

**Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
Health Protection Measures for Schools  
(applicable during periods when face-to-face classes  
are held in the 2022/23 school year)**

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## **1. Vaccination**

- Vaccination is the most effective safeguard measure against COVID-19 and can reduce the risk of severe cases and fatalities. Schools should strengthen the promotion of vaccination to students (especially boarders of special schools), parents, as well as their family members, and encourage them to get vaccinated actively. Schools can add the link of the website of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme to the school website to facilitate students and parents to obtain the latest vaccination information. The relevant link is as follows:  
<https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/>

### **1.1 Calculation of number of vaccine dosage**

- If you have never been infected with COVID-19 and your immunity is normal: for Sinovac vaccine as the primary series, primary and secondary school students are recommended to receive three doses; for BioNTech vaccine as the primary series, students aged 5 to 11 are recommended to receive two doses, while students aged 12 years or above are recommended to receive three doses.
- In general, a person who has been infected with COVID-19 requires one less dose of COVID-19 vaccine than others.
- In order to maximise the vaccines' effectiveness and enhance the immune response after vaccination, a minimum interval of 14 days between a dose and a COVID-19 infection episode is required. If an individual acquired COVID-19 infection and was tested positive for the first time within 14 days after receiving vaccination, they should not take one less dose of COVID-19 vaccine despite this infection episode. For example, when counting whether vaccinated students having fulfilled the requirements for participating in extra-curricular activities after face-to-face classes:

- Students who have never been vaccinated can be vaccinated 30 days after recovery. Students of any age group who choose to receive the Sinovac vaccine or students aged 18 or above who choose to receive the BioNTech vaccine should receive a total of two doses of the vaccine after recovery. Students aged 5 to 17 who choose the BioNTech vaccine will only need one dose of the vaccine after recovery. For details, please refer to the following link:  
[https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered_ENG.pdf)
  
- For recovered students who have received their first dose of vaccine at least 14 days before infection: students of any age group who have received a dose of Sinovac vaccine prior to infection, or students aged 18 or above who have received a dose of BioNTech vaccine prior to infection are only required to get one dose of the vaccine after recovery. Students aged 5 to 17 who have been vaccinated with a dose of BioNTech vaccine before infection are not required to receive further doses after recovery. They will be considered to have met the vaccination requirements, and can be calculated as a percentage required for schools to apply for whole-day face-to-face class, as well as to participate in non-academic extra-curricular activities after school or another half-day of school. For relevant vaccination requirements, please refer to the following link :  
[https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered\\_2\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/recovered_2_ENG.pdf)
  
- Students who have received two doses of the vaccine prior to infection are considered to have met the vaccination requirements and do not need to receive further doses after recovery.
  
- For a student who is required to receive the third dose of vaccine, if he/she has already received two doses but is still within the time interval waiting to receive the third dose, he/she will be considered as meeting the third-dose requirement for the time being but the student concerned should

receive the third dose within one week after he/she is eligible to do so<sup>1</sup>.

- All students who have received three doses of the vaccine will be considered to have met the vaccination requirements on the day and do not need to wait more than 14 days after vaccination. For students aged 5 to 11 who only need to receive two doses of BioNTech vaccine and students aged 5 to 17 who are vaccinated with one dose of BioNTech vaccine after recovery, they still need to wait for more than 14 days after vaccination before they are considered to have met the vaccination requirements.
- The Government will update the vaccination arrangements for various age groups from time to time, including the required dosage for vaccination (including the third dose, and fourth dose for groups with specific needs). Schools may share the relevant information to parents to enhance their understanding and encourage them to arrange their children to get vaccinated as early as possible. For details, please refer to the following website:  
<https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/recommendedDoses>

## 1.2 Arrangements on “Vaccine Pass”

- The “Vaccine Pass” arrangements have been implemented since 24 February 2022. Except for exempted persons, all teaching staff and non-teaching staff, persons providing on-campus services and visitors of kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-child care centres (collectively referred to as “KGs” thereafter), primary schools and secondary schools (including special schools and their boarding sections as well as schools offering non-local curriculum), and private schools offering non-formal curriculum (commonly known as “tutorial schools”) are required to

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<sup>1</sup> Students having received two doses of vaccine on or before 1 October 2022 who are still within the time interval waiting to receive the third dose of vaccine will be regarded as meeting the respective vaccination requirements. Such students are allowed to: (a) attend whole-day classes; (b) return to school on the other half-day for any reasons; (c) take part in mask-off activities (including luncheon); (d) reside in the boarding sections; (e) be counted as a valid entry in the commendation scheme. These students should take the third dose of vaccine within 1 week after they are eligible to do so.

comply with the requirements of “Vaccine Pass” prior to their entry into school premises. The Government announced on 20 March 2022 the adjustment of the vaccination requirements for the “Vaccine Pass” (including receiving the third dose of vaccination) to further encourage members of the public to receive vaccination as early as possible. Schools should tie in with the requirements and make relevant arrangements with details as follows:

- (i) Teaching staff or non-teaching staff directly employed by schools should have received at least the following number of doses according to the specified deadlines :

On or before 24 February 2022	On or before 21 April 2022	On or after 31 May 2022
First dose	Second dose	i. Second dose, if received the second dose for less than 5 months; ii. Third dose, if received the second dose for more than 5 months

- (ii) For other persons entering the school premises, they should follow the latest arrangements for other premises under the “Vaccine Pass”. For details, please refer to the website: <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/vaccine-pass.html>

- For those exempted individuals who have not received COVID-19 vaccine as required, they are subject to regular virus test on a 7-day cycle basis. The specimens must be collected by combined nasal and throat swabs, but not by self-testing kits. The testing results of the deep throat saliva test or **Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)** are not accepted.

- Teachers, school staff and other persons concerned, after completion of the tests, should retain and present the Short Message Service (SMS) messages, laboratory testing reports or related proofs containing the test results to the schools for record. Schools should maintain records of the negative test results of teachers, school staff or persons concerned.
  
- The relevant measures will be implemented during the resumption of face-to-face classes, suspension of face-to-face classes and school holidays. The above “Vaccine Pass” arrangements are not applicable to a school’s own students (including mature students aged over 18 attending evening schools). In addition, parents or guardians accompanying students to schools for vaccination or receiving vaccination in person on school campus, or visitors from other schools participating in school activities as students (for example, attending admission interviews or inter-school competitions), are also exempted from the requirements of “Vaccine Pass”. Nonetheless, other persons aged 12 or above visiting schools as visitors (for example, participating in a school anniversary event as general public), are required to comply with the above arrangements for “Vaccine Pass”. Regarding the Government lowering the applicable age of “Vaccine Pass” to 5 years old, starting from 30 September 2022, visitors aged 5 years or above (for example, participating in a school anniversary event as general public), are required to comply with the above arrangements for “Vaccine Pass”, otherwise schools should prevent the persons concerned from entering school premises.
  
- Schools should properly register and maintain a clear record of vaccination and medical exemption properly, inform all related stakeholders (including teachers and school staff, school bus operators, tuck shop operators, parents, nannies and volunteers, etc.) of the related arrangements before the implementation of “Vaccine Pass”.
  
- To avoid crowd gatherings of parents for picking up their children, the Education Bureau (EDB) suggested that schools properly arrange the pickup time and locations according to their school-based circumstances.

