



POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE OF BOTOLAN HEALTH GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS MANUAL

Implementing Rules and Regulations of Polytechnic College of Botolan School Sanitation and Health Services According to the Code on Sanitation of the Philippines (P.D. 856)

I. SCOPE

These implementing rules and regulation shall apply to all public, private schools and similar institutions and facilities that are covered within the scope of the other chapters of the Code on Sanitation of the Philippines.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

COVID-19 – refers to a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. Formerly, this disease was referred to as ‘2019 novel coronavirus’ or ‘2019-nCoV.’

Emotional Environment – factors which affects the emotional health of students and members of the faculty, non-teaching personnel and other support staff.

Establishment – a collective term constructed to include all schools mentioned within the scope of these rules and regulations.

Formal Education – refers to the hierarchically structured and chronologically graded learning experience organized and provided by the formal school system and for which certification is required in order for the learner to progress through the grades or move to higher levels. Formal education corresponds to the levels of elementary, secondary and tertiary education.

Imminent Danger – refers to a situation caused by a condition or practice in any place of employment that could reasonably be expected to lead to death or serious physical harm.

Local Health Authority – an official or employee responsible for the application of a prescribed health measure in a local political subdivision. For the provincial level, the local health authority is the governor and for a city and municipality the local health authority is the mayor.

Local Health Officer – the provincial, city or municipal health officer.

Physical Environment – the school plants, grounds and facilities.

Refuse or Solid Waste – all organic and inorganic. Non – liquid and non – gaseous portions of the total waste mass.



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Safety – the condition of being free from danger and hazard which may cause accident or disease.

School – a public or private educational institution undertaking educational operations with an organized group of students pursuing defined studies at defined levels, receiving instructions from teachers, usually located in a building or groups of buildings in a particular site specifically intended for educational purposes.

School Administrator – a person, usually the owner, who manages the activities of a particular school.

Stigma – refers to a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something.

Student – any person who is enrolled and engaged in formal education studies and attends classes at the secondary or higher education level.

Workplace – refers to any location where workers need to be or to go to by reason of their work, and which are under direct or indirect control of the employer.

III. STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS:

For the promotion of the physical and emotional environment in schools, the following shall be the minimum structural requirements and standards:

1. GENERAL STRUCTURE REQUIREMENT

- 1.1 Orientation and construction of the building shall be in such a way as to receive the maximum amount of natural light in the classroom, and a satisfactory amount along corridors and stairways. Adequate supplementary artificial lightning shall be provided.
- 1.2 School buildings shall not be designed in such a way that part of which shall be used to private residences or for other purpose that may interfere directly or indirectly in the proper functioning of the school.
- 1.3 Healthful air condition shall be provided through effective ventilation, either natural and /or mechanical ventilation.
- 1.4 Adequate protection against fire and other life and health hazard shall be provided.
- 1.5 The classrooms and facilities shall be designed as to provide satisfactory acoustic.
- 1.6 The school shall be equipped and constructed t5o meet the individual health needs of the school population.
- 1.7 Sanitary facilities shall be properly designed and installed
- 1.8 The school buildings, premises and other facilities shall be aesthetically designed.
- 1.9 The classrooms, premises and other facilities shall be ample size to prevent overcrowding.



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2. SPECIFIC STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Floors

- a. Floors of all rooms in the school shall be smooth, easily cleaned, and in good condition.
- b. Floors shall be constructed of concrete or other impervious material that is resistant to wear and corrosion and shall be adequately graded and drained.
- c. Floors in toilet rooms shall be of impervious materials.

2.2 Walls and Ceilings

- a. The walls and ceilings shall be smooth, tight and in good condition.
- b. Walls and ceilings shall have surfaces of light color and flat finish.
- c. Ceilings and overhead structures shall be painted with light color.
- d. Upper walls shall be painted with light color, and walls adjacent window areas shall be as near white as practicable.
- e. Lower walls up to the base board and not more than 1/3 of the height shall have a darker shade than the upper wall.
- f. All wall and ceiling surfaces shall have a flat non-glare producing finish of washable paint or equivalent finish.

3. VENTILATION

3.1 Apportionment of Air Space

- a. Each student shall be allotted not less than 1.00 square meter of floor area and not less than 3 cubic meters of airspace.
- b. Students doing laboratory or manual works shall be given at least twice the floor area and twice the air space.

