

# A QUICK GUIDE TO THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND  
CONTAINMENT OF COVID-19  
FOR SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL  
COMMUNITIES



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





## OBJECTIVES OF THE SOP



Help administrators of ordinary and special primary and secondary schools (hereafter referred to as “schools”) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among learners, educators, support staff and officials.

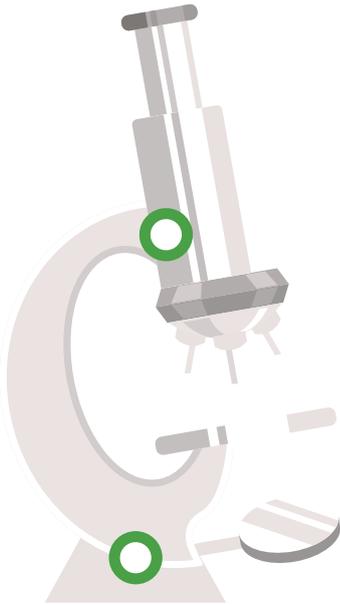


Help schools to understand the protocols that must be followed should a case of COVID-19 be identified.



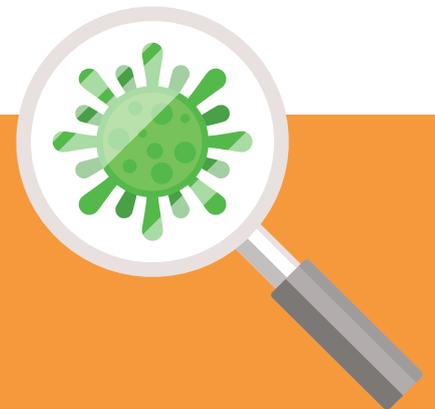
Provide considerations for the isolation of suspected cases of COVID-19.

## What is COVID-19?



# COVID 19

is mainly a respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) virus, and we are learning more about it every day. There is no vaccine available to protect against COVID-19 at present. Thus, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Preventing transmission (spread) of the virus through everyday practices is the best way to keep people healthy.



Childcare facilities and schools, working together with local health departments, play an important role in slowing the spread of diseases, to ensure that learners have safe and healthy learning environments. More detailed information on COVID-19 is available here on the following websites:

[www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za), [www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za), [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za),  
[www.sacoronavirus.co.za](http://www.sacoronavirus.co.za)

## How to prevent the spread of COVID-19?



## Roles and Responsibilities of the SMT, SGB AND STAFF

SMT, SGB and staff members must stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as the NICD, the DBE and the DoH and share this information with all stakeholders, and monitor the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Reinforce frequent handwashing and proper sanitation practices.

Establish an advocacy programme for learners about COVID-19.

Establish a COVID-19 response team led by the school principal to coordinate all COVID-19 related activities including internal and external communication.

Place signs or posters encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Ensure that cleaning staff clean and disinfect school buildings thoroughly and regularly, following the environmental health cleaning and decontamination protocols.

NB: Many schools catering for learners with physical disabilities will have increased "high touch" areas, including walls, as a result of the needs of learners.

## Management of COVID-19 cases

All learners, teachers, non-teaching staff and everyone entering the school must be screened and sanitized.

The suspected symptoms of COVID-19 are the following: Fever, coughing, sore throat, difficulty in breathing.

If these symptoms exist the learner, teacher or non-teaching staff must immediately be sent home or be isolated.

Immediately inform the parents, guardian or care giver and request them to come collect the child.