In principle, all persons entering school premises to pick up their children should observe the arrangements of “Vaccine Pass”. If a school has special needs or actual operational difficulties, for example, that the school entrance is located right next to a road where gathering of parents outside the schools for pickup is not feasible, schools may consider reserving an area as a buffer zone for individual parents not yet fulfilling with the “Vaccine Pass” arrangements, to wait for and pick up their children. Schools should impose a limit on the maximum number of persons within the buffer zone and maintain appropriate social distances. We recommend that the buffer zone should be set up in a separate school entrance or open space in order to stay away from crowds.

- If staff quarters are located inside the school premises, household members residing with teachers or school staff can enter the quarters using a separate entrance, or if their purpose of passing through the school area is only to enter or leave the quarters, the requirements for “Vaccine Pass” and “Leave Home Safe” do not apply to these household members. Nonetheless, if any household members visit other parts of the school premises apart from the staff quarters, they should follow the requirements for visitors by abiding by the “Vaccine Pass” and “Leave Home Safe”.

### **1.3 Arrangements on “Leave Home Safe”**

- To tie in with the full implementation of “Vaccine Pass” arrangements from 24 February 2022, the Government will enhance the “LeaveHomeSafe” mobile application from time to time on a need basis to facilitate the premises to check the vaccination records of visitors. For persons entering school premises (including teachers and school staff, persons providing on-campus services, and visitors etc.) using the upgraded version of mobile application and having stored the COVID-19 vaccination records (that is, electronic vaccination records), the ‘COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificates’ (that is, ‘exemption certificates’) or ‘recovery record QR Codes’ in the mobile applications after these persons have successfully scanned the QR codes or recovery

records, such records in the mobile application will be shown automatically to facilitate the persons-in-charge of the premises to check whether the visitors are able to meet the relevant vaccination requirements.

- In addition, the Government announced on 8 August 2022 that the “Vaccine Pass” function would be strengthened and the quarantine arrangements for those persons arriving in Hong Kong would be adjusted. Starting from 9 August 2022, cases confirmed with COVID-19 have been categorised as persons with a “Red Code”, and inbound persons from overseas places or Taiwan have been categorised as persons with an “Amber Code”. Their “Vaccine Pass” QR codes are displayed in red or amber accordingly.
- Schools should not allow persons with "Red Code" (that is, confirmed cases) to enter the school premises in accordance with relevant requirements. The arrangement applies to persons working or studying at school and visitors. If a school notices that a person with a "Red Code" is attempting to enter the school premises, the school should stop such person from entering. Since the person concerned should not have left his/her quarantine location, the school should report such case to the Police immediately.
- If individual school staff and students are inbound persons and are required to undergo quarantine arrangements, even if they have received the required number of doses of COVID-19 vaccine under the prevailing arrangements of the EDB, they must obtain at least the “Amber Code” before returning to school to work and study during medical surveillance. In order to allow students with “Amber Code” to have equal learning opportunities, schools should allow these students to return to school for face-to-face classes. The school staff/students concerned need to meet the requirement of obtaining a negative rapid antigen test (RAT) result before returning to school to work/study every day. Anyone with an “Amber Code” is not allowed to enter the school premises as a visitor (such as attending school ceremonies as a member of the public). Schools should pay attention from time to time to the latest arrangements announced by the Government on quarantine requirements on arrival in Hong Kong.

- Since students are exempted from using "LeaveHomeSafe" when entering the school premises, schools should remind students to proactively declare their status of having "Red Code" or "Amber Code". For students having "Red Code", they are not allowed to go back to school; for those having "Amber Code", they can return to school after obtaining a negative RAT result on each school day. Schools are obliged to proactively check all visitors to ensure that they are not holding a "Red Code" or an "Amber Code".
- If schools set up buffer zones for parents to pick up and drop off their children, schools should also remind these parents that if they are having "Red Code" or "Amber Code", they are not allowed to enter the school premises/buffer zones, and should arrange other relatives not having "Red Code" or "Amber Code" to pick up and drop off their children.
- If individuals entering the school premises use the old versions of the mobile application, school personnel should check the hardcopies of the visitors' vaccination record, electronic vaccination records, exemption certificates or recovery records before they enter the school premises in order to ensure their compliance with the "Vaccine Pass" requirements.
- Schools are not required to use the 'QR Code Verification Scanner' mobile application to scan and maintain the electronic vaccination records, exemption certificates or recovery record QR codes of persons entering the school premises. Nevertheless, schools could install and use the said application out of their own volition.
- To facilitate the checking of visitors by schools, schools should promote the latest version of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application to parents and other frequent visitors.

#### **1.4 Facilitation Measures for Vaccination**

- To facilitate vaccination of students through arrangements made by schools, schools (including KGs, primary schools and secondary schools)

can arrange vaccination via the following means:

(i) Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) at COVID-19 Vaccination Programme at Non-Clinic Settings (i.e. doctors providing outreach on-campus vaccination service) (applicable to KGs, primary schools and secondary schools. Schools may contact VSS doctors directly for arrangement.)	Sinovac vaccine (aged 6 months or above)
(ii) Community Vaccination Centre (CVC) through group bookings made by schools	Sinovac vaccine (6 months or above) BioNTech vaccine (aged 12 or above)
(iii) Designated Student Health Service Centre of the Department of Health (DH) through group bookings made by schools (only applicable for students)	Sinovac vaccine (students aged 3 to 17)
(iv) Children Community Vaccination Centre through group bookings made by schools	BioNTech vaccine (aged 5 to 11)

- For details of the interval between each dosage recommended by the health experts, please refer to the following website:  
[https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/FAQ\\_children\\_adolescents\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/FAQ_children_adolescents_ENG.pdf)

## 2. Precautionary Measures

### 2.1 General Principles

- Maintain appropriate social distance with other people, avoid going to crowded or staying in poorly ventilated places;
- Maintain good personal hygiene, perform hand hygiene properly and

- avoid touching eyes, noses and mouths;
- Maintain good environmental hygiene by frequent cleaning and disinfection;
  - Maintain healthy life style, keep strong, and strengthen the immune system;
  - If having fever or respiratory symptoms, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice immediately.

