



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**Guidelines for the Reopening of Schools- “The
New Normal” for Term II January 2021 (To be
used in collaboration with the MOH
Guidelines).**

School Supervision and Management Division
September 2020

Edited January 26, 2021

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1.0 Introduction

The COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) has created a ‘New Normal’ to which schools must conform. As schools across the globe gradually reopen, the practices to conform to the ‘New Normal’ are varied based on the dynamics that exist in various countries. In the Trinidad and Tobago context, the UNESCO Framework for Reopening Schools April 2020, the Ministry of Health’s Reopening Guidelines for Businesses, Facilities and Institutions (May 2020) and Operating Schools During Covid-19: Centre for Disease Control (CDC) School Considerations (December 2020) were used to develop these guidelines. These guidelines will be used in collaboration with the Ministry of Health’s Reopening Guidelines for Schools.

The Trinidad and Tobago approach remains student centred and seeks to ensure that learners continue to have equitable access to quality education. As such, a multi-pronged intervention involving Divisions and Units of the Ministry of Education as well as other Ministries and major stakeholders has been employed.

Term I, the longest term of the academic year, was based on remote teaching and learning, which will in turn impact the delivery of the curriculum for the rest of the academic year. In Term II, 2020/2021 there will be a shift from remote teaching and learning to a blended approach to curriculum delivery.

The School Supervision and Management Division (SSMD) has adapted the July 2020 version of the Guidelines for the Reopening of Schools, for implementation in Term II 2020/2021. This document forms part of the MOE’s roadmap for the physical reopening of schools to be used by principals and takes into consideration the 6 ft. (head to head) physical distancing enforced by the Ministry of Health (MOH). The Guidelines for physical reopening should be carefully adhered to. Schools should make a practice of repeating the safety guidelines multiple times during the school day as a reminder to staff and students of the protocols to be kept.

2.0 Operations of Primary and Secondary Schools: Term II 2020/2021

Term II 2020/2021 began virtually on January 4, 2021 for all students. As such, the guidelines for remote learning used in Term I 2020/2021 continue to be in effect.

On February 8th, 2021, students at secondary schools who are preparing to write the CSEC/CAPE 2021 Examinations, are scheduled to resume face-to-face sessions for Practicals, School Based Assessments (SBAs) and Internal Assessments (IAs). Implementation of face-to-face classes will begin on a phased basis, with the first phase being limited to students of Forms 4, 5 and 6, beginning February 8th, 2021. Guidelines specific to this are as follows:

Secondary School

- Schools to open on February 8th, 2021 for Forms 4 to 6 utilising a blended/hybrid system (online and face-to-face).
- The MOH has advised that mask wearing be mandated for all students above the age of eight (8). Therefore, all students **MUST** wear masks.
- The MOH has further advised that in order to minimize the risk of infection, minimal opportunities be given for students to mingle.
- Schools are mandated, in line with MOH recommendations, to allow students to eat/drink whilst seated in the classroom. Breaks (bathroom visits, lunch) should be staggered.
- Classrooms and laboratories are to be organised to facilitate 6 ft. (head-to-head) physical distances as mandated by the MOH. This means calculating the amount of students that can be accommodated in the existing teaching-learning spaces at the school.
- Secondary schools are authorised to operate **within** normal school hours.
- Online teaching should continue as far as possible for students of Forms 4, 5 and 6 with students physically reporting to school to complete Practicals, School Based Assessments (SBAs) and Internal Assessments (IAs).
- Students should report to school for face-to-face teaching only when absolutely necessary. The face-to-face sessions should be organised to minimise the contact hours and the number of students present on the school compound at the same time.
- For students who are physically reporting to school, further guidance is provided in Section 7: Class Timetable.

Primary School

Implementation of face-to-face classes for primary school will begin on the second phase with Standard 5 students only, which is scheduled at the start of Term 3, April 12, 2021.

- The MOH has advised that mask wearing be mandated for all students above the age of eight (8). Therefore, all students **MUST** wear masks.
- The MOH has further advised that in order to minimize the risk of infection, minimal opportunities be given for students to mingle.
- Schools are mandated, in line with MOH recommendations, to allow students to eat/drink whilst seated in the classroom and to stagger bathroom visits.
- Classrooms are to be organised to facilitate 6 ft. (head-to-head) physical distances as mandated by the MOH. This means calculating the amount of students that can be accommodated in the existing teaching-learning spaces at the school. Further guidance is provided in Section 7: Class Timetable.
- Primary schools are authorised to operate **within** normal school hours.
- The Substitute Teacher System has been repurposed to provide additional supervisory support for teachers. Schools are asked to indicate their need for Substitute Teachers through the usual channel.