3.2 Windows and Other Openings

- a. Windows and other openings shall have an area equivalent to but not less than 1/5 of its floor space.
- b. Windows shall have an aggregate opening area of not less than 50% of the gross floor area.
- c. The sill must be about 1-meter-high from the floor and the head at least 20 cm below the ceiling.

3.3 Mechanical Ventilation

- a. Air-conditioning units: A 1.50 HP air conditioner for every 50 cu. m. room
- b. volume shall be provided.
- c. Exhaust fans and blowers: A 25 cm. diameter blower fan per 35 cu. m. of room volume shall be provided

4. CLASSROOM AND OTHER ROOMS OF THE SCHOOL

- 4.1 The size of the classroom and other rooms of the school is influenced by



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lightning, ventilation and arrangement of seats.

- a. The minimum dimension of the room shall be 7 meters by 9 meters to accommodate a maximum of 50 student or pupils.
- b. Classrooms shall be properly lighted and ventilated.

4.2 Rest Room/Faculty Room

Every schools shall be provided with a rest room/faculty room where faculty members can stay and study their lessons or rest during their break time.

5. CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT

5.1 Seat/ Desk and Seat/ Desk Adjustment

Seats shall be movable, adjustable and adaptable for varying pattern of arranging the seats in the classroom to accommodate for such factors as left handedness and variation in teaching technique.

- a. The location of student in the room shall depend on his hearing vision.
- b. Diagonal seating is sometimes advisable to secure better lightning.
- c. Seats in laboratory room shall not be placed close to stove or draft

5.2 Seat Arrangement

- a. The seats shall be set with a distance of at least 75 cm. from the side and back walls of the classroom and 2 meters from the blackboards.
- b. An aisle of 75 cm shall be maintained in the middle, between the right and left seats
- c. The back seats shall be placed not farther than 9 meters from the blackboards/whiteboards.

6. SANITARY FACILITIES REQUIREMENTS

For the promotion of the physical and emotional environment in schools, the following shall be the minimum sanitary facilities requirements and standards:

6.1.1 Toilet Facilities

- a. Adequate and sanitary toilet facilities for male and female shall be provided.
- b. Toilet facilities shall be easily accessible to the students and school personnel
- c. Adequate lavatories shall be provided within or adjacent to the toilet rooms
- d. Toilet rooms shall be properly lighted and ventilated
- e. Toilet facilities shall be provided in all floors of the building
- f. All toilets shall have good ventilation either by window or exhaust fan.



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7. HAND WASHING FACILITIES

7.1 Installation of Lavatories

- a. Lavatories shall be installed inside the toilet room and shall be provided with water and soap
- b. Additional lavatories may be installed subjects to the requirements of the local health officer

7.2 Maintenance of Lavatories

- a. An adequate supply of water and soap shall be provided at all times
- b. The lavatory shall be maintained in good and clean condition

7.3 Solid Waste Management

- a. Every room shall be provided with at least two (2) refuse receptacles or containers with swing cover and made of impervious materials, one for biodegradable and one for non- biodegradable waste.
- b. All receptacle or containers shall be provided with tight fitting lids or covers, so constructed and maintained. It shall be lined with black colored plastic bags for non- biodegradable and green colored trash bag for biodegradable materials.
- c. Collection of the garbage shall be done by the school personnel daily.

8. HOUSEKEEPING

- a. It shall be responsibility of the school administrator to assign custodial worker manage the housekeeping activities of the school and its premises.
- b. The responsible person for housekeeping shall have suitable training and experience and shall work under the supervision of the school administrator.

9. SCHEDULE FOR HOUSE KEEPING

Daily Duties

- a. Maintenance and cleaning of pathways and grounds. Floors, lavatories, toilets, desk and chairs, collection and disposal of solid waste shall be done on a daily basis or more frequently as necessary
- b. Cleaning shall be done before and after school hours
- c. Each room shall have at least two waste receptacles, one for biodegradable and one for non- biodegradable wastes.
- d. All windows, floors and glasses shall be kept clean at all times.



