

## **Detailed instructions to open schools safely with health guidelines under the COVID – 19 Pandemic situation**

Children are the future of a country. If their education is not properly attended, the development of the country shall be severely affected. Therefore, while protecting children under strict health guidelines, the schools will be reopened under new normal situation.

Accordingly, except the schools in Western province and in other isolated areas, all other schools will be open on 11 January 2021.

Following instructions are issued on health guidelines in reopening schools and continue the education.

Following should be given priority during preparative action.

- Getting ready for school reopen and preparing plans and strategies thereof.
- Providing adequate washing stands and facilities for hand washing at the entrance.
- Providing continuous water facilities.
- Cleaning water drains / gullies and removing ditches in school premises to prevent the spread of Dengue.
- Cleaning toilets regularly
- Supplying adequate sanitary liquids, soap and liquid soap and entrusting the responsibility of continuous supply of such items to a teacher.
- Disinfecting the school premises and cleaning tables, chairs etc. with sanitary liquids.
- Organizing awareness programs to educate teachers and nonacademic staff as to how they should work under the COVID – 19 pandemic situations, by the Medical Health Officer / Public Health Inspector of the area.

### **Important facts to maintain a healthy school premises**

- Making it compulsory for children to wear facemasks while coming to the schools, leaving the school and supervising it to make sure all students follow the action.
- Checking the body temperature of all students and staff at the entrance of the school and allow them enter the school with normal body temperature (37 °C). If someone with increased body temperature is entering the school, send him/her to the sick room first for rest, check temperature again, and contact the MOH / PHI for further instruction.
- Making it compulsory to wash hands, disinfecting shoes at the entrance of the school for students, and supervising the process on daily basis.
- Using additional entrance and exit gates in the school to prevent students gathering at the entrance / exit points.
- Minimizing the unnecessary gathering of students during school hours and implementing a supervision system to monitor it.
- Having at least one Personnel Protection suit and a face protection cover in each school.
- If a student with COVID symptoms is found in the school, send him to the sick room for rest and contact the MOH / PHI for instruction.

- Introducing the exercises that can be done while maintaining distance. Making students aware on the consumption of healthy food and bad effects of using liquor and smoking. This helps to prevent non-communicable diseases.
- Minimizing of entering outside people into school premises during school hours. Maintaining a register with names and contact information of such people.
- Hostels should be operated under strict guidelines of the health authorities and hostels should be supervised / monitored by the principal or a deputy / assistant principal.
- If any student is sick, he / she should be sent immediately to the sick room and contact MOH / PHI as soon as possible and follow their instruction. Moreover, parents / guardians of the child should be informed as soon as possible. Such children need to be come to the schools after completely healed.
- Keeping emergency contact numbers and information in the school for contacting when necessary. Informing the school management committee, and teacher in charge of the health promotion program of the school. (Information on PHI / MOH/ Ambulance Service / Grama Niladhari / OIC of the Police station / nearest hospital/ etc. ).
- At special instance, call 1390 for information and guidance
- Disinfecting the sick room regularly.
- Schools that provide food under the school nutrition program may continue to do so under the recommendation of MoH / PHI.
- There should be a system of monitoring the food suppliers to find information on them as to there are people quarantined or sick people with cough/ cold etc.
- No food or services should be obtained from such houses. Proper monitoring system need to be implemented in this regard.

## Teaching Learning Process and Classroom Management

Main points to be attended during teaching learning process and classroom management is keeping distance, wearing facemasks and following health guidelines.

- Following action should be taken in keeping individual distance.

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|-----------------------|--|
| Less than 15 students | keeping classes every day  |
| 16 – 30 students      | Having two groups and having classes a week after week (first week and third week for one group) |
| More than 30 students | having 15 students in one group and having classes for equal days                                |

- Time tables should be arranged to have a limited number of students
- To maintain distance all classrooms in the school need to be used for teaching.
- Common spaces of the school (auditorium / main hall) should also be used for teaching learning process to accommodate more students as per health guidelines.
- All classrooms need to be arrange to have adequate ventilation.
- All education activities such as seminars / revision sessions, which will be helpful for education of the students, can be arranged as per health guidelines.
- Direct teachers to organize teaching activities keeping distance for ventilation and have lessons outside the classroom when possible.
- Having seating arrangements in the classroom so that students do not face each other.

## School Interval

- Do not provide the interval for all students at the same time. Arrange it as suitable for the school on discretion of the principal.
- Have a monitoring system to prevent students exchanging food.
- Always encourage students to bring food from their homes and provide instruction to prevent purchasing outside food.
- Keeping distance and wearing face masks during interval and prevent risky contact sports.

