



**CORONA FET**



**Week: 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

**Big Idea of the Week:**

Working together keeps children safe in schools

### **Schools reopened July 1<sup>st</sup> for students taking NPSE, BECE and WASSE examinations.**

- **Students:** Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community safe. Work with your friends to look after the health and well-being of other students.
- **Teachers:** Ensure that health measures are fully implemented. Wear a cloth mask and ensure students wear theirs. Identify sick learners, isolate them, and inform the relevant health and school authorities.
- **Parents/caregivers:** Ensure that your child wears a cloth mask when leaving the house and that the mask is washed each day. Do not send your child to school if he/she is sick.

NPSE, BECE and WASSE are international examinations and must be taken at a particular time. Therefore, it is important for students taking these examinations to complete the exam on time.

There is greater flexibility for other classes and covering content missed during this period in the next session.

Reopening schools for only students taking NPSE, BECE and WASSE allows for more space for students and teachers to keep safe distance from each other and learn in a safe environment.

### **Suggestions for people to interview**

- Minister of Education
- District Deputy Directors of Education
- School Heads
- Head of Parent-Teacher Associations
- Teachers
- Students
- Head of EducAid
- Head of Rising Academy

### **Suggestions for questions for interviews and panel discussions**

- What are schools doing to protect students, teachers, and staff?
- Now that schools have reopened for a few days, what have you heard or learned from students returning to school?
- What challenges do students, teachers, and schools face as the coronavirus continues in Sierra Leone? What are recommendations for addressing these challenges?

### **Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) School Operations Guidelines for Examination (NPSE, BECE and WASSCE) Candidates**

The following are guidelines put in place for school reopening for NPSE, BECE and WASSCE candidates.

1. Operational hours for schools are from 8:45am – 2:00pm, 5 days a week.

2. There will be no two-shift system or afternoon classes. All schools (including those in the afternoon shift before the closure of schools on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020) will start at 8:45am and end at 2:00pm. Detailed daily school schedules/timetables will be shared by schools.
3. Students will have one break for 20 minutes, and must remain in their classrooms during the break. Social distancing should be adhered to during this period at all times.
4. There will be no recess or cafeteria opened to students during the operation of schools.
5. Parents and guardians are encouraged to provide lunch packs for their children to carry to school. Government will supply take-home dry food rations to pupils in Primary schools during the operational periods of schools.
6. The government will provide a one-time transportation for all students and teachers needing to return to their locations of schooling and teaching. Details will be made public separately.
7. The conduct of extra classes after the regular school hours (8:45am – 2:00pm) as stipulated in this release is strongly prohibited.
8. Students and teachers are required to observe all other COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines in schools, and immediately report any sick student or teacher to the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Center by calling 117.
9. Parents/guardians are encouraged to ensure that their children wash their hands before and after school with soap and water, or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and wash their face masks each day after school. Face masks will be provided by the Government to pupils.
10. Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have COVID-19-related symptoms and report to 117 immediately. Children with symptoms will be asked to return home.
11. Any school or teacher who violates these guidelines will face disciplinary measures.

### **Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools**

<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools>

COVID-19 is the disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. The 19 comes from 2019, the year it was discovered.

We are still learning about how this new coronavirus 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 coronavirus reported among children.

Sick students, teachers, and other staff should not come to school. Stay home and call 117 if you have fever, tiredness, and cough.

There is currently no available marklate for coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated and getting early care from a health worker can make the sickness less dangerous. There are many research studies going on now to find a marklate to prevent coronavirus and treatments to help those who get it get better fast. Scientists and researchers are working hard and as fast as possible, but these things take time for us to be very sure any marklate or treatment is safe for people.

### **Actions for Students**

- Immediately tell your teacher if you are sick or your friend is sick.
- Work with your friends to look after the health and well-being of each other and other students.
- Share school health and other healthy behaviors with your friends.

- Promote handwashing with soap and water or use of hand sanitizers that are at least 60% alcohol-based.
  - Cough and sneeze into your upper arm or sleeve.
  - Wear cloth face masks when you leave your house and are around people. Wear your mask when you use public transportation includes bikes, kekehs, taxis, and poda podas.
  - Always maintain a safe distance of at least three feet or arms-stretched length from others. Limit close face-to-face contact with others in school and other places.
  - Tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver if you feel sick, and ask to stay home.
- Make sure to continue learning activities at home and listen to the radio teaching programme.
  - In a situation like this, it is normal to feel sad, worried, confused, scared or angry. Know that you are not alone and talk to someone you trust, like your parent or teacher so that you can help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.
    - Ask questions, educate yourself and get information from reliable sources
  - Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy.
    - Share what you learn about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially with younger children
    - Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members
  - Don't stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick; remember that the virus doesn't follow geographical boundaries, ethnicities, age or ability or gender.

### **Actions for Teachers**

- Implement all COVID-19 prevention and control measures in the classroom and school grounds.
- Ensure that the school health measures are fully implemented in accordance with prevailing guidelines from the Government and its partners.
- Identify sick learners, isolate them, and inform relevant health authorities including your school's safety and emergency contacts. Each school has a trained staff.
- Call 117 if you suspect that a learner or colleague has symptoms.
- Always prioritize your safety and that of learners.
- Monitor classroom attendance daily and report absenteeism to the School Management.
- Ensure that all learners are given quality lessons and adequately prepared.
- Emphasize that students can do a lot to keep themselves and others safe.
  - Introduce the concept of social distancing.

- Focus on good health behaviors, such as covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow and washing hands.
- Remind students that they can model healthy behaviors for their families.
- Encourage students to prevent and address stigma.
  - Discuss the different reactions they may experience and explain these are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Encourage them to express and communicate their feelings.
- Incorporate relevant health education into other subjects.
  - Science can cover the study of viruses, disease transmission and the importance of marklates.
  - Social studies can focus on the history of pandemics and evolution of policies on public health and safety.
  - Media literacy lessons can empower students to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens.

### **Actions for Parents/Caregivers**

- Ensure all in your home follow the COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines.
- Ensure that your child washes his/her hands frequently with soap and water, or uses a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol-based before, during and after school.
- Ensure that your child wears a cloth face mask when leaving the house for school and that the mask is washed each day.
- Do not send your child to school if he/she is sick.
- Encourage your child to read his/her book and listen to the radio teaching programme.
- Teach and model good hygiene practices for your children
  - Wash your hands with soap and water frequently. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol-based.
  - Cough and sneeze into your elbow and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - Ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets or latrines are clean and available at home.
  - Ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed of.
- 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.
- Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding students to be considerate of one another.
- Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts (through parent-teacher committees, etc.).