## **2.2 Environmental Hygiene**

### **2.2.1 Ventilation**

- Schools should maintain good indoor ventilation. Doors/windows of school halls, classrooms and special rooms should be kept open as appropriate to increase flow of fresh air. If fans (e.g. wall, circulating or exhaust fans) are used in indoor areas, exchange of outdoor air should be increased at the same time by, say, opening windows or maximising fresh air intake of air conditioners. Schools should minimise as far as possible having air blowing directly from one person (or a group of people) to another. If air-conditioning systems are used, schools should open windows from time to time to ensure there is sufficient fresh air supply, and should ensure that the air-conditioning systems function normally. For rooms without windows or are poorly ventilated, schools should install adequate air purifiers in order to minimise indoor pollutants or viruses. The dust-filters of air-conditioning systems should be cleaned and the filters of air purifiers should be replaced regularly. Schools should also ensure that exhaust fans are located on the different walls / far from the air conditioners to reduce the risk of drawing back the exhausted air into the indoor areas. The ventilation inlets or outlets must not be obstructed.
- Schools should refer to the guidelines “A Supplement on Ventilation” issued by the DH in 2022 and observe the relevant stipulations. For details, please refer to the website:

[https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/supplement\\_on\\_school\\_ventilation\\_eng.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/supplement_on_school_ventilation_eng.pdf)

## **2.2.2 Cleaning and Disinfection**

- School premises (including boarding section, if applicable) including frequently used classrooms, special rooms, tuck shops/canteens (if any), toilets, etc., should be frequently cleaned and disinfected to ensure their cleanliness and hygiene. To disinfect the school premises, first use 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water) to wipe, leave for 15-30 minutes, and then rinse with water and wipe dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70% alcohol. For schools with boarding section, a cleansing timetable should be prepared and staff should pay special attention to frequently touched utilities such as door handles, elevator buttons etc. Schools should ensure that there are sufficient masks, gloves, 70-80% alcohol-based hand sanitisers, household bleaches and thermometers in the dormitory.
- To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in schools, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) advises schools not to use drinking fountains. Schools should close all drinking fountains on campuses.
- Liquid soap and disposable paper towels should be provided at places where there are handwashing facilities, e.g. toilets, kitchens, pantries, tuck shops, canteens, art rooms, home economics rooms and other activity rooms. 70-80% alcohol-based hand sanitisers should be provided in places where handwashing facilities are not available, e.g. entrances of school and individual floor of school buildings.
- Schools should keep toilets clean and dry and provide adequate hand washing facilities including liquid soap, disposable paper towels and lidded rubbish bins. Besides, schools should ensure that the flushing

system of the toilets are in proper function at all times, and that users keep toilet lids closed when flushing. For cases where there are no lids for the toilets (such as squat toilets), it is suggested that schools should reduce the amount of objects stored inside the concerned toilet compartments to ensure that the ventilation facilities (e.g. exhaust fans) function normally and to maintain good ventilation. Schools should also disinfect such toilets with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach regularly, and consider installing lids for the toilets or replace the squat toilets with seating toilets. Students should avoid using toilets without lids for defecation. Schools should not alter the drains and pipes without prior authorization, and should pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet once a week.

- When school premises are contaminated by secretions, vomitus or excreta spillage, use strong absorbent disposable paper towels to wipe them away, then disinfect the surface and the neighbouring area with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water), leave for 15-30 minutes, rinse with water and wipe dry afterwards. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70% alcohol. For places contaminated by blood, use 1 in 4 diluted household bleach instead.

**Recommended Use of Household Bleach (5.25% hypochlorite solution)**

Dilution ratio	Concentration	Preparation	Usage
1 in 4	10,000 ppm (1%)	One part of household bleach (5.25% hypochlorite solution) in 4 parts of water	For facilities contaminated with blood spillage
1 in 49	1,000 ppm (0.1%)	One part of household bleach (5.25% hypochlorite solution) in 49 parts of water	For surfaces or articles contaminated with vomitus, excreta or secretions
1 in 99	500 ppm (0.05%)	One part of household bleach (5.25% hypochlorite solution) in 99 parts of water	For general environmental cleaning

- Schools can make reference to the CHP’s guidelines, **“Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)”** (Annex 1) for details.

### **2.3 Hygiene and Seating Arrangements of School Buses and School Private Light Buses**

- Schools should also ensure that school bus compartments are clean and disinfected. The procedure is : first use 1 to 99 diluted household bleach to wipe, leave for 15-30 minutes, and then rinse with water and wipe dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70% alcohol. Special attention should be paid to the seats, handrails, seat belts and their locks as well as the gas ports.
- Maintain good ventilation in school bus compartments, ensure smooth operation of the air conditioning systems, and wash and check the filtering facilities and pipes regularly so as to ensure their proper operation. Ensure that there is sufficient supply of fresh air in school bus compartments, and open the windows if possible and safe.
- Drivers, nannies and students should wear well-fitted surgical masks properly before boarding and should not remove the masks during the journey. Schools should seek the assistance of school bus and school private light bus operators to enforce the mask-wearing requirement. Maximise the use of space in the school bus compartment in order to allow students to distance themselves by decentralised seating arrangements if feasible.
- To ensure the hygiene and safety of school buses and school private light buses, schools should require the drivers and nannies to check their body temperatures and undergo RAT every day before going to work. Anyone having positive results or fever must not get on board and drive, and must inform the schools and parents immediately for alternative arrangement. Besides, nannies should take the body temperatures of students before getting on board as far as practicable.
- When the school bus driver, school private light bus driver or nanny is

found to be a confirmed case or a close contact of COVID-19, he/she will receive medical treatments / be put under quarantine / isolation/ undergo COVID-19 test. He/she must not go to work and should inform the schools in person or through the service providers immediately. If he/she is defined as a “person subject to compulsory testing”, he/she must undergo virus tests during the specified period as instructed by CHP, and obtain a negative test result before returning to work.

- Schools and the school bus service providers can make reference to the CHP’s guidelines, “**Health Advice on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) for Drivers, Crews and Operational Staff for Public Transport**” (Annex 2), and distribute the document to all school bus drivers, school private light bus drivers and nannies. They should strictly follow the health advice.

## 2.4 Personal Hygiene

- Schools should remind staff and students to take good care of personal hygiene. Whenever coughing or sneezing, students should use tissue paper to cover their mouth and nose. They should dispose of soiled tissue paper in lidded rubbish bins properly and wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water. If staff and students have fever, respiratory symptoms, or sudden loss of taste or smell, they must wear well-fitted surgical masks and should not return to work or school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice immediately.
- Schools should post notices to urge staff and students to wash their hands with liquid soap. To prevent infection, schools are reminded not to provide shared towels for using. In order to increase the capacity of schools to step up cleaning and disinfection of school premises, and provide students, especially young children, with sufficient time for hand washing, schools may consider adjusting their originally scheduled timetable or extending the recess time whenever necessary.

- Schools may make reference to CHP’s guidelines, “**Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**” (**Annex 1**), and remind the staff and students to pay attention to the following practices of personal hygiene:

#### **2.4.1 Proper Hand Hygiene**

- Hand hygiene procedures should be performed properly before touching eyes, noses or mouths, before eating, after using the toilets and touching public facilities such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels, door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by secretion of respiratory tract (e.g. after coughing or sneezing). When hands are visibly soiled, liquid soap with water should be used to wash hands. If hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene procedures with 70-80% alcohol-based hand sanitisers is also an effective alternative. For methods and steps on performing hand hygiene procedures, schools can make reference to CHP’s guidelines, “**Proper Hand Hygiene**” (**Annex 3**).

#### **2.4.2 Proper Use of Masks**

- In general, staff and students must wear well-fitted surgical masks at all times in school premises, on vehicles and in crowded environments to minimise the risk of viral transmission. Masks with exhalation valves or vents which allow exhaling air to escape should not be used. If students cannot wear masks due to their own physical conditions or other reasons, schools can adopt other preventive measures, such as requiring the students to wear face shields or “anti-droplet hats with face shield”. Nevertheless, in light of safety reasons, staff and students with breathing difficulties or requiring special assistance to remove masks are not advised to wear masks inside the school campus or when having school activities. For the proper way of using masks, schools can make reference to CHP’s guidelines, “**Supplementary Note on Use Mask Properly**” (**Annex 4**).