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10. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

For the promotion of the physical and emotional environment in schools, the following shall be the minimum safety requirements and standards:

10.1 Maintenance of buildings and Grounds

- a. School buildings with 2 or more stories shall have stairways of at least 1.8 meters wide located on each side of the building to ensure safe entrance and exit of students and school personnel. Stairways shall be well lighted. They shall be provided with at least one handrail running full length of the stairs, and all elevated porches shall be enclosed with railings.
- b. Corridors shall have a minimum width of 1.8 meters. They shall be well lighted and ventilated and shall be cleared of all obstructions.
- c. Loose boards, splintered floors, cracks, raised boards in floor, broken windows and mirrors shall immediately be repaired or replaced.
- d. There shall be no protruding nails or other similar objects. Desks shall be smooth with rounding edges and so constructed that they will not tip or turn over.
- e. Grounds shall be free from broken glasses, rocks, cinders, tree limbs, old boards, weeds, and other refuse.
- f. All abandoned wells and other excavations, small holes and pits shall be filled to the level of the ground.

10.2 Precaution to Prevent Fire, Explosion, Gas Poisoning and Other Disasters

- a. School buildings of 2 or more stories shall be provided with fire escapes. All fire escapes and all paths leading to them shall be always be cleared of obstructions.
- b. All passageways shall be kept free of obstructions.
- c. All doors and gates of the school shall open outward.
- d. School electrical wirings shall be regularly checked by an electrician. Damaged wiring, defective switches, lighting fixtures, and the like, shall be immediately be repaired or replaced.
- e. An efficient means to of putting out fire shall be on hand. A fire extinguisher is desirable, but if not available, a fire blanket and bucket of sand can be used with good effect. The fire extinguisher shall be checked frequently to be sure it is good working condition.
- f. Fire and earthquake drills shall be held at least once every semester.
- g. Combustible or flammable materials shall be stored in the school or in its immediate vicinity shall be subject to the regulations of the fire department.

10.3 Stoves, appliances and equipment shall be kept in good repair. Burners and drafts shall be adjusted to reduce formation of carbon monoxide.

- a. Gas shall be burned only in appliance with fixed connections.
- b. Every gas-type appliance shall be tested for leaks.



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- c. No appliance shall be installed in a room in which facilities for ventilation do not permit proper combustion under normal conditions of use.
 - d. Laboratory rooms for Science subjects shall be provided with sufficient devices for the exit of irritating or poisonous gases.

11. Special Requirements for Other School Facilities

11.1 Laboratories

- a. The laboratory area shall be adequate in size and volume and provided with fixtures for the science subject courses offered.
- b. The laboratory shall be provided with satisfactory lighting and ventilation. The air shall be discharged to a clear area.
- c. Tables, chairs/stools, equipment and other facilities shall be designed ergonomically.
- d. The laboratory shall be provided with lavatories and waste disposal facility.
- e. A first-aid kit, completely stocked for emergency treatments of cuts and burns, shall be provided and shall be easily accessible for use. The first-aid kits shall be kept out of the reach of children.
- f. The laboratory shall conform to the existing requirements as to location, size and volume of rooms, fire and explosion prevention, personal protective equipment as embodied in the provisions of the Code on Sanitation of the Philippines (P.D. 856) and its implementing rules and regulations.

11.2 Computer Rooms

- a. Equipment, furniture, and other facilities in the computer rooms shall be ergonomically designed.
- b. Computer rooms shall be provided with appropriate lighting and ventilation.
- c. The temperature in the computer rooms shall be maintained at a room temperature 26°C - 28°C.

11.3 Libraries and other School Facilities

- a. Libraries and all other facilities in the school shall be constructed in accordance with the national Building Code of the Philippines, Fire Code, Code on Sanitation, National Plumbing Code and other existing laws and local ordinances.

12. Specific Requirements for Personnel, Students, and School Health Services

12.1 Personnel

- a. Teaching and non-teaching personnel of the school shall undergo annual physical, medical, and dental check-up.
- b. No person shall be employed in the college without first securing a health certificate (EHS Form 102-A) from the municipal health officer of the locality



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where the institution is located. Health certificates are non-transferable and shall be renewed annually.

12.2 Student

- a. All students enrolled in the school shall undergo physical, medical and dental examinations annually.
- b. Periodic immunizations that may be necessary or required shall be provided in coordination with the local health office.
- c. Guidance and counselling services for the promotion of physical, mental and emotional health of pupils/students shall be provided by the college.

