



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**TO: HEADS OF PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS
DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
TEACHER UNIONS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ASSOCIATIONS**

**CIRCULAR NO. S1 OF 2022: MEASURES FOR THE RESUMPTION OF FULL TIME
DAILY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

1. Introduction

On 31 January 2022, Cabinet took a decision to end rotational schooling with immediate effect. School closures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the rotational schooling, presented a significant negative impact to learners' education, protection, wellbeing and nutrition. The Basic Education sector has welcomed the Cabinet decision, and a directive is hereby issued for all primary, secondary and special schools from both public and independent schools to resume full time attendance on Monday 07 February 2022. All teachers, non-teaching school staff, all learners as well as all officials should return to school and offices with effect from 07 February 2021.

2. COVID-19 Interventions

Taking into account the resumption of full time schooling, the regulatory provision for 1-meter social distancing in schools has been removed with immediate effect.

The following non-pharmaceutical measures should be maintained and adhered to by schools and education offices:

- Wearing of non-surgical face masks by all learners, teachers, non-teaching staff and visitors.
- Face mask breaks for learners (5 – 15 minutes for every 2 hours during the school day) where they can safely remove their masks in an outdoor area.
- Washing of hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using hand sanitisers.
- Placing of 70% alcohol-based hand sanitisers in each classroom, at entrances and exits, and near lunchrooms as well as halls so that sanitising of hands should be done when entering and leaving these venues.
- Maintaining good ventilation by opening doors, windows and/or using fans for air circulation.
- School buildings and equipment must be cleaned thoroughly and regularly by following the environmental health cleaning and disinfection protocols. Household bleach is recommended for this purpose. No fogging and spraying of buildings as part of environment cleaning should be done. Instead, surfaces should be wiped with a wet cloth.

3. Isolation for COVID-19 positive cases

Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts are no longer required to isolate. **ONLY** people who have symptoms or are advised by a health care worker should isolate for not more than 7 days after which the learner, teacher, school support staff or official should return to school/office.

4. Sports and Extracurricular Activities

The following activities may resume with spectators, subject to compliance with the hygiene and safety measures on COVID-19:

- All contact sport and non-contact sport, including training, intra-school and inter-school games.
- All arts and culture intra-school and inter-school activities.
- All co-curricular and enrichment programmes.

5. COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

All teachers, non-teaching school staff and officials who were vaccinated using the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in June/July 2021, are now eligible for a booster vaccination and are encouraged to visit their nearest health facility, pharmacy or vaccination site for this purpose. Those who received the Pfizer double dose vaccine will qualify for the booster dose 6 months after the second dose.

All learners aged 12 – 17 years and older are also encouraged to vaccinate at their nearest vaccination sites. Parents are urged to take their children for vaccination or use the opportunity of vaccinating their children in schools when the opportunity to do so arises. Vaccination is currently the only way to protect schools against COVID-19., enabling schools to continue with the traditional daily attendance schedule.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is working with the Department of Health (DoH) to introduce an in-school vaccination programme, and an official announcement in this regard will be made in due course. Provinces are however allowed to introduce in-school vaccination in collaboration with their provincial departments of health. In-school vaccination will require parental consent in line with the procedures of the Integrated School Health Policy.

Yours sincerely



MR HM MWELI

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 05/02/2022