### **Transporting students to and from school**

- It is advisable and always safe for students to walk or ride a bicycle if they are living close to school.
- If using public transport or school transport limit the number of students using such modes of transport for only the number of available seats.
- When using public transport cleaning hands with sanitizer liquids when getting in and off the vehicle, prevent touching nose and eyes.
- Not using air conditioners in the vehicles and keeping all shutters open.
- Not removing facemasks inside not exchanging food inside vehicles.
- Sit in the relevant seat and unnecessarily not moving about inside the vehicle.

### **Opening canteens / cafeteria**

- All cafeterias / canteens should keep close until further information.

### **Organizing sports events and other co-curricular activities**

- Instruction to organize sports events and co-curricular activities will be sent in due course.

## Instruction for teachers

It is the duty of all teachers and other staff members to protect themselves from COVID – 19 virus and assisting to protect all students.

- Organizing a welcome on the first day to improve students' mental situation to face COVID – 19 challenges.
- All health guidelines for children are also valid for teachers and other staff members. They need to adhere to checking body temperature, washing hands, wearing facemasks and keeping distance.
- All teachers need to extend their active cooperation for the health promotion program implemented by the teacher in charge of health promotion program under the guidance of the Principal.
- Teachers need to implement programs to enhance mental health of students while doing educational activities.
- Allow students to remove facemasks when keeping distance and thereby giving them some relief.
- Paying more attention to children with special needs.
- Aware students on protective measure to be taken when using sanitizer liquids
- It is the responsibility of the teachers to aware parents on benefits of school education than the distant learning processes

## Instruction for students

**It is your duty to face the prevailing challenges and continue education.**

- Cleaning hands using soap and cleaning shoes when entering the school premises
- Keeping adequate distance
- Not sharing pens, books etc.
- Wearing facemasks during school hours and keeping extra ones in the school bag.
- Keeping sanitizer liquids and use when necessary.
- For those find it difficult to use facemasks for long time, using face protection shields.
- Removing and keeping facemasks safe and clean during eating food.
- When removing and wearing facemasks keeping hands clean and sanitized. Not wearing others facemasks at all.
- When touching surfaces outside the classrooms, sanitizing hands.
- Not exchanging water bottles and food.
- Not gathering inside or outside the schools.
- Going home as soon as the school is over.
- Following health guidelines when using public transport to coming school and going back home.
- Not coming to school until feeling better when feeling sick, cold or fever.
- Not touching surfaces unnecessarily inside or outside the school.

## Guidelines for parents

### **It is the responsibility of parents to assist to keep school safe and healthy.**

- Not sending children to school when sick with cough, fever or cold.
- If members of family are in quarantine, not sending children to school.
- If a member of family have been subject for PCR test or Rapid Antigen Test, not sending the children to school until receiving health instruction as per the reports.
- Not sending children living in isolated areas.
- Disinfecting school equipment of children on daily basis. (School bag / water bottle / lunch box)
- Cleaning, washing and disinfecting clothes and shoes of the child on daily basis.
- Cleaning and washing hands of the child when returning from home.
- Always provide food prepared at home for the child and instruct him / her to use personal equipment without sharing with others.
- Bring child home as soon as the school is over.
- Providing instruction for children to use public / school transport as per the health guidelines.
- If any health issues are detected / noticed in the area, informing the principal to prevent any harmful effect to the school.

## Common instruction

- Principal should arrange school as per the instruction of this guideline and keep a log entry.
- Organizing a continuous monitoring program under the guidance of the principal and the supervision of the deputy principal / teacher in charge to implement the health promotion committee actively in the school to prevent the spread of COVID – 19.
- Ensuring the proper use of funds, equipment and supplies provided by the Ministry of Education to prevent the spread of COVID 19 funds and inform parents through children the fair use of such provisions.
- Complete the checklist of ensuring the adherence to health guidelines prior to the commencement of school and send a copy with the signature of the principal to the divisional director. (Annexure one)
- Completing the daily checklists after the commencement of schools on daily basis by teachers, sent on weekly basis with the signature of the principals to the divisional director, and keeping a copy of the same in the school. (annexure two)
- Keeping a proper system to make parents aware on how to send students to school safely.
- If child has the symptoms of cough, cold, fever or if a member of the family is in quarantine or had a PCR or Rapid Antigen Test recently, inform parents to wait until receiving health instructions as per such reports before sending the child to school.
- If children need to be kept in home due to any sickness, keep a system to provide them lessons without hindering their education and encouraging the parents to keep children at home until their condition is getting better.
- Having methods to keep records of the vehicles students coming to the school.
- Organizing a system to disinfect the hand rails, lock handles etc. on regular basis.

It is the responsibility of the school Principal, school community, Divisional Education Office, Zonal Education office and Provincial Department of Education to maintain the school properly by ensuring the health of students with the continuous monitoring and keeping monitoring reports. Success of the programme should be monitored by the Divisional Education Office, Zonal Education office and Provincial Department of Education