THE MOE HEALTH SERVICES UNIT

Cabinet has approved the establishment of the MOE District Health Unit which operates as follows:

- The Unit comprises fourteen (14) nurses headed by one (1) doctor.
- Two nurses will be assigned to each educational district (the District Medical Team) with direct responsibility for being the liaison between schools and the relevant units of the MOH to facilitate and expedite communication between principals, supervisors and the MOH. Tobago will also make their arrangements.
- The Education District Health Unit will facilitate medical clearance for the entry/re-entry of students to school where necessary.
- The Unit will also have responsibility, in collaboration with the Health and Safety Unit of the MOE, for ensuring that arrangements are in place at school for COVID-19 protocols to be enforced.

- The District Medical Team will be the first response in the event of an emergency¹ at school.

The Crisis Management Team at each school must keep abreast of research and best practices as they relate to the reopening of schools and advise the School Based Management Team accordingly. Discussions should also be held with targeted stakeholders for general assistance and for dealing with COVID-19 related emergencies.

2.0 Entry Protocol

In addition to the school's regular entry protocol the following should be put in place:

- Signage indicating the following: "All visitors must wear masks. No mask, no entry".
 - All visitors must wear masks at all times whilst on the compound.
- All persons entering the compound must wash their hands.
- Visitors must observe the visible floor markers for physical distancing placed at the school entrance and must comply with instructions to form orderly lines and to maintain appropriate physical distancing upon entry.
- Visitors must provide contact information to facilitate contact tracing if necessary (visitors to schools must be kept at a minimum).
- Physical distancing must be observed on the compound, especially at the sanitisation stations, cafeteria, washrooms, main office, etc.
- Visitors with flu-like symptoms will not be allowed entry onto the compound.
- Students entering the school's compound who display flu like symptoms should be directed to the designated quarantine area. The principal, parent and Education District Medical Team must be immediately contacted. Parents will be asked to take the student out of school and seek medical attention. In order to return to school, the parent must produce written medical clearance from the District Health Unit through the school's principal.
- Schools must have a designated quarantine area to which students who display flu-like symptoms can be assigned to await pickup by their parents (where applicable). These students must be identified to the principal by teachers, health and safety officers, security officers or staff. The designated area must be an area/room with adequate

¹ An emergency may be considered as any incident which is not addressed in this document nor in the School's Crisis Management/School Safety Plan

ventilation, or any available room that is deemed suitable by the Crisis Management Team.

- The usual procedure when students are leaving with their parents must be adhered to.
- Safety/Security Officers or other appointed persons shall, via the use of non-contact infrared or standing thermometer, monitor the temperature of personnel at the school's entry point. Students, staff or visitors with a higher than average temperature (over 37.5 degrees Celsius/99.5 degrees Fahrenheit) should be directed to a cool area nearby and their temperature rechecked after 5 minutes. The environmental temperature must be taken into consideration; therefore, temperature checks must be done more than once before a student or visitor is deemed to be a person of concern. *Please note that persons, **other than students**, with flu-like symptoms must be barred from entering the compound and their temperature should **not** be taken. It is possible for a person to display flu like symptoms without having a higher than normal temperature.*
- Visitors with a high temperature reading should **not** be allowed entry and will be advised to make contact with school administration via telephone or email instead of face-to-face.
- A screening notebook/questionnaire should be put in place to be used if a member of the staff or student body has two (2) consecutive high readings (over 37.5 degrees Celsius/99.5 degrees Fahrenheit). Headings in this book/questionnaire should be in accordance with the following suggestion:
American Medical Association: Pre-visit screening script template. Retrieved from <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-06/physican-guide-reopening-practicescovid-19.pdf>
- Student drop-off and pick-up must be managed to reduce the presence of persons/drivers on the school compound. Drop-off and pick-up times must be close to start and end time of the school day.
- In emergency situations, where parents or guardians are expected to visit the school, it is advised that only one (1) representative be allowed entry.
- Visitors and service providers who access the school's compound, must abide by the school's policy and guidelines provided by the MOH (see Appendix 1).
- Sanitation measures for entering the compound must be enforced to ensure success in the fight against COVID-19. Hand washing / sanitising stations should be strategically placed close to the entrance of the school compound, where the security guard / School Safety Officer can ensure that all students and visitors sanitise their hands upon entry.

- Staff and students with flu-like symptoms must remain at home and provide written medical clearance from the District Health Unit before returning to school.

3.0 Guidelines for Assembly

Based on the recommended 6 ft. (head-to-head) physical distancing by the MOH, **whole school assemblies are not allowed**. The following alternatives can be considered:

- Schools should conduct assemblies over the Public Address (PA) system with students in classrooms supervised by the Form teacher/ Class teacher.
- Morning assemblies must allow for a motivational message (guidance can be sought from the Student Support Services Division-SSSD), COVID-19 reminders and updates, preparation for learning and roll call.
- COVID-19 reminders include compliance with new normal measures such as washing/sanitising hands and maintaining physical distancing. Updates can include local and global trends and findings.

