



No. SO (EP&C) 1-8/2020  
**GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB**  
**PRIMARY & SECONDARY**  
**HEALTHCARE DEPARTMENT**

Dated Lahore the 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2020

To

1. Secretary to Government of the Punjab, School Education Department.
2. All Commissioners in the Punjab.
3. All Deputy Commissioners in the Punjab.
4. All Chief Executive District Officers District Health Authorities, Punjab.
5. All Chief Executive officers, District Education Authorities, Punjab.

Subject: **SOPs FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES TO PREVENT COVID-19 SPREAD WHILE RESUMPTION OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PROVINCE**

On the recommendations of Technical Working Group (TWG), Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) is pleased to issue following 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) for reopening of schools in the province:

**1. Basic Principle**

COVID-19 is a highly transmissible disease which spreads through respiratory droplets produced during coughing, sneezing and talking of the infected person including asymptomatic carriers. Cough and sneeze droplets may contaminate the surfaces and hands. Touching eyes, mouth and nose with contaminated hands transmits the virus.

School environment offer increased chances of surface sharing, crowding, close contact and may cause rapid transmission of droplet infections. The protection of children and staff at educational facilities is particularly important. Precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in school settings; however, care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus. It is important to remember that COVID-19 does not differentiate between ethnicities, disability status, age or gender. Education settings should continue to be welcoming, respectful, inclusive, and supportive to all. Measures taken

by schools can prevent the entry and spread of COVID-19 to the students and staff and should have system in place to identify and isolate the student or staff that may have been exposed to the virus without any discrimination, while minimizing disruption in educational activities. Thereby strict compliance to COVID-19 prevention key principles is required: -

**a. Hand Hygiene**

- (1) Students should be encouraged to practice frequent hand wash with soap and water for 40 seconds or rub with >60% alcohol-based sanitizer for 20 seconds.
- (2) Students should be educated about precautions especially after touching shared surfaces like door knobs, furniture, chair arms, tables, books, computer equipment, audio/video equipment, game tools/ devices, and other communal use items.
- (3) Students should be advised to wash hands and preferably take bath on reaching back home before engaging in any activity or mixing with family.
- (4) Maintain sufficient stock of soap and hand sanitizer at school premises and provide to staff and students where required.

**b. Respiratory Etiquettes**

- (1) Student or staff with symptoms of respiratory infections should be isolated respectfully and advised to stay at home until cured.
- (2) Wearing of face mask/covering during the lectures and gathering should be advised. Teachers should help students, especially younger children in proper use of face mask/cover. Strict face mask/ face cover compliance should be ensured where inter-person spatial distance is less than 6 feet.
- (3) Students should be educated and trained on mandatory compliance to face cover with arm fold, tissue or handkerchief while sneezing or coughing.





- (4) Face mask/cover should remain intact while talking to others especially when safe distance is not observed; removal of mask may cause spread of droplets and pose a risk for virus transmission.
- (5) Avoid touching and exchange mask/face covering.
- (6) Wash/sanitize hands if contaminated while coughing/sneezing or touching mask.
- (7) Maintain sufficient stock of masks/face cover at school and provide to staff and students if needed.

**c. Physical (Social) Distancing**

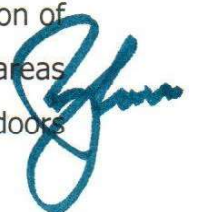
- (1) Maintain inter-person spatial distance of 6 feet throughout the school activities. Floor marking for social distancing should be preferred.
- (2) Adjust the seating arrangements in the classrooms by placing desks and chairs at recommended distances. In case, desks are fixed to floor, mark seating for each student and advise students not to change their allotted seats.
- (3) Students should be advised not to shake hands or hug other students.
- (4) Line and social distance discipline should be implemented for entry and leaving school or class rooms. Ensure 6 feet inter-student distance all the time.
- (5) Schools with large number of students should use multiple gates for entry and exit to ensure safe distancing and avoid crowd.
- (6) Such schools are advised to stagger and reschedule opening and closing hours for each class to minimize the crowding of students at one time.
- (7) Student volunteers/monitors should be assigned to perform duties at entry and exit to support line and safe distance discipline.
- (8) Morning assembly, should be avoided during the current pandemic.
- (9) Playgroup, KG, Nursery classes involving younger kids, play areas, toys, etc. should be avoided.
- (10) Ensure seating of students and staff 6 feet apart in classrooms, library rooms, staff room, laboratory and other communal use areas.



- (11) Teachers should observe safe distance while delivering lectures.
- (12) Indoor games area, swings and slides in the schools shall remain closed during the current pandemic.
- (13) School van/bus/rickshaw/transport shall strictly abide with 50% occupancy of the seating capacity. School administration shall monitor its implementation in letter and spirit.
- (14) Boarding/hostel occupancy should be reduced to 30% of total capacity. Ensure single or double occupancy of rooms if room is large enough, full time deployment of cleaners at washroom and toilets. Communal TV watch, newspaper reading dice, indoor games and other activities those may be at risk of social distancing violation should remain closed.
- (15) Special attention shall be paid to ensure social distance, hand hygiene and cleanliness of dining table & crockery in the hostel facilities. Where possible, room serving shall be preferred over communal dining.