- The DH does not recommend the use of N95 respirators, as the major transmission route of COVID-19 is mainly by droplets or contacts which can be protected from wearing masks. Special training is required for proper wearing and removal of N95 respirators. If such respirators are not used properly, the infective risk may increase due to inadequate protection and contamination.

### **2.4.3 Monitoring Body Temperature and Undergoing Rapid Antigen Test**

- Schools should require parents to ensure that their children have taken their body temperatures and undergone RAT before returning to schools, and to bring the **“Record Sheet for Body Temperature and Rapid Antigen Test ” (Annex 5)** signed by parents back to schools. When students return to schools every day, schools should monitor their body temperature upon entry to the school premises in order to identify students who are having fever.
- The body temperatures of individuals may vary with age, activity amount and physical conditions. Proper measurement of body temperatures is therefore important to accurately assess whether staff or students are having fever. For parents/schools measuring temperatures for their children/students, and staff measuring temperatures for themselves, they can make reference to the CHP’s guidelines, **“Guidelines Note on Monitoring Body Temperature” (Annex 6)**. Schools can distribute the guidelines for parents’ reference.
- Schools may set up body temperature checkpoints with thermometers at the school entrances. If infrared thermometers are used for initial screening of persons with fever, schools should make reference to the normal temperature ranges as advised by the manufacturers. Schools should operate the thermometers according to the instructions from the manufacturers. Please note that infrared forehead thermometers may not detect body temperatures reliably. Should there be doubts on the

temperature measured by the infrared forehead thermometers upon the first attempt, schools should use alternatives (for example, infrared ear thermometers) to verify the body temperature.

- Staff who use thermometers to take temperatures for students should take all necessary preventive measures and wear well-fitted surgical masks. Schools should not arrange pregnant staff to take temperature for students. Moreover, schools should require all staff to check their body temperature before returning to schools. If they have a fever, they must not return to schools.
- Schools can make reference to the CHP’s guidelines, “**Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**” (Annex 1).

### **3. Learning Arrangements for Face-to-Face Classes**

- Taking into account the epidemic development, the EDB from time to time refines the following precautionary measures and points to note, including luncheon arrangements and the organisation of different large-scale events (for example, swimming galas, sports days, parents’ days, or speech days etc.). Schools should observe the instructions set out in the EDB’s letters and put in place appropriate learning and administrative arrangements in the light of different circumstances.

#### **3.1 Arrangements concerning Timetables and Seats**

##### **(i) Secondary and Primary Schools**

- Schools should strictly put in place all the anti-epidemic preventive measures, including checking of body temperature, wearing of well-fitted surgical masks for staff and students at all times, maintaining appropriate social distance, avoiding crowd gatherings and ensuring the school

premises are clean and hygienic. These measures can enable students to learn in a safe environment. For details, please refer to the guidelines issued by the CHP “**Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**” (Annex 1).

- Schools should avoid crowd gathering of students at school entrances. If possible, schools can arrange students to return to and leave schools by batches, for example, by class or level.
- Schools should also divide students to use shared facilities, such as special rooms, libraries, chapels, music rooms and computer rooms, etc., by batches in order to prevent crowd gathering of students of various levels.
- For classrooms of primary and secondary schools, in principle, schools should arrange students to sit in single rows with a “face-to-back” setting, and teachers should teach students who are facing one direction. Desks set side-by-side in the classrooms in double rows should be re-arranged to single rows. Schools should also maximise the use of space in classrooms to ensure proper physical distances among students. If sitting in groups is unavoidable due to special circumstances, school should maximise the use of space in classrooms, a distance of at least one metre should be kept between any two students. Schools should also consider installing partitions.

**(ii) Kindergartens**

- KGs should avoid crowd gathering of parents or students at school entrances. If possible, schools can arrange students to return to and leave schools by batches.
- During half-day resumption of face-to-face classes, KGs should not arrange learning activities for the same batch of students on the half of the day after the half-day class has been conducted. Students should not stay at the school for learning activities for an entire day.

- If classroom situation allows, students keep a distance of at least one metre from one another. In case of space constraint and KGs cannot make such arrangement, they should fully utilise the classroom space to allow a proper physical distance among students as far as practicable and to avoid close face-to-face setting.
- To facilitate cleansing and disinfecting work by school and to allow students to have sufficient time for hand-washing, KGs may adjust the originally scheduled school timetable, such as extending the break time or arranging students to have breaks by batches.
- KGs may flexibly arrange students to go to toilets and have snacks by batches under the supervision and assistance of staff. Toys, books, teaching aids, etc. should be regularly disinfected and replaced, and be placed in different corners to scatter the students when conducting learning activities so as to avoid crowd gathering.
- KGs should properly arrange venues and groupings as well as the design of activities according to school-specific circumstances so that students can safely engage in physical activities. During the activities, children should wear well-fitted surgical masks and maintain a certain distance between one another as far as practicable, and be reminded to avoid touching eyes, noses and mouths. They should wash hands before and after the activities. KGs should avoid activities that require touching a common object or sharing of facilities/equipment. If such activities are unavoidably held, KGs must disinfect the related items with diluted household bleach/alcohol after use.
- Teachers and children should wear well-fitted surgical masks and keep appropriate distances during music activities, including singing and rhyming. They should also avoid playing woodwind musical instruments to reduce the risk of viral transmission through droplets. KGs should also avoid children touching common musical instruments. If it is unavoidable,

KGs should disinfect the equipment with diluted household bleach/alcohol in between uses.

- In case some students have to stay at school because of the lack of carers to look after them at home, KGs must ensure these students have fulfilled the vaccination requirement (with details as stated in para 4.3). KGs should keep the premises clean and arrange appropriate staff to take care of these students. KGs should provide alcohol-based hand sanitisers and disposable paper towels, pay attention to the storage of food and drinks (such as covering drinks with a lid), etc. Schools should put in place the necessary preventive measures to ensure hygiene and cleanness when students are eating.

### **3.2 Arrangements of Recesses, Snacks and Luncheons**

#### **(i) Secondary and Primary Schools**

- Students should wear well-fitted surgical masks during recess times, and they should keep a proper social distance with other students in periods such as the recess times, when they are engaging in activities and when they are queueing up for toilets or at the tuck shops. Schools should maximise the use of physical space to maintain physical distances between students during recess times. Schools may consider arranging students to have recess by batches by different class levels, so as to avoid overcrowding in playgrounds and common areas.
- During whole-day resumption of face-to-face classes, if schools arrange luncheons for students within the school campus, a better alternative is for schools to make arrangements for students to have individually packed lunchboxes offered by lunch suppliers / operators of catering outlets, and students should have luncheons under the supervision of teachers / staff. Schools should also ensure that the distribution of seats and partition facilities, etc. of the canteens and luncheon venues comply with the health

protection requirements.