4.0 Role of Management

School operations, policies and plans: The School Based Management Team (SBMT) must review systems, policies and procedures in light of a changing teaching/learning environment (such as the Crisis Management Plan, Maintenance Plan, Prefect System, Communication Plan, club activities). The School Development Plan, inclusive of the Physical School Reopening Plan and Discipline Plan, must take into consideration the new online learning environment as well as constraints/restrictions arising as a result of the COVID –19 pandemic. Decisions must be data driven and research based. Deans/SBMT/ School Based Intervention Team (SBIT) and members of the SSSD are expected to work closely together to manage and address any issues and challenges that students may present with.

Monitoring of Student Attendance: Deans, Heads of Departments/ Senior Teachers (HOD/ST) and Administration must ensure that attendance data is taken by form teachers, class teachers and subject teachers for each scheduled class whether face-to-face or online

(synchronous or asynchronous). Form teachers will ensure that attendance is taken for the morning session as well as the afternoon session.

Form/Subject teachers should make a note of students displaying flu like symptoms and report same to the principal immediately. Principals are then obligated to place the child in the designated quarantine area, contact the parents to take the student out of school and seek medical attention. In order to return to school, the parent must produce written medical clearance the District Medical Team, through the school's principal.

Teachers will monitor student attendance and follow up on absenteeism with parent conferencing (via telephone). At Secondary school, continued absenteeism will be reported to the Form Teacher who will also follow up with parent conferencing and then to the Dean if no change is observed. Cases of continued absenteeism must be referred to the SSSD for further intervention. At Primary schools, teachers will refer the matter to HOD/ST/VP/PP and then to SSSD for further intervention if absenteeism continues.

Monitoring Curriculum Delivery: HODs will ensure adherence to the Curriculum Guide and that topics taught are in alignment with Schemes of Work and Daily/Weekly Plans. Administrators will receive summary reports from the Heads of Department on a fortnightly basis and forward a Termly Report to School Supervisors. Any concerns with respect to teachers, will be reported by the Head of Department/ Senior Teacher to Administration as per usual protocol.

With specific reference to preparing for CXC examinations 2021, HODs are to ensure compliance with the most recent version of "Treatment of Syllabuses and the School-Based Assessment for Administration of Examinations in 2021 Handbook" as issued by CXC. Note that further elucidation is being sought from CXC with respect to Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) and other subjects.

Clinical Supervision: Clinical Supervision remains a developmental process to support teachers in the delivery of the curriculum and will be conducted by HODs and school administration. Schemes of work and lesson plans must now cater for blended learning. Clinical Supervision will therefore not be confined to the physical classroom but expanded to include online teaching/learning. Additional Instruments for Clinical Supervision have been created by the Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) to cater for Clinical

Supervision for the online teaching/learning process. Curriculum Officers will also be involved in monitoring the Clinical Supervision process and will inform principals prior to visiting a teacher's class whether virtually or physically. Curriculum Officers will continue to liaise with School Supervisors with reference to any concerns.

The classroom observation component of the Clinical Supervision process for any online teaching can involve a Head of Department/Vice-Principal/Senior Teacher, logging in to an online class, or visiting a physical class. Teachers will be required to share the link for their online classes with the administrators. Administrators together with Heads of Department/Senior Teacher/Vice Principal (HOD/ST/VP) will have the opportunity of monitoring these classes.

All persons involved in Clinical Supervision need to become acquainted with the methods and strategies involved with online learning in order to give the necessary support and guidance. The Teacher Education Performance and Professional Development Division (TEPPDD) of the MOE continues to organise training sessions. Heads of Department and administrators are also encouraged to apply and/or do upskilling through other avenues.

5.0 Role of the District Leadership Team (DLT)

The schedule of weekly DLT² meetings must continue based on the usual agenda and can be virtual or face-to-face provided the MOH requirements can be met.

Prior to the start of Term II, the DLT will meet to review the District Plan and to determine the Calendar of Events. Review of the District Plan must take into consideration the blended learning approach proposed to commence from February 2021 with face-to-face classes for students of Forms 4, 5 and 6 and remote learning for the rest of the student population.

The individual school context must be taken into consideration as each will present unique and diverse challenges. Individual school plans for reopening should include measures to mitigate/address such challenges, and should be submitted to School Supervisors within one week of the circulation of the final version of this document.

² The DLT comprises representation from SSMD, CPDD, SSSD, HSSU

At DLT meetings, progress on the district's plan and the School Development Plans (SDP), inclusive of reopening, for the schools of the district should be discussed. Issues identified by individual members of the DLT will also be addressed.

As customary, schools of focus will be identified based on evidence (data collected, observations through school visits, issues raised through other avenues, etc.). The new School Development Plans/ Reopening Plans in schools will be monitored and assessed with support given to schools by members of each arm of the DLT. Feedback shall be provided at each meeting.

A termly status report on the District Plan should be produced and submitted to the office of the Director of School Supervision (DSS).

