

COVID-19



Guidance for Integrated Safe School Re-opening

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Background

The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and partners, in consultation with the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 (PTF-COVID-19) and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) have developed these guide lines to support states in preparing for safe re-opening of schools. This is to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infection in school settings amidst the surge in cases.

Recommendations

- States should conduct risk assessments to guide decisions and interventions for reopening. The risk assessment should be conducted weekly by schools, monthly by LGAs and quarterly by states and provide update to FME.
- States should establish or re-establish a multi-sectoral school health programme that includes a trained school health team to ensure adherence to all protocols, monitor and report incidence of cases in schools.
- Schools should:
 - i. Provide learners' a "medical status" form to be completed by all parents and kept in confidence by the school head;
 - ii. Ensure that a triage point is identified and well-marked at the entrance where everyone gaining access to the school is screened for high temperature, requested to wear masks and perform hand hygiene;
 - iii. Ensure that classrooms are well ventilated with minimum of one meter sitting arrangement;
 - iv. Ensure that all staff, visitors and students above 6 years wear face masks at all times;
 - Teachers have discretion to define circumstances when the wearing of a face mask is not appropriate for children e.g. children with special needs;
 - Schools to ensure that students have short breaks from wearing face masks during the day This should be done safely, still ensuring one metre distance;
 - Hand hygiene measures should be adhered to, when face masks are being put back on;
 - v. All schools must identify a section that can serve as sample collection site and have a record of reported cases and contacts in school;
 - vi. All schools must ensure that there is access to sufficient running water, soap and hand washing facilities;
 - vii. Staff at sick bay/designated holding room should be trained and provided with required PPE;
 - viii. School should ensure that waste from the sickbay and used face masks are separated from general waste and safely disposed;

- ix. Ensure that sick bays/holding room can be used to manage asymptomatic cases boarding students and that for day students, a response protocol is in place to transfer students who are ill or test positive to the nearest designated hospital facility;
- x. All schools must also have a communication plan to regularly teach learners and staff on protocol and inform parents in the event of a COVID-19 confirmed case;
- xi. State Ministries of Health should ensure that all schools are in close communication with the Local Government, Rapid Response Team, State Epidemiologist and other health officials at all times. These groups should collaborate on school-related response activities;
- xii. State should ensure training of monitoring teams at all levels and schools on use of the protocols;
- xiii. State should agree with stakeholders on arrangements for provision of masks to pupils where affordability may be a challenge.

Further Support

- FME has developed templates incorporating NCDC protocols and tools for prevention, detection, reporting, sample collection and treatment. This should be adopted by all states to ensure schools and relevant officials are trained on the protocols. .
- A detailed and well-followed protocol for communication must be established by the state and disseminated to schools, to include parents, staff, the school health team and authorities at the school, parents, LGA, state and National level. This is to ensure regular updates or any change in policy / procedure are effectively disseminated and communicated appropriately.



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