- Schools should install partitions and students should keep proper distances with one another and face one direction (avoid eating when sitting face-to-face). Schools can, taking into account their school-based circumstances, schedule students to have luncheons by batches so as to reduce the number of students staying in canteens/eating places at the same time. If different batches of students have luncheons in a particular venue at different time slots, schools should thoroughly clean and disinfect the venue in between each use.
- Schools should pay attention to the size of the partitions. The partitions should be large enough to effectively prevent the splash of respiratory droplets or vomitus when a student eats on his or her own seat. They should be made of materials which can be easily cleaned and disinfected and can withstand 1 in 49 diluted household bleach or 70% alcohol. The partitions should be cleaned and disinfected after each meal. Apart from effectiveness in infection control, schools should make sure that the partitions are installed properly.
- Schools should remind lunch suppliers / operators of catering outlets to observe **“Food Safety and Hygiene Advisory for Food Premises on the Prevention of COVID-19”** (Annex 7) and **“Precautions for Food Delivery Agents on the Prevention of COVID-19”** (Annex 8) issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.
- In principle, schools should not arrange activities which require students to take off their masks. If it is necessary for students to have snacks or drink water, or luncheons during whole-day resumption of face-to-face classes, schools should remind students to refrain from talking when their masks are taken off. The masks should be kept properly and students should put their masks back on immediately after eating or drinking. Students should not share tableware, food, or drinks.

- For special schools, students (especially students of boarding sections) may need intensive medical care. When staff assist children to eat during meals, they should take additional preventive measures and wear appropriate protective equipment as needed such as wearing well-fitted surgical masks and goggles/face shields to protect their mouths, noses and eyes as necessary, in order to avoid contamination by droplets when children sneeze/cough during meals. Before and after arranging students for meals, they should maintain hand hygiene and clean their hands thoroughly.
- If schools (including boarding sections of schools) have to arrange meals for students, they are advised to make reference to “Food Safety Advice on Prevention of COVID-19 and FAQs” of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department when preparing snacks and luncheons for children: [https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/files/Food\\_Safety\\_Advice\\_on\\_Prevention\\_of\\_COVID-19\\_and\\_FAQs\\_rev\\_20200228.pdf](https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/files/Food_Safety_Advice_on_Prevention_of_COVID-19_and_FAQs_rev_20200228.pdf)
- If schools cannot arrange students to have luncheons within the school campuses, they may consider allowing their students to eat out. Students must be reminded to strictly observe the social distancing measures and other health precautionary measures as stipulated in the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance.

**(ii) Kindergartens**

- KGs should flexibly adjust arrangement of toilet time to avoid crowd gathering.
- If some students have to stay at school for the whole day because of the lack of carers to take care of them at home, students are required to fulfill the vaccination requirements (with details as stated in para. 4.3). Under such circumstances, KGs may provide luncheons for students.
- KGs should fully utilise classroom space. KGs should arrange children to

have meals by batches to allow proper physical distances between students as far as practicable. Students should be arranged to sit in parallel of each other and face one direction to avoid close face-to-face setting. KGs should also install partitions on tables as far as possible to reduce the risk of infection.

- KGs should pay attention to the size of the partitions. The partitions should be large enough to serve as an effective barrier to prevent the splash of respiratory droplets or vomitus when a child eats on his or her own seat. They should be made of materials which can be easily cleaned and disinfected and can withstand 1 in 49 diluted household bleach or 70% alcohol. The partitions should be cleaned and disinfected after each meal. Apart from effectiveness in infection control, KGs should make sure that the partitions are installed properly.
- KGs should remind children to refrain from talking when their masks are taken off when having meals, and children should keep a distance with one another other as far as possible. They should not share tableware, food, and drinks. They should put their masks back on immediately after finishing meals. KGs should arrange staff to help children keep or handle their masks properly when children have taken them off and wash their hands to ensure hygiene.
- Before and after eating, staff and children must wash their hands properly. After finishing snacks and luncheons, KGs must clean and disinfect the venues thoroughly.
- Individual young children may need to be fed by adults. When staff assist children to eat during meals, they should take additional preventive measures by wearing well-fitted surgical masks and goggles/face shields to protect their mouths, noses and eyes as necessary, in order to avoid contamination by droplets when children sneeze/cough during meals.
- KGs are advised to make reference to “Food Safety Advice on Prevention

of COVID-19 and FAQs” of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department when preparing snacks and luncheons for children: [https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/files/Food\\_Safety\\_Advice\\_on\\_Prevention\\_of\\_COVID-19\\_and\\_FAQs\\_rev\\_20200228.pdf](https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/files/Food_Safety_Advice_on_Prevention_of_COVID-19_and_FAQs_rev_20200228.pdf)

### **3.3 Nap Arrangements for Kindergartens**

- For children returning to schools or staying after classes because of lack of carers to take care of them at home, students must fulfill the vaccination requirements with the relevant schedule. Parents should help their children undergo RAT every day, and obtain negative test results before returning to schools. For details, please refer to para 4.3.
  
- For children taking afternoon nap at school because of a lack of carers to take care of them at home, KGs should review the arrangements of venues for children’s afternoon nap. The arrangements and locations for afternoon nap should be properly adjusted to maintain proper physical distance between children and to avoid close face-to-face settings during the naps. KGs may also consider installing partitions between beds to reduce the risk of infection.
  
- From the infection control perspective, children in school should wear well-fitted surgical masks as far as possible unless under the following conditions (due to safety reasons):
  - (i) people with breathing difficulties;
  - (ii) people requiring special assistance to remove masks.
  
- KGs may consider whether the children should wear masks taking into account other practical issues. If children would not wear masks during afternoon naps, KGs should ensure children to refrain from talking when their masks are taken off, and children should keep a distance with one another as far as practicable. Children have to put their masks back on immediately afterwards.

- When the afternoon nap sessions are over, KGs must clean and disinfect the venues and beds thoroughly. Bed sheets/quilts should be placed separately from beds. Children's belongings should be stored separately according to individual children and should not be mixed. Bed sheets/quilts must be washed and disinfected frequently to ensure cleanness and hygiene.

### **3.4 Points to Note for Specific Subjects in Secondary and Primary Schools**

- For relevant guidelines related to learning activities of Physical Education, Music, Visual Arts, General Studies for Primary Schools, Science subjects, Home Economics / Technology and Living, Design and Technology, Information and Communication Technology, please refer to the EDB's websites as follows:

Physical Education

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pe/Guidelines\\_Physical\\_Activities\\_COVID-19/index.html](https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pe/Guidelines_Physical_Activities_COVID-19/index.html)

Music

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/COVID-19\\_Music\\_en.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/COVID-19_Music_en.pdf)

Visual Arts

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/COVID-19\\_VA\\_en.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/arts-edu/COVID-19_VA_en.pdf)

General Studies for Primary Schools

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/cross-kla-studies/gs-primary/new.html>

Science Subjects

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/science-edu/COVID-19\\_SE.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/science-edu/COVID-19_SE.pdf)

Home Economics / Technology and Living

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline\\_HE\\_T&L.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline_HE_T&L.pdf)

Design and Technology

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline\\_D&T.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline_D&T.pdf)

Information and Communication Technology

[https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline\\_ICT.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/technology-edu/whats-new/Guideline_ICT.pdf)

### **3.5 Arrangements of Assemblies/ Activities**

- According to the advice of the CHP, gatherings, social contacts and group meal gatherings should be minimised when COVID-19 is prevalent.
- Schools may arrange primary and secondary students having received two doses of COVID-19 vaccines for more than 14 days to have mask-off activities<sup>2</sup> (for example, playing woodwind musical instruments, “contact sports” such as football or basketball).
- For those having had meals, or having participated in the same activity without wearing masks, with a confirmed case within the 2 days before that case is tested positive, they must undergo RAT starting from the day after their last day of contact for 7 consecutive days, including non-school days. They should also refrain from having mask-off activities within those 7 days.