Divisions of the MOE other than those that make up the DLT are involved in the implementation of the District Plan. For instance, the TEPPDD, in addition to the National Teacher Training Programme, will also lend assistance to any school as required.

Other than the routine visits by individual members of the DLT, inclusive of the line Supervisor, the DLT will schedule physical visits to each school at least once per term. At these visits, meetings will be conducted between the DLT and the SBMT to assess and give recommendations based on reports submitted. Virtual meetings can be organized as the need arises. The Line supervisor as well as Curriculum Officers and SSSD personnel, will be expected to monitor implementation of the recommendations made.

School Supervisors' meetings: Weekly meetings based on the usual agenda must continue. Each Line Supervisor will report on schools under his/her purview which were visited and his/her proposed plan of action for the coming week. Reports must include all contact with schools whether virtual or physical. A termly report must be produced by each School Supervisor. The School Supervisor III will compile one report for submission to the Office of the DSS. These discussions ensure that all Supervisors are made aware of issues at all schools, facilitate the development of targeted interventions to address identified issues and inform the agenda for fraternity meetings.

Any other issues or concerns pertaining to the schools and the district office operations can also be discussed at the School Supervisors' meeting.

6.0 Orientation and Support

COVID - 19 has impacted on the social, emotional and economic well-being of families and undoubtedly the psychosocial status of our students. The student-centred approach of the Ministry of Education suggests that the following be considered:

- The SSSD, in collaboration with School Administration, must inform staff on methods of engaging with students after an extended period of absence from the physical classroom (reduced attention span, interaction, etc.).
- School Administrators must ensure that provision is made for SSSD personnel to interact with each class within the school term. The topics to be covered by SSSD are as follows:

Primary School

TOPIC	TARGET POPULATION	NUMBER OF SESSIONS
Debriefing of all students upon re-entry of face-to-face teaching / Orientation	Infant 1 – Std. 5	1 session per class
Personal Safety during the Pandemic	Infant 1 – Std 5	1 session per class
Good Touch / Bad Touch	Lower Primary	1 session per class
Diversity among people: respect, tolerance and brotherhood	Infant 1 – Std. 5	1 session per class
Effective Study Skills		
Independent/Online Learning	Stds. 2 - 5	1 session per class
Setting Personal and Academic Goals	Stds. 2 – 5	1 session per class
Understanding and applying effective exam taking strategies and relaxation techniques	Stds. 4 & 5	1 session per class

Secondary School

TOPIC	TARGET POPULATION	NUMBER OF SESSION
Building resiliency	Forms 1 – 5	1 session per class
Understanding diversity and interconnectedness	Forms 1 – 5	1 session per class
TOPIC	TARGET POPULATION	NUMBER OF SESSION
Student roles and responsibilities	Forms 1	1 session per class
Understanding the link between curriculum-based skills and the world of work	Forms 2	2 sessions per class
Knowledge of the relationship between school subjects and the world of work	Forms 3	2 sessions per class
Virtual Career Fairs	Forms 1-3	
Accessing Information: Skills in collating and classifying information; Sourcing from electronic media; Analysis and Synthesis of information	Forms 4	2 sessions per class

- Home Room periods must be time-tabled as a part of the orientation programme in the first week of the physical classes. Form/Class teachers will engage students in active discussions, lend support and give guidelines on adapting to the school environment. Form/Class teachers will be alert to any student who displays symptoms of any behaviour of concern and make necessary referrals to the SSSD.
- Deans (Secondary) are to be rostered for a session in the first week of physical classes to interact with students of the respective year groups on a class by class basis to reinforce student expectations in keeping with the guidelines.

- Administrators should liaise with the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or suitable NGO's to attend to the psychosocial needs of the staff. The TEPPDD has also scheduled sessions for staff.

6.1 Student Services

The MOE will be providing transport and meals via the Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) and National School Dietary Services Limited (NSDSL) to students who are registered for these programmes and will be attending face-to-face classes. Principals will be required to submit the names of students of the Standard 5 and Forms 4 to 6 who are registered for these services, so that arrangements can be made to facilitate the provision of these services.

7.0 Class Sizes and Timetabling

Classrooms are to be organised to facilitate 6 ft. (head-to-head) physical distances as mandated by the MOH. This means calculating the amount of students that can be accommodated in the existing teaching-learning spaces at the school.

Timetables must be carefully constructed to allow for remote and face-to-face classes for examination students with regards to Practicals, SBAs and IAs. As such, principals may exercise a degree of flexibility in the creation of timetables to ensure that all students are actively engaged on school days and that the educational needs of all students are met. Variations in timetable construction may take into consideration, for example, specific days for practical sessions, and non-rostering of teachers for online classes on the same day that they are rostered to conduct practical sessions. Additionally, care must be taken to ensure that Schemes of Work are carefully prepared so that all students preparing for the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) and Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) examinations are given the best opportunity to perform optimally. The timetable should be developed before the physical return of students and shared with staff, students, parents and the Line School Supervisor. The timetable must allow for a smooth transition to face-to-face classes with effect from February 2021.

