagna (including Piacenza, where heightened surveillance applies). The yellow areas are also now extended to the Province of Savona (in the Liguria Region), and the Province of Pesaro/Urbino (in the Marche Region). Piedmont is not in the yellow area according to this new decree.

In consequence, the corresponding paragraph regarding these '**yellow**' areas should read as follows:

- (I) Any children returning from such areas should not be admitted to the European schools, **if the child or one close member of the family has had any contact with an ill person infected with the new coronavirus COVID-19**
or
if the child or any close member of the family having travelled in those areas does not remain asymptomatic.
- (II) Any member of staff working in a European school returning from such areas, should also not return to work,
if they have had any contact with an ill person infected with the new coronavirus COVID-19,
or
if they have developed any symptoms.

The **European School Brussels 2** – Woluwe had to implement additional measures taken by the Commune of Woluwe-Saint-Lambert for schools regarding children that return from the Italian regions of Veneto and Lombardy.

The **European School Varese** had to implement additional measures taken by the Italian Authorities, namely the closure of the pedagogical activities up to March 15th.

In the event that a member of staff has been travelling to the ‘yellow’ area and **has had any contact with a sick person infected with the novel coronavirus COVID-19 or has developed any symptoms**, you are advised to get in contact with your general practitioner for advice and care. If you do not have a GP, you can contact the relevant national number for guidance on where to go:

Brussels and Belgium

The Belgian government has now published a helpline on its official coronavirus website: 0800/14689. The e-mail address for queries remains the same: info-coronavirus@health.fgov.be. Website (FR/NL/DE/EN):
<https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/>
Région de Bruxelles-Capitale : 0478 77 77 08

Luxembourg

Direction de la santé, Division de l'inspection sanitaire (24h/24) : Tel (+352) 247-85650 ou via 112

Ispra and other JRC sites

Italy: <http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/nuovocoronavirus/homeNuovoCoronavirus.jsp>

Netherlands: <https://www.honk.nu/huisartsenpost>

Germany: https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/nCoV.html

Spain: <https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/home.htm>

In case of medical emergency, call 112.

IMPORTANT: Always inform the caregiver about your recent travel history and do not go to the clinic without prior telephone contact.

Same prudent measures, as outlined above for “yellow areas” in Italy, would apply to Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Iran.

As the situation is evolving, these instructions will go on being updated, in close cooperation with the relevant services of the European Commission.

We briefly recall the standard hygiene recommendations that will reduce exposure to, and transmission of, viral respiratory illness, that we recommend to recall to the School Community:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms (fever and cough);
- Frequently clean your hands by using alcohol-based hand cleanser or soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow (not hands!) or a tissue – throw the tissue away immediately and wash your hands;
- Update your flu-vaccination: this will not protect you against the coronavirus, but may protect you from getting flu-related respiratory symptoms

A more complete information can be found on the website of WHO (World Health Organisation):

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

We finally remind, in general and more importantly in the present context, that children who develop any symptoms should visit their general practitioner and follow his/her advice and when relevant remain at home. The same is recommended to members of staff.