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<sup>2</sup> Starting from 1 October 2022, the arrangements will be stepped up to the completion of three doses of vaccine, excluding those students aged 5 to 11 who are required to receive only two doses of BioNTech vaccines, and students with prior COVID-19 infection who are not required to take the third dose of vaccine. Regarding those students who are still within the time interval waiting to receive the third dose, they should observe the CHP's recommendation to take the third dose within one week after they are eligible to do so.

- School staff/students with "Amber Code" are not allowed to participate in any mask-off activities at school (such as woodwind instruments, "contact" sports such as football or basketball, etc). If a person with "Amber Code" working or studying at school needs to have lunch, he/she must be arranged to have lunch at school. The school should install partitions and arrange these persons to have meals in a location separate from other school staff and students. The school staff or students concerned must maintain appropriate social distances and face one direction (avoid face-to-face interactions). After meals, schools are required to thoroughly clean and sanitize the dining areas.
- Before and after participating in activities, participants should perform hand hygiene procedures properly. After an activity, schools should thoroughly clean and disinfect the venue with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach and disinfect metallic surfaces with 70% alcohol.
- Students should reduce the chances for shared use of books and pay attention to their hand hygiene when they use shared books.

*Arranging mask-wearing activities in assemblies / group activities / mass events during lesson time on school days*

- If assemblies have to be held, schools may consider conducting the same in the form of non-physical or hybrid mode in order to reduce the risk of infection by staff and students.
- When conducting physical group activities, schools should ensure that the venues are well-ventilated. All attending participants should wear well-fitted surgical masks, and in principle, a one-metre physical distance should be maintained between each participant. Participants should be seated to face one direction (avoid face-to-face interactions) as far as possible.

- If schools have to organise on-campus half-day mass events such as speech days, parents’ days, open days, campus visits, etc., they should maintain adequate social distances and strictly observe various anti-epidemic measures, including ensuring that the venues are well-ventilated. All attending participants should wear well-fitted surgical masks, and in principle, a one-metre physical distance should be maintained between each participant. For school visitors, they must use the “LeaveHomeSafe” mobile application as well as comply with the requirements of “Vaccine Pass” upon entry into the school premises.
- If a school organises a speech day, it must shorten the time of the ceremony as far as possible and reduce the number of performance activities. Participants sit side-by-side facing one direction (to avoid face-to-face interactions). All kindergarten, primary and secondary school students can attend the speech day. For primary and secondary schools, they may arrange students having received two doses of vaccines for more than 14 days to participate in mask- off performance activities<sup>2</sup>.
- For half-day activities held off campus, schools should pay attention to the latest arrangements of “Vaccine Pass” in various premises, and observe the related guidelines (if applicable) or requirements of the venues (including imposing a limit on the maximum number of participants entering the venue, and the arrangements of “Vaccine Pass”).

*Arranging supplementary classes / extra-curricular activities outside school hours*

- If an activity is organised by primary and secondary schools for the other half-day of a school day or the whole day of a school day, as students need to have meals<sup>3</sup> schools (excluding schools that have resumed whole-day face-to-face classes for the whole school or by individual classes) should only arrange their students having received two doses of vaccines for more than 14 days to participate in such activities<sup>2</sup>. For sports days or

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<sup>3</sup> If schools arrange students to have luncheons within school premises, please refer to para 3.2 of the guidelines.

swimming galas, primary and secondary schools should only arrange students having received two doses of vaccines for more than 14 days to participate in the sports events<sup>2</sup> .

- On Saturdays, secondary students of senior levels may return to schools for half-day supplementary academic classes.
- On Saturdays, primary and secondary schools and KGs may also arrange students to conduct **half-day** non-academic extra-curricular activities **without students taking their masks off** (for example, music, sports activities, school team training, etc.). If the activities require students to take off their masks, primary and secondary schools should only arrange students having received two doses of vaccines for more than 14 days to participate in such activities.<sup>2</sup>
- Primary and secondary schools may arrange students having received two doses of vaccines for more than 14 days to participate in activities on Saturdays for an entire day.<sup>2</sup>
- Schools must ensure that all participants should strictly observe all the anti-epidemic requirements when conducting the above activities.

### **3.6 Arrangements of Examinations, Tests and Assessments**

- Regarding the test/examination arrangements at schools, schools can make reference to the CHP's guidelines, "**Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**" (Annex 1).

## **4. Arrangements for Testing and Reporting at Schools**

### **4.1 Early Identification**

*Undergoing regular Rapid Antigen Test and Reporting Timely*

- Schools should require all staff (including teaching and non-teaching staff), school bus, school light bus drivers, escorts and students to complete RAT on every school day. Generally speaking, RAT should be conducted in the morning every day. Only persons obtaining negative test results are allowed to return to schools for work or lessons. Parents should follow the instructions and timely report the RAT results of their children before the latter go to schools. Schools should remind parents that students tested positive should not return to schools and such cases should be reported to schools immediately. Also, siblings residing in the same household with the students who are tested positive should not return to school. The schools of such siblings should be informed of the situation . **The CHP advises that, for hygiene’s sake, students should not bring their used RAT devices to schools.**
- Schools should request parents that they should ensure that their children have completed RATs (including taking part in half-day supplementary academic classes or extra-curricular activities conducted on Saturdays) every day before returning to school and bring the **“Record Sheet for Body Temperature and Rapid Antigen Test” (Annex 5)** signed by the parents/guardians to schools.
- Schools may conduct spot checks and ask students concerned to re-test as appropriate.
- Staff and students concerned must also report their RAT positive results within 24 hours via the “Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test” (Website: <https://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp/>) under the CHP. For procedures of reporting cases to the CHP, please refer to para. 4.2 of the guidelines.
- Schools may remind parents that when choosing RAT kits, reference could be made to the following lists: <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html>

- For staff or students who were recently infected with COVID-19 and submitted relevant proof (for example, isolation order, medical certificates, recovery record or QR code, etc.), they are not required to undergo RATs (excluding those with symptoms) within three months from the specimen collection date of positive test result..
- Parents taking their children to schools or picking up their children from schools are exempted from conducting RATs.