Principals must ensure that lines of communication remain open and parents are aware of changes to timetabling schedules.

Critical staff shortages must be highlighted and brought to the attention of the Human Resource Division of the MOE through the established channels of communication.

The Substitute Teacher System has been repurposed to provide additional supervisory support for teachers. Schools are asked to indicate their need for Substitute Teachers through the usual channel.

8.0 Closing the Gap

In order to cater for students who were at a greater disadvantage during the period of school closure, and for those in need of extra assistance, the following options can be considered. **(only in schools with very small populations):**

- Assistance at level of the school
 - Rooms with computers and internet access, e.g. computer labs and libraries, may be made available to identified students to access online activities at scheduled times. Where possible, these students can be rostered to attend on particular days to have access to the online material/lessons.
 - These accommodations, which may involve students outside of Forms 4 - 6 and Standard 5, **must only be made with the expressed permission from the MOE, sought through the Office of the CEO.**

9.0 Administrative Responsibilities

- Assessment

In addition to formative assessments, summative assessments can now be introduced. Summative assessments remain part of the preparations for students of examination classes.

The CPDD and the TEPPDD will ensure that teachers are familiar with the purpose and methods of the two types of assessment and provide the necessary training for online implementation.

- Information and Communication:
 - School Supervisors should ensure that School Administrators are kept abreast of relevant information from Head Office. School Administrators in turn, should communicate with staff, parents and other key stakeholders on a scheduled basis and as needed.
 - The schools' online database/ records should be further developed to include:
 - All information contained in the Students' Cumulative Record Cards
 - Valid parents' address, email address (if available), other contact information and ID card number
 - National School Dietary Services Limited (NSDSL) listing
 - Students accessing the Ministry of Education sponsored Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) transport service
 - Students receiving social welfare
 - Any other information as may be deemed necessary.

All information should be verified on a termly basis.

- Additionally, in collaboration with the SSSD, sessions to assist parents in coping with the changed school environment will continue. Schools must reach out to parents either virtually or via printed material to inform as to how Term II will be conducted.
- Training:

Training of teachers in ICT and online teaching and assessment will continue as needed. In addition to training provided by the Teacher Education Performance and Professional Development Division, Administrators/HODs can organize sessions based on identified needs.
- Students and Teachers Medically At-Risk re COVID-19:

Students and teachers who are deemed to be medically at risk **and cannot physically attend school**, must provide a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner to the District Health Unit. In the case of students, parents must liaise with the school for alternate teaching-learning arrangements. In the case of teachers, arrangements must be made so that job-related duties and responsibilities can be honoured.
- Resumption of Duty After Approved Leave:

Members of staff who were on approved leave, must provide a hard copy of a Resumption of Duty form to the principal.

- Physical Attendance at School:

The Principal may ask members of staff to occasionally report physically to school to attend to administrative matters.

The MOE continues work on the following:

- Provision of devices and connectivity to students in need.

10.0 Additional Activities

10.1 Physical Infrastructure:

Principals are asked to ensure that:

- Requests for critical infrastructural works are submitted in a timely manner via the online School Infrastructural Management System (SIMS).
- Visits by officers of the Education Facilities Planning and Procurement Division (EFPPD) for school compound assessment are facilitated.
- Markers for physical distancing are strategically placed in offices, cafeterias, entrance to washrooms, hall, etc. (see checklist for administrators).
- Rooms/areas are identified as quarantine/screening rooms as per guidelines issued by the MOH.
- Entry and exit points are equipped with hand-washing/sanitization stations.
- Where possible, hand sanitizer dispensers are set up at various locations throughout the School.

10.2 Water Storage:

Principals are asked to ensure that:

- Water tanks are cleaned and filled as scheduled.
- The water pump is serviced as scheduled and remains functional.
- 50% storage capacity is maintained at all times.

- A system to minimise wastage of water is implemented e.g. timely repair of leaks; ensuring that taps are not left on.

10.3 Communication:

Principals are asked to ensure that:

- Signage indicating the following are clearly visible at the entrance and other key areas of the school:
 - Persons with flu like symptoms will not be allowed entry to the compound.
 - The respiratory etiquette to be followed when coughing and sneezing.
 - The maximum capacity of each room (including library, washrooms, etc.) subject to physical distancing guidelines.
 - The preventative and protective measures.
 - Out of bound areas are clearly marked.
- Form teachers, Deans, Heads of Department have access to updated information for parents and students.
- Parents are apprised of the safety protocols and procedures in operation and enlist their support in reinforcing same with their children.
- Staff, students, and parents/guardians are aware of the following:
 - structure of timetable
 - arrangements for break and lunch
 - policy for personal hygiene
 - the drop off and pick up policies of the school
- Regular reminders are communicated on the method of operation in the “New Normal”.