**d. Cleanliness & Disinfection**

- (1) Ensure cleanliness and disinfection of school and boarding buildings 3-5 days before opening, especially if the school/hostel building remained in use for quarantine purpose for COVID-19 suspects.
- (2) Follow standard procedure i.e. clean the surface to make it dirt/dust free then wipe with 1% freshly prepared sodium hypochlorite solution. Help may be sought from District Health Authority concerned for proper disinfection measures.
- (3) Staff deployed for cleanliness and disinfection of communal use equipment should wear mask and gloves.
- (4) On opening of schools, ensure regular cleanliness and disinfection of surfaces of surroundings in use by multiple individuals. Priority areas for frequent cleanliness include floor, furniture, equipment, doors (knobs & handles), rest rooms, wash basins and toilets etc.





- (5) Carpeting or mat cover of floors is not permissible and must be removed.
- (6) Ensure daily cleanliness and disinfection of school building, class rooms, toilets and offices.
- (7) Ensuring adequate ventilation of classrooms, hall and other places of communal use in the building.
- (8) Don't share cellphone or other devices unless wiped with alcohol (sprit swab).
- (9) Communal towel use is not permissible.
- (10) Avoid indoor or outdoor curricular or co-curricular activities like seminars, speech competitions, stage presentation, sports competitions, tournaments and other pro-crowded activities requiring frequent surface sharing, close contact and posing risk for violation of desired social distance. However, coaching practices for sports, debate, etc. may be carried out subject to strict compliance of recommended social distance, wearing of mask. Avoid surface sharing and practice frequent hand wash.
- (11) Student should bring their lunch from home and not share with other fellows.
- (12) Ensure continual cleanliness and disinfection of communal use wash basins and toilets. Full time cleaner should be present at the facility to keep it clean and disinfected.
- (13) Ensure cleanliness and disinfection of student pick and drop vehicle after every trip. Use leather seat covers for easy cleaning.
- (14) Ensure adequate arrangements for collection and disposal of solid waste.
- (15) Ensure provision of safe drinking water. Student should keep their own drinking cup and not share with other fellows.
- (16) Sharing of learning tools, devices, equipment (pen, paper, stationary, etc.) should be avoided. If not possible, frequent cleaning and wiping with standard disinfectant solution should be practiced.



## **2. Health and Awareness**

Health status and awareness regarding COVID-19 prevention requires high importance for self-protection and taking care of fellows.

### **a. Health Status**

- (1) Fever with cough and sore throat are considered symptoms of COVID-19. If anybody is identified/reported with these symptoms, please call 1033 for guidance.
- (2) Ensure daily temperature checking with thermal scanners at entry.
- (3) Entrants who develop any upper respiratory symptoms or fever should be immediately separated and referred for medical checkup.
- (4) Students/ staff suffering from fever or cough should stay at home.
- (5) School attendance should be monitored to record absenteeism due to fever or acute cough sickness.
- (6) Health log book for all students and staff should be maintained.
- (7) Any cluster of more than five fever or acute cough cases from same locality should be reported to the respective District Health Authority/ DDHO or UC Medical Officers/or 1033 helpline.

### **b. Mental Health**

- (1) Encourage children to discuss their questions and concerns.
- (2) Explain it is normal that they may experience different reactions and encourage them to talk to teachers if they have any question.
- (3) Provide information in an honest, age-appropriate manner.
- (4) Ensure teachers are aware of local resources for their own well-being. Work with school health workers/social workers to identify and support students and staff who exhibit signs of distress.
- (5) Work with social service systems to ensure continuity of critical services that may take place in schools such as health screenings, feeding programs or therapies for children with special needs.
- (6) Consider the specific needs of children with disabilities, and how marginalized populations may be more acutely impacted by the illness

or its secondary effects.

- (7) Examine any specific implications for girls that may increase their risk, such as responsibility for taking care of the sick at home, or exploitation when out of school.

**c. Covid-19 Awareness Activities**

- (1) Ensure display of awareness standees on COVID-19 prevention at entrances and in the class rooms.
- (2) Invite health professional from neighboring health facility to conduct awareness sessions with parents, teachers and school health clubs. While conducting sessions ensure social distancing. Session should be conducted in groups of maximum 10 participants.
- (3) Teachers should conduct daily session on COVID-19 prevention.
- (4) Students may be assigned to prepare posters, speeches and essays on COVID-19.
- (5) Deploy volunteers in each class to monitor compliance of COVID-19 SOPs and help younger children observe precautions.

  
**CAPTAIN (R) MUHAMMAD USMAN**  
Secretary

**No.& Date Even**

A copy is forwarded for information and further necessary action to:

1. Minister for SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments Punjab.
2. Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab.
3. Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Punjab.
4. Secretary, SHC&ME Department, Government of Punjab.
5. Special Secretaries, SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments
6. Additional Secretaries (Tech), SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments.
7. Director General Health Services, Punjab, Lahore.
8. All Divisional Directors Health Services in Punjab.
9. Master File.