#### *Undergoing Rapid Antigen Tests at school*

- If students have not completed RATs timely before returning to schools, provided that prior consents of the parents have been obtained, schools should assist students to undergo RATs (e.g. by giving a student a RAT test kit and ask the student to conduct the test by himself/herself, or having a school staff to assist the student to complete the test).
- The RAT testing can be conducted in a playground or a designated room such as the medical room. The room should be well-ventilated with door / windows open to increase fresh air as appropriate. A better venue will be one installed with an exhaust fan or an air purifier to reduce indoor pollutants or viruses. The staff who assists the student concerned to take RAT must wear a well-fitted surgical mask, gloves and face-shield. Personal hygiene and environmental hygiene must be observed while taking the respiratory specimen. After completing the test, the staff must wash their hands. If the environment is contaminated during the process, the school must clean the environment with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution. For metallic surfaces, use 70% alcohol to disinfect the area. After conducting the test, wrap and seal all the components of the test kit carefully according to manufacturers' instructions, dispose of them properly, and wash hands afterwards. Upon completion, cleansing and disinfection of the room, tables and chairs should be conducted. More information on undergoing RATs can be found in the following website: <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html>

#### *Handling of Cases Tested Positive with RATs at School*

- When a test conducted at schools is positive, take a photo immediately after reading the test result. To avoid further spread of the virus, the school should keep the student at the testing venue and prevent other persons from entering the venue. In addition, the school should remind the student to wear a well-fitted surgical mask and keep his/her hands clean and hygienic, inform the parent/guardian immediately and arrange the student to go home directly from the school as early as possible. Besides, the school should remind the parents to report via the “Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test” as early as possible. If personal particulars of household members are also reported at the same time, such household members (including the siblings of the student) will receive Short Message Service (SMS) messages and will receive isolation orders after uploading their identity card details.

*Paying attention to the overall health conditions of teachers and students*

- To strengthen the preventive measures against COVID-19 and heighten the vigilance of staff towards students’ health, schools should have full knowledge of whether there are any confirmed cases of COVID-19, or if there are any close contacts of confirmed cases with COVID-19 among staff and students. Schools should stay vigilant if their staff or students have travelled outside Hong Kong.
- Principals and teachers should pay attention to the mental and physical health conditions of their staff and students. In case any peculiar symptoms are observed, schools should take body temperatures for the staff and students. Schools should prevent staff or students who feel unwell from taking off their masks in the school campus for undergoing RAT. If any staff and students feel unwell, schools should arrange the patients to the medical room to take rest. If the patient is a student, schools should inform the parents to take the student back home and advise the parents to arrange the student to seek medical advice. In case the student has a fever or is seriously ill, but the school cannot contact his/her parents or guardians, the student should be sent to the emergency department of a nearby hospital for medical treatment. The staff who are temporarily taking care of the

student should wear a well-fitted surgical mask and gloves and put in place all precautionary measures.

- Schools should remind students to pay attention to the health conditions of themselves and their counterparts. In case anyone feels unwell, one should inform teachers and staff as soon as possible.
- For staff or students who are absent from schools, schools should keep close contact with the staff or parents/ guardians concerned to find out their reasons for absence and keep proper sick leave records for early identification of illnesses.

#### **4.2 Reporting Confirmed/Close Contact Cases**

- Schools should request teachers, school staff (including staff of boarding sections) or students to report to schools immediately if the staff or students are found to be under the **following 3 conditions** in order to facilitate implementation of contingency measures:
  - (i) Being a confirmed case of COVID-19;
  - (ii) Being a close contact of a confirmed case with COVID-19; or
  - (iii) Being a “person subject to compulsory testing” to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid test under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) (hereafter be referred to as “Regulation”).
- All persons subject to compulsory quarantine / isolation are prohibited from leaving the quarantine / isolation places and entering school campuses. Schools should report to the law enforcement officers immediately if they found any person returned to school campuses, contravening the quarantine / isolation order.

*Definition of confirmed cases*

- Confirmed cases include cases confirmed by recognised medical institutions, cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (including deep throat saliva tests), or cases tested positive by RAT conducted by himself/herself with test results having been registered on the website of the DH.

*Definition of close contacts*

- Generally, it refers to household members who live with the confirmed case.
  - Under the circumstance of taking adequate health protection measures, staff and students who have been in contact with confirmed cases on campus are generally not considered as close contacts.
  - For boarding sections (including special schools), close contacts in general refer to the boarders living in the same room with the confirmed cases, or boarders having had meals together with the confirmed cases.
- Schools should remind staff or students of confirmed COVID-19 cases to report to the DH via the following website within 24 hours upon confirmation of obtaining the results :
  - (i) <https://www.chp.gov.hk/cdpi/> (for reporting positive cases using nucleic acid test)
  - (ii) <https://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp/> (for reporting positive cases using RAT)
- School are required to collect positive results confirmed by RAT for all staff and students under their school-based mechanism and report case(s) tested positive (if any) via CHP's dedicated website (<https://www.idea.gov.hk/chp-cdb/SCHOOL>) before 10 a.m. every day (2:00 p.m. every day for afternoon sessions of the schools) . Even if there is no case on that day, school should also report in the system to confirm.

For individual staff or students tested positive with RAT, they should at the same time report their personal particulars to the CHP on their own using the related website.

- Kindergartens-cum-child care centres must report cases of the kindergarten portion as well as the child care centres portion under them.
- If activities are conducted on Saturdays, schools should report case(s) tested positive (if any) via CHP's dedicated website (<https://www.idea.gov.hk/chp-cdb/SCHOOL>)
- The CHP will take follow-up actions upon receiving the positive case notifications from schools. The CHP will conduct epidemiological investigations and consider other anti-epidemic measures. Taking into account the actual circumstances, the CHP will decide whether to contact the schools to give further instruction. Generally speaking, the CHP will not contact schools only having sporadic cases. If the positive cases have reached a particular level, schools should refer to para. 4.3 of the guidelines for follow-up actions.
- As the reporting of cases involve the personal data of staff and students, schools should pay attention to the “Guidance for Schools on the “Collection and Use of Personal Data of Teachers, Staff and Students during COVID-19 Pandemic” issued by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data when collecting data and reporting cases. (Website: [https://www.pcpd.org.hk/english/resources\\_centre/publications/files/guidance\\_covid19.pdf](https://www.pcpd.org.hk/english/resources_centre/publications/files/guidance_covid19.pdf))

#### *Boarding Section of Special Schools*

- Same as the requirements for non-boarding students, special schools should require all boarders to undergo RATs every day before they go to schools. As the boarding sections of special schools are still in operation

during school holidays, schools should require all staff of boarding sections and boarders to undergo RATs on non-school days to strengthen the health protection for boarders.

- If staff of the boarding section or boarders are tested positive for COVID-19, apart from reporting to the DH within 24 hours via the dedicated websites [<https://www.chp.gov.hk/cdpi/> (for reporting positive cases using nucleic acid test) or <https://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp/> (for reporting positive cases using RAT)] as above mentioned, boarding sections of special schools should also report to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the DH as early as possible (Email: [group\\_occ\\_notification@dh.gov.hk](mailto:group_occ_notification@dh.gov.hk) ; Telephone: 2477 2772 ; Fax: 2477 2770) to facilitate epidemiological investigation and infection control, and the CHP will contact schools for further instructions in accordance with the actual circumstances. In addition, boarding sections should maintain close communication with staff, parents and students, keep sickness records of staff and students, and report suspected COVID-19 cases with symptoms (for example, fever, symptoms of upper respiratory infections and sudden loss of taste and smell) early when necessary.
- When boarders are tested positive for COVID-19 and reported accordingly, they must stay in the boarding sections to wait for the further instructions from the CHP for making arrangements for infected persons to receive isolation or treatment according to the multi-tiered triage. Boarding sections may also seek help by contacting the related advanced practice nurses of the Hospital Authority. When the boarding sections are taking care of boarders while they are waiting for admission to hospitals or in isolation facilities, they should pay close attention to their health conditions and if they develop serious symptoms, they should go to the Accident and Emergency department as soon as possible. If it is necessary to obtain health advice, schools may call the CHP's Hotline (Telephone: 1830111, 2125 1111 or 2125 1122, operates during 9am to 8pm every day) or email to ([group\\_occ\\_notification@dh.gov.hk](mailto:group_occ_notification@dh.gov.hk) / [mco@dh.gov.hk](mailto:mco@dh.gov.hk)) for enquiries. Besides, they may call the support hotline of the Hospital

Authority (Telephone: 1836115, operates during 9am to 7 pm every day) which will answer medical related enquiries for the confirmed cases awaiting admission into isolation facilities, as well as provide infection control advice. Schools may refer to the following website: [https://www.ha.org.hk/goto/pre-admission\\_support/en/](https://www.ha.org.hk/goto/pre-admission_support/en/) for the latest information.