10.4 Classrooms and Staffrooms:

- Furniture must be arranged so that student and staffroom seating satisfy the physical distancing requirement as stated by the Ministry of Health.
- There must be proper ventilation throughout the school area inclusive of class, staff rooms, administrative areas and any area used for quarantine purposes. Where possible, the use of air-conditioning should be minimised and windows and doors left open.

Where the building is not designed to allow for the flow of natural air, the air conditioning units must be in good working order.

10.5 Washroom Facilities:

- An adequate supply of running water and liquid soap must be readily available at all times.
- Paper towels or hand dryers where possible, should be made available in washrooms.
- Washrooms must be cleaned frequently.
- Door handles and taps must be frequently sanitised with the recommended alkaline solution or alcohol.

10.6 Cleaning and Sanitising:

- Administrators must be familiar with the contractual agreement of maintenance workers.
- The school should implement a cleaning and disinfecting schedule to ensure that:
 - All surfaces are wiped with the Ministry of Health's recommended mixture of bleach and water/ sanitising solution on a daily basis before entry and after all have exited the room. Sanitising wipes can be used.
 - High-traffic areas and high-contact surfaces are frequently sanitised with the recommended disinfecting solutions.
 - All classrooms and specialty rooms are cleaned regularly and recorded on the work schedule.
 - Cleaning and sanitisation is done before and after opening and closing of schools.
 - Furniture in use is sanitised before being occupied by another person.
 - Cleaning or disinfecting/sanitising product residues are not left on table surfaces, and there is adequate ventilation when disinfecting/sanitizing.
 - General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises occur at least once a day.
 - The compound is free of debris and moss.
 - The drains are cleaned and the grass cut.
- As far as possible, garbage bins have swing type lids and garbage is disposed of securely. The garbage bins should be strategically placed at multiple locations throughout the school inclusive of class and staff rooms and administrative areas to allow persons to dispose of gloves, tissues or disinfecting wipes

- Sinks are installed at the entrance of the compound and, where possible, at strategic areas throughout the compound.
- Where possible, that hand sanitizing dispensers be placed at identified parts of the school.

10.7 Personal Responsibility:

Parents/guardians and staff shall work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19, by reinforcing the following with the students:

- ***Sharing***
Sharing of materials such as books, stationery, food, drinks and snacks as well as sanitisers and other personal items, among or between students should not be permitted.
- ***Personal Hygiene***
 - All students should be encouraged to walk with a personal supply of sanitiser and/or hand soap.
 - The wearing of masks by staff and students is expected and any changes will be guided by the Ministry of Health.
 - Students must wash their hands with soap and water after using the washrooms.
 - Students must engage in frequent hand washing.
- ***Students/Staff with Flu-like Symptoms***
 - Students/staff experiencing flu-like symptoms **MUST** stay at home.
 - Once an individual was ill with flu-like symptoms within two weeks prior to reporting to school, written clearance from the District Medical Team assigned to the particular school must be presented. This can be arranged through the Principal.
 -
- ***Respiratory Etiquette***
 - If the need to cough or sneeze arises, do so into the sleeves/elbows or in a tissue which must be discarded in a covered bin immediately. Hands to be sanitised immediately after disposing of tissue.
 - Masks must be kept on when sneezing or coughing.
 - Rags are not allowed.

- ***Parental Responsibility***

- Parents are to be encouraged to attend all parent sessions and PTA meetings to keep updated on school policy.
- Parents must inform the school if their children begin displaying flu-like symptoms at home or if their children have been identified as primary contacts.
- Parents must provide current and accurate contact information, inclusive of an emergency contact number, and email address.
- Parents must respond to calls from the school to pick up their children /charges in a timely manner.
- Parents must acquire and submit a certificate of medical clearance for the student as needed through the principal.
- Parents are to ensure that as far as possible, their child always has a clean mask and a supply of hand sanitizer in his/her possession.
- Parents must inform children of health protocols and guidelines from the Ministry of Health.

11.0 Procedure for dealing with positive COVID-19 cases or COVID-19 symptoms

Schools must follow specific protocols in the event of staff or students:

- Displaying flu-like symptoms
- Testing positive of COVID-19
- Being identified as a primary contact of a person testing positive for COVID-19
- Being medically cleared to re-enter the school population after being suspected/confirmed to have contracted COVID-19
- Being medically cleared to enter the school population if another medical condition (e.g. allergies is causing the display of flu-like symptoms which would result in being barred from entry to the school compound.

