

Note from the School Management:

Welcome back to the 2021/2022 School Year at New Horizon International School

The continued safety and well-being of our students, teachers and staff is our top priority. As you know, our school follows the guidance of Global Public Health provisions on the best practice and safety guidelines. In this academic year, we hope to return to normal gradually in order to prevent any kind of health and safety related issues. We know that this year may look different than others, but we are going to do the best we can to have a successful and productive year!

The WHO provisions will be observed by every member of our New Horizon School Community (Students, Staff, Parents and Visitors) and will be strictly adhered to.

The School Director reserves the right to dismiss, without prior notice, any member who does not comply with the given provisions. Parents are kindly requested to ensure that their children understand and comply with these regulations. Entry to the school premises will be denied, at the decision of the school security, to any individual who presents a risk to the school community. School opening or closure will be determined by the School Director.

Kindly note that all and any of the above provisions are not up for discussion or exceptions. When human welfare and lives are at stake, cooperation from all school community members is a requirement and not an option. Whether in school or out of school, our children's education continues and will not be compromised.

If a parent, at any point does not feel comfortable to send their child to school, we shall respect the decision. We only ask that he/she checks with a classmate to receive the academic work covered and timely deliverance of assignments. If E-learning is introduced again at any point during the academic year, the session will recap the week's main concepts, and therefore participation for online sessions would be mandatory.

Students must remain in their designated areas as advised by school staff.

Irresponsible behaviour or joking about this matter will not be accepted.

Kindly review the provisions hereunder as stipulated in the WHO protocol.

Thank you.

A Caption of the protocol as denoted by WHO

Introduction

This Annex examines considerations for school operations and the measures needed to minimize the risk to students and staff of COVID-19. This Annex applies to educational settings for children under the age of 18 years and outlines general principles and key recommendations.

This document was developed with input from the Technical Advisory Group of Experts on Educational Institutions and COVID-19 and experts from WHO, UNICEF, and UNESCO, who jointly reviewed the latest evidence to develop this guidance, which considers equity, resource implications, and feasibility.

This Annex is intended to help policy makers and educators with making decisions on running schools as safely as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the forefront of all considerations and decisions should be the continuity of education for children for their overall well-being, health and safety. Nonetheless, all decisions will have implications for children, parents or caregivers, teachers and other staff and more broadly, their communities and societies.

General principles

- Ensuring continuity of safe, adequate and appropriate educational and social learning and development of children.
- Minimizing the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission within school and school-associated settings among children, teachers and other school staff.
- Guarding against the potential for schools to act as amplifiers for transmission of SARS-COV-2 within communities.
- Ensuring school-related PHSM are integrated into and support the wider measures implemented at the community level.

School level

- Administrative policies: setting attendance and entry rules; cohorting (keeping students and teachers in small groups that do not mix, also referred to as bubble, capsule, circle, safe squad); staggering the start of school, breaks, bathroom, meal and end times; alternate physical presence (e.g. alternate days, alternate shifts).
- Infrastructure: Reorganization of the physical space or its use, identifying entry/exits and marking direction of walking, handwashing facilities, building environmental design clues (“nudging”) to facilitate appropriate use of space.
- Maintaining clean environment: frequent cleaning of surfaces and shared objects.

- Ensuring adequate and appropriate ventilation with priority for increasing fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors, where feasible, as well as encouraging outdoor activities, as appropriate.
- The age-appropriate use of masks where physical distancing cannot be maintained; this includes ensuring the availability of masks.
- Symptom screening by parents and teachers, testing and isolation of suspected cases, as per national procedures; stay-at-home when sick policies.
- Reorganization of school transportation and arrival/departure times.
- Clear accessible sharing of information and feedback mechanisms established with parents, students and teachers.
- Continuation of essential school-based services such as mental health and psychosocial support, school feeding and nutrition programs, immunization and other services.

Classroom level

- Physical distancing where appropriate.
- Wearing of masks, where recommended.
- Frequent hand hygiene.
- Respiratory etiquette.
- Cleaning and disinfection.
- Adequate ventilation.
- Spacing of desks or grouping of children if required.

Physical distancing between groups

- Limit mixing of classes and of age groups for school and after-school activities.
- Ensure crowd control during school or day-care drop off and pick up periods; clearly identify entry and exits, with marking direction for walking; consider restrictions for parents and care-givers entering school campus and premises.
- Create awareness that ensures students do not gather in large groups or in close proximity when in lines, when leaving the school and in their free time.

Use of masks in school settings

WHO and UNICEF recently issued *Advice on the use of masks for children in the community in the context of COVID-19*. To operationalize this guidance for school settings, age categories should be aligned with the local educational structure.

In countries or areas where there is intense community transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and in settings where physical distancing cannot be achieved, WHO and UNICEF advise decision

makers to apply the following criteria for use of masks in schools (either in classes, corridors or communal areas) when developing national policies:

- Children aged 5 years and under should not be required to wear masks.
- For children between six and 11 years of age, a risk-based approach should be applied to the decision to use a mask. This approach should take into consideration:
 - Children and adolescents 12 years or older should follow the national mask guidelines for adults.
 - Teacher and support staff maybe required to wear masks when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others or there is widespread transmission in the area.

Ventilation Strategies

- Consider using natural ventilation (i.e., opening windows if possible and if it is safe to do so) to increase dilution of indoor air by outdoor air when environmental conditions and building requirements allow.
- Ensure adequate ventilation and increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces, if possible.

Hygiene and daily practices at school

The hygiene and environmental cleaning measures to limit exposure include:

- Educate everyone in the school about prevention of COVID-19, including appropriate and frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, use of mask use, if recommended, symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do when one feel sick; offer regular updates as the pandemic evolves; counter rumors and misleading information through messaging and communication.
- Create a schedule for frequent hand hygiene, especially for young children, specifically at school arrival and at certain key moments of the school routine, including before snacks and lunch and before school exit; provide sufficient soap and clean water or alcohol-based rub at school entrances and throughout the school and in classrooms where feasible; ensure physical distancing when students wait at hand hygiene/washing points using signage on the ground.
- Schedule regular cleaning of the school environment daily, including toilets, with water and soap/detergent and disinfectant; clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, desks, toys, supplies, light switches, doorframes, play equipment, teaching aids used by children and covers of shared books; elaborate checklists for schools' cleaners to ensure all daily hygiene tasks are accomplished and ensure provision of cleaning and protective supplies for cleaning staff such as personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Assess what can be done to limit risk of exposure, or direct physical contact, in physical education classes, sports, music or other physical activities and playgrounds, wet areas (shower/pool) and changing rooms, labs/computer labs, libraries, bathrooms and dining areas/cafeteria.

Screening and management of sick students, teachers and other school staff

- Enforce the policy of “staying at home if unwell” for students, teachers or school staff.
- Create a checklist for parents/students /staff to decide whether they can go to school, with due consideration for the local epidemiology of COVID-19. The checklist should include:
 - underlying medical conditions and vulnerabilities, to protect the student/staff.
 - recent illness or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, to prevent spread to others.
- Consider daily screening for history of fever or feeling feverish in the previous 24 hours upon entry into the building for all staff, students and visitors to identify persons who are sick.
- Ensure students who have been in contact with a COVID-19 case stay home for 14 days. School officials should notify public health authorities in the event of a positive COVID-19 case among students or staff.

May we all stay Safe, Healthy and Happy.