13. SCHOOL HEALTH FACILITIES

13.1 School Clinic

- a. All school shall establish a medical and dental clinic for the delivery of preventive and promotive health services and the treatment of minor ailment and emergency cases.
- b. School clinics shall be well lighted and ventilated
- c. A lavatory or handwashing facility with adequate and potable water supply shall be installed in the school clinic
- d. Basic medical and dental equipment, stretcher, portable oxygen tank with regulator and other basic drugs/ medicines and dental supplies shall be provided.
- e. The presence of health personnel in the school clinics shall be required for the duration of time when classes are going- on.
- f. A referral system for health, medical and dental services shall be established by the school with the local health office, government or private hospitals and clinics for handling complicated cases.
- g. A list of hospitals, clinics and practitioners for referral of emergency/ complicated cases, including their addresses and telephone numbers shall be available in the school clinic.

13.2 First Aid Kit

- a. First- aid kit shall be available in every teacher's/ faculty room
- b. Only teachers trained in first-aid shall do first aid measures. Otherwise, this shall be referred to the school clinics.
- c. The first aid kit shall contain the following.

First Aid Kit Contents:

- Alcohol – 70% isopropyl
- Ammonia – aromatic spirits
- Applicators
- Bandages – elastic, triangular and sterile
- Cotton – absorbent and sterile
- Drinking cups
- Gauze – plain and sterile



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- Safety pins
 - Soap
 - Splints and splinter
 - Tapes and adhesives
 - Thermometer
 - Tongue depressor
 - Paper towels or tissues
 - Scissors, forceps, or tongs
 - Hot water bottle
 - Wash basins
 - Ice bags
 - First Aid textbooks or guide (PNRC)

** depending on the school population and their activities.*

14. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

The School Administrators shall:

- a. Conduct and supervise the maintenance of a health physical and emotional environment for the school as provided these implementing rules and regulations;
- b. Apply sanitary permit before operating school and renew such permit at the beginning of each year thereafter;
- c. Maintain a school clinic as prescribe in the foregoing provisions of these rules and regulations;
- d. Report the occurrence of notifiable diseases and disease outbreaks in the school to the local health office;
- e. Guide the health authorities in the conduct of inspection;
- f. Assist the local health officer in the campaign for the promotion of health and the prevention and control of disease: and;
- g. Comply with the provision of these implementing rules and regulations.

15. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER

The Local Health Officer shall:

- a. Conduct or cause the regular inspection of schools and their premises to ascertain their state of sanitation;
- b. Apply precautionary measures to prevent the spread of any communicable disease or possible outbreak and disease within the school and investigate all reported outbreaks and deaths;
- c. Issue sanitary permits to schools and health certificates to the personnel employed in these establishment;
- d. Recommend to the regional health office the approval of school site clearances; and
- e. Assist in the enforcement of the provision of these rules and regulations.



16. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Local Government Unit shall:

- a. Reserve appropriate tracts of land under their jurisdiction as school site;
- b. Apply appropriate measures or action to maintain a healthful physical and emotional environment for the school, particularly, as to its distance from proposed or existing establishments that are considered nuisance under these rules and regulations;
- c. Every municipality shall prohibit unnecessary blowing of horns within 120 meters from the school site. The school shall provide the necessary sign to this effect;
- d. Guide the local health officer in the enforcement of these rules and regulations; and
- e. Enforce the provisions of these rules and regulations.

IV. GUIDELINES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER CLASS

For the promotion of the physical and emotional environment in schools, the following shall be the minimum safety requirements and standards. Below are the steps in taking to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses during classroom activities. (American Red Cross Training Services, 2020)

1. Before the Class

As recommended, if one have been ill or have any signs of illness within 24 hours prior to the class (fever, cough, breathing difficulties/shortness of breath, or other symptoms) one should not attend classes.

2. During the Class

The instructor will review the procedures done during all classes to minimize the risk of infection. The following practices should be observing:

2.1 Instructors and students must wear face coverings during classes and while inside the school facility. If students cannot wear a face mask to their class, they will not be admitted into their classes.

2.2 Instructors and students must perform hand hygiene using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol.

2.3 At a minimum, hand hygiene should be performed at the following times:

- Beginning and end of class
- Before and after meals and snacks
- Before and after skill practice sessions (When wearing gloves, hand hygiene should be done before putting on gloves and after removing them.)



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- Before and after using the comfort rooms for personal hygiene and sanitation.

2.4 Every student must wear face mask and gloves during all skill practices and classes.

2.5 There will be a minimum of six (6) feet of separation of students and instructors at all times, as well as no physical contact for observation of social distancing.

2.6 Appropriate cleaning of all class materials and surfaces, based on DOH guidelines

3. After Class

The cleaning process follows proper guidelines.