The following protocols should be observed:

- If the school is informed by the CMOH that a member of the school population has tested positive:

- The School Supervisor and District Medical Team must be immediately alerted.
- A request for written correspondence from the CMOH to the principal must be made. An email from the CMOH to be followed by official letter will suffice.
- The email and letter from the CMOH must be forwarded to the School Supervisor upon receipt.
- The school shall be closed immediately and arrangements for sanitisation and Public Health clearance must be made before reopening. Schools must not be reopened before a minimum of three days have lapsed unless otherwise advised by the District Medical Team or Health Officials.
- Information as required by the MOH for contact tracing must be forwarded. This involves the preparation of a database of all students, staff and visitors who were on the compound at the same time as the infected individual. The database should include the following:
 - a) Name of infected person
 - b) The name of parent if infected person is a student
 - c) Telephone contact
 - d) Residential address
 - e) Email address
 - f) Contact information for all persons who would have been in direct contact with the infected person.
- If the infected person is a student, the class to which he/she belongs is expected to stay at home and monitor their health for a period of fourteen (14) days. At the end of this period, students without symptoms can report to school.

Based on the contact tracing process, the advice of the medical professionals will be adhered to with regard to the persons required to stay at home in the event that a member of the school population tests positive for COVID-19.

A Principal's report must be submitted to the School Supervisor and the District Medical Team and include a copy of the school's protocol to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and a list of the areas on the compound that the student/other individual visited.

- If the school is informed by the infected individual, the School Supervisor and District Medical Team must be immediately contacted for further advice. If the report is not substantiated by a positive COVID-19 test, staff and students who have recently had close contact (less than 6 ft. for fifteen minutes or more) with the COVID-19 case

should stay at home and monitor their health for a period of fourteen (14) days. At the end of this period, staff or students without symptoms can report to school.

- If a staff member or student has been identified as a primary contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, it is the obligation of the staff member or parent to inform the school principal immediately and provide a copy of the letter indicating such.
- Staff members or students who have tested positive for COVID-19 must present evidence of a negative test and receive medical clearance from the District Medical Team. This should be presented to the principal before being allowed to enter the school's compound.

OR

- If the report is substantiated by a positive COVID-19 test, the School Supervisor and the District Medical Team should be immediately alerted and the procedure outlined previously, including the closure of the school, should be followed.

12.0 Age-Specific Health Education (Taken from MOH Guidelines)

These guidelines should be contextualised based on the specific needs of children and include:

- **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Centres**

In ECCE centres, the relative impact of physical distancing among children is likely small based on the high degree of difficulty to implement. In this regard, the preschool should focus on more effective risk mitigation strategies using cartoons, puppets or dolls and songs to demonstrate the practice of hand hygiene and fostering safe caring behaviours when coughing and/or sneezing. Where possible, outdoor spaces should be utilised.

- **Primary Schools**

In Primary schools, the emphasis should be on the reinforcement of hygiene practices through adherence to the rules and protocols of the Guidelines. The teachers should create a classroom and school environment with pictorial displays and use special projects to reinforce these Guidelines such as quiz competitions and assignments. Any concerns arising with the practice of these guidelines should be communicated to students as required. The focus should be on the practice of healthy behaviours within the school and home environments. Where possible, outdoor spaces should be utilised.

- **Secondary Schools**

The key intervention in Secondary Schools is the use of self-monitoring among students to ensure adherence to the Guidelines. The focus should be on the practice of good health behaviours and hygiene practices to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19. The adjustment to the new normal should be understood through special projects and assignments. Social and interactive forums such as debates should be part of the schools' activities to foster greater understanding and awareness of these guidelines.

- **Special Education**

Every child and adolescent with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education and is entitled to special education services based on their individualized education programme (IEP). Students receiving special education services may be more negatively affected by distance-learning and may be disproportionately impacted by interruptions in regular education. It may not be feasible, depending on the needs of the individual child and adolescent, to adhere both to distancing guidelines and the criteria outlined in a specific IEP. Attempts to meet physical distancing guidelines should meet the needs of the individual child and may require creative solutions, often on a case-by-case basis.

13.0 General protocols

All persons should be educated, engaged and empowered to adjust to the New Normal as per the following:

- Wear masks in public;
- Maintain a 6 ft. (head-to-head) distance from others;
- Stay home if ill;
- Wash hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol based sanitiser;
- Cough into a tissue or into the crook of elbow;
- Avoid touching of face; and
- Clean then sanitise surfaces (e.g. table tops, door knobs and cell phones).

14.0 Phase III Proposed Reopening

The proposed Phase III takes into consideration children with special needs, Standard 4s and where possible, the entire student body for schools with a small student population. The incidence of students at both the primary and secondary levels who are not accessing online or packaged curriculum delivery, warrants that consideration also be given to roster these students to attend school. This is to mitigate against a possible increase in the number of dropouts and to address the educational needs of students. The number of these students that can be catered for and the frequency of their physical attendance at school will be determined by the physical capacity of the school, and can be factored into the school's individual reopening plan.