## Management of COVID-19 cases in schools

### 1 DBE

- Hygiene and infection control
- Maintain effective communication
- Ensure symptom screening and appropriate response
- Providing training (assisted by DoH)
- Reporting confirmed case within 6 hours
- Environmental disinfection



#### SCHOOL

- COVID-19 Point Person or the School Principal
- School-based Support Team (SBST) or School Management Team (SMT)

### 2 DOH

- Providing advice and support when requested
- Linking schools with professional nurses and health care facilities
- Providing training
- Manage learners and staff with symptoms
- Notify the school of confirmed cases
- Providing contact tracing for confirmed cases
- Seek advice from a provincial or national epidemiologist

- School health nurse
- CDC co-ordinator or member of contact tracing team
- Provincial epidemiologist or NICD

### 3 PED

- Guide interventions to cases or clusters of COVID-19
- Decision to class cleanliness or surfaces in the school

- School Health Teams in Intergrated School Health (ISHT) (District/ Provincial) of contact tracing team
- District/ Provincial Director

## Management of COVID-19 in school hostels



- All learners and hostel staff must be screened.
- Hostel staff must be trained in management of COVID-19.
- Learners, teachers and non-teaching staff must always observe social distancing.
- There must be a sanitizer at the entrance of each door in the hostel.
- Soap and 60% alcohol-based sanitizer must be available in the bathrooms.
- Learners should not share utensils.
- Dormitories and dining areas must be disinfected very often.
- Every person entering a library must wear a mask.
- Every person in the hostel must wear a mask.

## Management of COVID-19 in learners with disability



The risk of contracting COVID-19 may be significantly different for learners with co-morbidities and learners with disabilities. It is therefore, critical to know, understand and implement the specific health and safety measures required for each unique learner.

Depending on underlying health conditions and co-morbidities, learners with disabilities may be at greater risk of developing more severe cases of COVID-19 if they become infected. This may be because of COVID-19 exacerbating existing health conditions, particularly those related to respiratory function, immune system function, heart disease or diabetes and barriers to accessing health care.

Guidelines to deal with disabilities have been developed and are available on the following link:  
<https://www.education.gov.za/>

## Decontamination



- Areas of the school must be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Environmental decontamination and disinfection must be conducted in the work area/classroom where the confirmed COVID-19 (learner or staff member) has been during the past three days.
- Heavily contaminated areas such as toilets, common areas must also be disinfected regularly
- High touch surfaces: cell phones, keyboards, gate buzzers, door handles, light switches, taps, rails must be disinfected regularly.
- All classrooms must be disinfected every change of period.

## Learner Transport

- Learner Vehicle Operators must make sure that the Vehicles are cleaned and disinfected before picking up and after dropping off learners.
- Before embarking learners must be sanitized with 60% alcohol-based sanitizer.

# Psychosocial Support for learners, teachers and non-teaching staff

## PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS, TEACHERS AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

Teachers and non-teaching staff who need psychological support.

- Identify learners, teachers and non-teaching staff who need psychosocial support.
- Symptoms for psychological problems are the following:

### Fear

Worry and anxiety

### Sadness

Hopelessness

### Overwhelming emotions

Withdrawal from others

### Expression of rage or anger

Use of drugs or alcohol

### Missing work or classes

Use of drugs or alcohol

- Contact Employee Health and Wellness Programme Department in your Education Department for psychological support.

What do you do when you identify symptoms that require emotional support to learners?

- When a learner is identified, an educator can speak to the learner and check if he or she can provide emotional or other support, if so then a learner must be referred to a school counsellor.
- Provide counselling to the learner.  
**Call a helpline (see contact details below)**

What happens to learners who may not return to school due to disability, comorbidity or parent opting for home schooling.

- Schools must take appropriate steps to ensure that learning continues for such children by providing all platforms available to the school for learning.

LIFE CAN BE **DIFFICULT** SOMETIMES, IF YOU NEED SOMEONE TO **TALK** TO YOU MAY **CONTACT** ANY OF THE **CALL CENTRES BELOW:**

### Child Hotline

0800 55 555

### Loveline free plz call me

083 323 1023

### Lifeline TOLL Free

086 132 2322

### SADAG

### Suicide Crisis Line

0800 567 567 OR SMS 31393

### Substance Abuse Line

0800 12 13 14 OR SMS 32312