3.1 Surfaces

- a. Surfaces should be cleaned using a detergent, or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- b. For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions (1/3 cup unexpired bleach per gallon of water), alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective
- c. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.) In their absence, products with label claims against human coronaviruses or other viruses should be used according to label instructions.
- d. For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs and drapes, remove visible contamination if present, and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.

3.2 For Clothing

- a. If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.
- b. Laundry items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- c. If possible, laundry items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.
- d. If clothing cannot be immediately laundered, store in a sealed disposable bag.



Students should be safe in school and when undertaking out of school activities. The risk management to keep them safe should be proportionate to the nature of the activities.

Schools must appoint a competent person to ensure they meet their health and safety duties. A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to give sensible guidance about managing the health and safety risks at the school.

This can be someone appointed directly by the school, one or more of its staff, or the employer can arrange support from outside the school.

Schools must have a health and safety policy in place. This should be an integral part of the school's culture, values and performance standards. The key elements of the policy should:

- set out the roles and responsibilities within risk management processes
- the mechanisms to control risk
- specific control measures that need to be implemented

The assessment must cover the risks to the health and safety of employees and students

Review the assessment if:

- there is any reason to suspect that it is no longer valid
- there has been a significant change in related matters

Schools are obliged to record significant findings of the assessment. They must identify any group of employees identified as being especially at risk.

Every health and safety policy is separated into 4 elements:

1. Plan – leaders should set the direction for effective health and safety management
2. Do – introduce management systems and practices that ensure risks are dealt with sensibly, responsibly and proportionately
3. Check – monitoring and reporting
4. Act – a formal management review of health and safety performance

The following list gives examples that schools could include their health and safety policy. This list is not exhaustive and the content of the policy will be determined by the school:

- line management responsibilities
- arrangements for periodic site inspections



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- arrangements for consulting and involving employees
 - staff health and safety training, including assessment of risk
 - recording and reporting accidents to staff, students and visitors
 - policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities
 - dealing with health and safety emergencies, including procedures and contacts
 - first aid for staff and students
 - occupational health services
 - how you will investigate accidents and incidents to understand causes
 - how you will monitor and report performance and effectiveness of the health and safety policy

Schools need to record significant findings of the assessment by identifying:

- the hazards
- how people might be harmed by them
- what they have in place to control risk

Records of the assessment should be simple and focused on controls. Outcomes should explain to others what they are required to do and help staff with planning and monitoring.

Risk assessments consider what measures you need to protect the health and safety of all:

- staff/ Faculty
- students
- visitors

Schools will need to think about the risks that may arise in the course of the school day. This could include anything related to the school premises or delivery of its curriculum, whether on or off site.

V. REFERENCES:

<http://www.oshc.dole.gov.ph/images/OSH-Standards-2019-Edition.pdf>

<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/in-the-news/coronavirus-prevention-information-for-students>

<https://www.doh.gov.ph/node/5731>

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=ba81d52_4

<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/in-the-news/coronavirus-prevention-information-for-students>



SCHOOL SANITATION AND SERVICES PROTOCOL ON COVID 19

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'

The COVID-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. These symptoms are similar to the flu (influenza) or the common cold, which are a lot more common than COVID-19. This is why testing is required to confirm if someone has COVID-19.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing). Individuals can also be infected from and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and touching their face (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth). The COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but simple disinfectants can kill it.

Who is most at risk?

We are learning more about how COVID-19 affects people every day. Older people, and people with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, appear to be more at risk of developing severe symptoms. As this is a new virus, we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus, but so far there are relatively few cases of COVID-19 reported among children. This is a new virus and we need to learn more about how it affects children. The virus can be fatal in rare cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

What is the treatment for COVID-19?

There is no currently available vaccine for COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated and getting early care from a healthcare provider can make the disease less dangerous. There are several clinical trials that are being conducted to evaluate potential therapeutics for COVID-19.



How can the spread of COVID-19 be slowed down or prevented?

As with other respiratory infections like the flu or the common cold, public health measures are critical to slow the spread of illnesses. Public health measures are everyday preventive actions that include:

1. staying home when sick;
2. covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of used tissue immediately;
3. washing hands often with soap and water; and
4. cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.

As we learn more about COVID-19 public health officials may recommend additional actions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and the virus has now spread to many countries and territories. While a lot is still unknown about the virus that causes COVID-19, we do know that it is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing) Individuals can also be infected from touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and touching their face (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth). While COVID-19 continues to spread it is important that communities take action to prevent further transmission, reduce the impacts of the outbreak and support control measures.