Appendix 1**Checklist for school administrators and school based intervention/crisis management team****Facilities:**

- Adequate and clean toilets
- Soap available for handwashing at all taps
- Schedule for monitoring and replenishing of soap and hand sanitiser
- Staff room arranged to facilitate social distancing
- Classroom arranged to facilitate social distancing
- Sufficient ventilation in classrooms
- Availability of cleaning and sanitising supplies for disinfecting surfaces and for disinfection of small items
- Availability of suitable area for quarantine / sick bay
- Roster for sanitising door knobs and frequently used surfaces

Communication and Basic Operations:

- All staff perform assigned role in monitoring student interactions
- All staff perform revised roles as per school committees and designations
- Systems are in place to ensure adherence to visitors policy (visitors wash hands before being escorted to the office; no entry on compound without mask, etc.)
- Parents are made aware of the visitor's policy and requirements for students
- Form / class teachers reiterate with students the hand washing policy, cough and sneeze etiquette
- Social distance floor markers are clearly visible in the cafeteria, administration office, outside washrooms and handwashing stations/ sinks
- Schedule for lunch/break time shared with staff, parents and students
- Schedule developed for cleaning classrooms and sanitization of furniture
- Age appropriate signage promoting covid protocols, prominently displayed
- School Policy for persons with flu-like symptoms shared with stakeholders
- Updated contacts for all students
- Revised list for NSDSL and PTSC
- Schedule for monitoring of water stores developed and implemented

Checklist for parents/ caregivers and community members

- Monitor children's health and keep them home from school if they are ill
- Ensure children are equipped with a clean mask, tissues, hand soap and sanitizers
- Reinforce the importance of social distancing to children
- Teach and model good hygiene practices
 - Wash hands with soap and water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty
 - Ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets or latrines are clean
 - Cough and sneeze into a tissue or elbow and avoid touching face, eyes, mouth and nose
 - Ensure safe disposal of used tissue and garbage in general
- Encourage children to ask questions when unsure
- Monitor children's reactions to stress, be patient and understanding
- Co-ordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts (through parent-teacher committees, etc.)
- Provide school with updated contact information and provide alternative emergency contact numbers
- Respond in a timely manner when contacted by your child's school
- Make arrangements for supervision of children
- Ensure that children attend online sessions/collect and return packaged material as scheduled/ face to face classes as timetabled
Keep abreast of their children's timetable to facilitate monitoring of the times at school and at home
- Attend all parent sessions organized by the school
- Notify the school if anyone in your household has tested positive for coronavirus

Checklist for students

- Ask questions, educate self and get information from reliable sources
- Wash your hands frequently, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Practice social distancing whilst away from home
- Always have a supply of mask, tissue, hand soap and sanitiser when leaving home
- Do not touch your face
- Do not share books, stationery, cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others
- Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy
- Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members
- Do not stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick
- Tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver if you feel sick.

Appendix 2

County Medical Officers of Health

No.	Title	First Name	Last Name	County/ Position	Telephone	Fax	Address 1	Address 2	Email
1.	Dr.	Harry	Smith	St. George West	624-3439 625-4151	624-9169	#3 Jerningham Place	BELMONT	cmoh.sgw@nwrha.co.tt harry.smith@health.gov.tt
2.	Dr.	Osafo	Fraser	St. George East	667-5273 667-3693 667-6688	667-5273	Queen Mary Avenue	ARIMA	cmoeast@gmail.com cmoeast@hotmail.com osafo.fraser@health.gov.tt
3.	Dr.	Robert	Naidike	Nariva/ Mayaro	222-5005 Ext. 3003	222-5014	Narine Ramrattan Building, Naparima Mayaro Rd	RIO CLARO	cmohnama.erha@gmail.com nssookhoo@hotmail.com natasha.sookhoo@health.gov.tt
4.	Dr.	Natasha	Sookhoo	Victoria	653-0515 652-2716	653-0515	160 Pointe-a-Pierre Road, Vistabella	SAN FERNANDO	robert.naidike@health.gov.tt
5.	Dr.	Tiffany	Hoyte	Tobago	639-3751	635-1567	C/o Scarborough Health Centre	TOBAGO	thoyte@hotmail.com
6.	Dr.	Allana	Quamina-Best	St. Andrew/ St. David	668-2053-55	668-3532	Cor. Blake Avenue & Eastern Main Road	GUAICO	allana.best@health.gov.tt
7.	Dr.	Jeanine	St. Bernard	Caroni	226-4400 Ext. 4402	636-3960	Southern Main Road	COUVA	jeanine.stbernard@health.gov.tt
8.	Dr.	Roger	Ramjohn	St. George Central	285-8992	675-5253	Corner Hassanali Street and El Socorro Main Road,	SAN JUAN	roger.ramjohn@health.gov.tt
9.	Dr.	Kalicharan	Ramnarine	St. Patrick	649-2056	649-1827	Allies Street, Health Administration Building	SIPARIA	kalicharan.ramnarine@health.gov.tt kali0773@gmail.com