The protection of children and 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 borders, ethnicities, disability status, age or gender. Education settings should continue to be welcoming, respectful, inclusive, and supportive environments to all. Measures taken by schools can prevent the entry and spread of COVID-19 by students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus, while minimizing disruption and protecting students and staff from discrimination.

A. Purpose

Today, children and young people are global citizens, powerful agents of change and the next generation of caregivers, scientists, and doctors. Any crisis presents the opportunity to help them learn, cultivate compassion and increase resilience while building a safer and more caring community. Having information and facts about COVID-19 will help diminish students' fears and anxieties around the disease and support their ability to cope with any secondary impacts in their lives. This guidance provides key messages and considerations for engaging school



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administrators, teachers and staff, parents, caregivers and community members, as well as children themselves in promoting safe and healthy schools.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and actionable guidance for safe operations through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in schools and other educational facilities. The guidance, while specific to countries that have already confirmed the transmission of COVID-19, is still relevant in all other contexts. Education can encourage students to become advocates for disease prevention and control at home, in school, and in their community by talking to others about how to prevent the spread of viruses. Maintaining safe school operations or reopening schools after a closure requires many considerations but, if done well, can promote public health.

B. Basic Principles

Following basic principles can help keep students, teachers, and staff safe at school and help stop the spread of this disease. Recommendations for healthy schools are:

1. Sick students, teachers and other staff should not come to school.
2. Schools should enforce regular hand washing with safe water and soap, alcohol rub/hand sanitizer or chlorine solution and, at a minimum, daily disinfection and cleaning of school surfaces.
3. Schools should provide water, sanitation and waste management facilities and follow environmental cleaning and decontamination procedures.
4. Schools should promote social distancing (a term applied to certain actions that are taken to slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease, including limiting large groups of people coming together).

C. Ensure safe school operations

1. Update or develop school emergency and contingency plans. Work with officials to guarantee schools are not used as shelters, treatment units, etc. Consider cancelling any community events/meetings that usually take place on school premises, based on risk.
2. Reinforce frequent handwashing and sanitation and procure needed supplies. Prepare and maintain handwashing stations with soap and water, and if possible, place alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizers) in each classroom, at entrances and exits, and near lunchrooms and toilets.
3. Clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc.).
4. Implement **social distancing practices** that may include:
 - a. Staggering the beginning and end of the school day.
 - b. Cancelling assemblies, sports games and other events that create crowded conditions.



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- c. When possible, create space for children's desks to be at least one meter apart.
 - d. Teach and model creating space and avoiding unnecessary touching.

D. Establish procedures if students or staff become unwell

Plan ahead with local health authorities, school health staff and update emergency contact lists. Ensure a procedure for separating sick students and staff from those who are well – without creating stigma – and a process for informing parents/caregivers, and consulting with health care providers'/health authorities wherever possible. Students/staff may need to be referred directly to a health facility, depending on the situation/context, or sent home. Share procedures with staff, parents and students ahead of time.

E. Promote information sharing

Coordinate and follow guidelines from the national health and education authorities. Share known information with staff, caregivers and students, providing updated information on the disease situation, including prevention and control efforts at school. Reinforce that caregivers should alert the school and health care authorities if someone in their home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and keep their child at home. Utilize parent-teacher committees and other mechanisms to promote information sharing. Also be sure to address children's questions and concerns, including through the development of child-friendly materials such as posters which can be placed on notice boards, in restrooms, and other central locations.

F. Adapt school policies where appropriate

Develop flexible attendance and sick leave policies that encourage students and staff to stay home when sick or when caring for sick family members. Discourage the use of perfect attendance awards and incentives. Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff. Plan for possible academic calendar changes, particularly in relation to breaks and exams.

G. Monitor school attendance

Implement school absenteeism monitoring systems to track student and staff absence and compare against usual absenteeism patterns at the school. Alert local health authorities about large increases in student and staff absenteeism due to respiratory illnesses.

H. Plan for continuity of learning

In the case of absenteeism/sick leave or temporary school closures, support continued access to quality education. This can include:

1. Use of online/e-learning strategies
2. Assigning reading and exercises for home study



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3. Radio, podcast or television broadcasts of academic content
 4. Assigning teachers to conduct remote daily or weekly follow up with students
 5. Review/develop accelerated education strategies

I. Implement targeted health education

Integrate disease prevention and control in daily activities and lessons. Ensure content is age-, gender-, ethnicity-, and disability-responsive and activities are built into existing subjects.)

J. Address Mental Health/Psychosocial support needs

Encourage children to discuss their questions and concerns. Explain it is normal that they may experience different reactions and encourage them to talk to teachers if they have any questions or concerns. Provide information in an honest, age-appropriate manner. Guide students on how to support their peers and prevent exclusion and bullying. 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.

II. CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STAFF

- A. Promote and demonstrate regular hand washing and positive hygiene behaviors and monitor their uptake. Ensure adequate, clean and separate toilets for girls and boys
 1. Ensure soap and safe water is available at age-appropriate hand washing stations
 2. Encourage frequent and thorough washing (at least 20 seconds)
 3. Place hand sanitizers in toilets, classrooms, halls, and near exits where possible
 4. Ensure adequate, clean and separate toilets or latrines for girls and boys
- B. Clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc.)
 1. Use sodium hypochlorite at 0.5% (equivalent 5000ppm) for disinfecting surfaces and 70% ethyl alcohol for disinfection of small items, and ensure appropriate equipment for cleaning staff
- C. Increase air flow and ventilation where climate allows (open windows, use air conditioning where available, etc.)
- D. Post signs encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices
- E. Ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely



III. PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

COVID-19 is a new virus and we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus, but so far there have been relatively few cases of COVID-19 reported among children. The virus can be fatal in cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Understand basic information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as UNICEF and WHO and national health ministry advisories. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online.

A. Recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 (coughing, fever, shortness of breath) in your child

Seek medical advice by first calling your health facility/provider and then take your child in, if advised. Remember that symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or fever can be similar to those of the flu, or the common cold, which are a lot more common. If your child is sick, keep them home from school and notify the school of your child's absence and symptoms. Request reading and assignments so that students can continue learning while at home. Explain to your child what is happening in simple words and reassure them that they are safe.

B. Keep children in school when healthy

If your child isn't displaying any symptoms such as a fever or cough it's best to keep them in school – unless a public health advisory or other relevant warning or official advice has been issued affecting your child's school.

Instead of keeping children out of school, teach them good hand and respiratory hygiene practices for school and elsewhere, like frequent handwashing (see below), covering a cough or sneeze with a flexed elbow or tissue, then throwing away the tissue into a closed bin, and not touching their eyes, mouths or noses if they haven't properly washed their hands.

C. Washing Hands Properly

Step 1: Wet hands with safe running water

Step 2: Apply enough soap to cover wet hands

Step 3: Scrub all surfaces of the hands – including backs of hands, between fingers and under nails – for at least 20 seconds

Step 4: Rinse thoroughly with running water



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Step 5: Dry hands with a clean, dry cloth, single-use towel or hand drier as available

Wash your hands often, especially before and after eating; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom/ toilets/latrines and whenever your hands are visibly dirty. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.

D. Help children cope with the stress

Children may respond to stress in different ways. Common responses include having difficulties sleeping, bedwetting, having pain in the stomach or head, and being anxious, withdrawn, angry, clingy or afraid to be left alone. Respond to children's reactions in a supportive way and explain to them that they are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Listen to their concerns and take time to comfort them and give them affection, reassure them they're safe and praise them frequently.

If possible, create opportunities for children to play and relax. Keep regular routines and schedules as much as possible, especially before they go to sleep, or help create new ones in a new environment. Provide age-appropriate facts about what has happened, explain what is going on and give them clear examples on what they can do to help protect themselves and others from infection. Share information about what could happen in a reassuring way.

For example, if your child is feeling sick and staying at home or the hospital, you could say, "You have to stay at home/at the hospital because it is safer for you and your friends. I know it is hard (maybe scary or even boring) at times, but we need to follow the rules to keep ourselves and others safe. Things will go back to normal soon."

IV. CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- A. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are ill.
- B. Teach and model good hygiene practices for your children.
 - 1. Wash your hands with soap and safe water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty
 - 2. Ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets or latrines are clean and available at home
 - 3. Ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed of
 - 4. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose
- C. Encourage your children to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.



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D. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding students to be considerate of one another

E. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts (through parent-teacher committees, etc.).

V. REFERENCE

<http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novelcoronavirus2019/advice-for-public>