- If boarders are confirmed cases, the facilities and equipment of the boarding section are in general difficult to cater for the needs of students being isolated. If the students continue to stay in the boarding section, it will pose a significant health risk to other boarders and staff. Schools should report such cases to the CHP to facilitate epidemiological investigation and follow up isolation arrangements, and according to the situation, parents will be notified to take sick students home and seek medical treatment as required. The boarding section of schools can make reference to the guidelines issued by the CHP “**Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**” at **Annex 1**.

#### **4.3 Mechanism for Suspending Face-to-Face Classes**

- Generally speaking, schools are not required to suspend classes for cases of close contacts. Close contacts are in general defined as household members of confirmed cases. With proper anti-epidemic measures duly put in place, staff and students with previous contact with infected persons in a school context normally will not be regarded as close contacts. In addition, as staff or students will undergo RAT on each school day, those tested positive will not return to schools.
- The CHP will initiate epidemiological investigation for reported cases, and consider taking the appropriate follow-up measures, including assessing the need to suspend face-to-face classes in accordance with the outbreak situation of the school, requiring the school to conduct thorough disinfection and requiring the school to enhance ventilation. Schools

should report the relevant situations to the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) / School Management Committee (SMC) / KG Operators. Generally speaking, if a cluster outbreak has been identified for a particular class (for example, if 10% or more of students in a particular class report positive RAT results of COVID-19), the CHP will suggest suspending the classes concerned for 7 days.

- If the CHP suggests suspension of face-to-face classes, schools should inform the stakeholders (including parents, students, staff and school sponsoring bodies, etc.) and the respective school development sections / Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres (JOKC) of the EDB of the suspension arrangements.
- For some KGs with relatively small in operating scale, if some teaching staff or other support staff (such as school bus drivers, nannies, etc.) are confirmed cases or defined as close contacts and fail to return to school to work or provide services such that the normal operation of the school is seriously affected, after obtaining the consent of the KG operator, the school may switch to other modes of learning, but the school should keep the school premises open during this period to take care of students who need to return to school. KGs should notify their stakeholders (including parents, students, staff, etc.) as soon as possible, properly handle parents' enquiries, and try to inform their respective School Development Section / Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres under EDB in advance before announcing the relevant arrangements.
- During the suspension of face-to-face classes and school activities, schools must remain open to take care of students who have to return to schools because of lack of carers to take care of them at home. Schools may allow teachers and school staff to return to schools if their RAT results are negative. On top of this, students returning to schools must be vaccinated. The specific requirements are as follows:
  - (i) secondary schools: students who need to go back to school outside

face-to-face class time should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days<sup>2</sup>;

- (ii) primary schools and KGs : students who need to go back to school to be taken care of should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days<sup>2</sup>. For students aged 3 years or below, they are required to have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days starting from 17 October 2022 onwards. They should also receive the third dose of vaccine timely. KGs can provide meals for students who remain in school for care services, but they must observe strictly the “Health Protection Measures for Schools” and put in place adequate anti-epidemic measures to safeguard the health and safety of students; and
- (iii) boarding sections: boarders residing in the boarding sections of schools (including special schools) under the EDB should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days<sup>2</sup>.

For boarders who are unfit for vaccination with medical proofs or with previous COVID-19 which render them unable to be vaccinated will not be subject to the above restrictions (please refer to para. 1.1 of “Calculation of number of vaccine dosage”).

- School should properly register and maintain records of student vaccinations and the list of students who are certified temporarily to be medically unfit for vaccination, and keep track of the latest announcements by the Government and EDB, and inform all stakeholders (including all teachers, school staff, school bus operators, school tuck ship operators, parents, nannies and volunteers, etc.) of the latest arrangements in a timely manner.

#### **4.4 Administrative Arrangements for Schools**

##### **4.4.1 Informing Parents**

- When a staff or student is identified as a confirmed case of COVID-19, the school should issue letters to parents to let them know more about the situation as well as the measures taken by the school to ease their minds, and remind them to pay attention to their children's health conditions.
- As mentioned in para. 4.3, if there are a certain number of cases tested positive, the CHP will initiate epidemiological investigation and consider taking the appropriate follow-up measures, including assessing the need to suspend face-to-face classes. If it is required to switch to online learning or other modes of learning, the school should inform parents of the related arrangements for parents' better preparation. Schools may make reference to **“Notification for Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 (Sample letter to all parents)” (Annex 9)** and inform parents by a letter the related situation and corresponding arrangements.

#### **4.4.2 Cleansing and Disinfection of School Premises when there is(are) suspected/confirmed case(s) of COVID-19**

- Schools should strengthen the disinfection measures of the school premises, and remind all staff and students to step up preventive measures based on the advice provided by CHP. Cleansing staff should wear appropriate PPE including well-fitted surgical masks, latex gloves, disposable gowns, eye protections (goggles/face shields) and caps (to be used when necessary). After the cleansing procedure, staff should carefully dispose of the wastes, take off and handle the PPE and perform hand hygiene procedures.
- Schools have to disinfect all possibly soiled areas, surfaces and utilities. They should wipe the affected objects with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach, leave for 15-30 minutes, rinse them with water and wipe them dry afterwards.
- When school premises are contaminated by blood, secretions, vomitus or excreta spillage, use forceps to hold strong absorbent disposable paper

towels to wipe them away, then disinfect the surface and the neighbouring area with 1 in 4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 4 parts of water), leave for 10 minutes, rinse with water and wipe dry afterwards. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70% alcohol.

#### **4.4.3 Leave Arrangements for Staff**

- When staff are identified as confirmed cases of COVID-19, schools should make reference to the proofs submitted, including hospital discharge papers, the positive nucleic acid test results presented in SMS / Electronic Records / Paper Records issued by the private laboratories recognised by the Government or the DH, SMS / Electronic Records issued by the “Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test”, the isolation orders issued by the DH, or the recovery records issued by the Government or the Hospital Authority, to grant sick leave to the teaching staff or non-teaching staff concerned. Presentation of a photo showing positive RAT results alone cannot be considered as a valid proof. The relevant staff should make use of the “Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test” to declare to the DH. Meanwhile, schools can follow the stipulations in the “Codes of Aid” to appoint teaching staff or non-teaching staff to substitute the regular teachers or non-teaching staff who have been granted sick leave to minimise the impact on school operation. Please refer to **“Testing Arrangements of Staff / Students who are Confirmed Cases / Close Contacts for Resuming Work and Schooling” (Annex 10)** for the resumption of work and schooling arrangements.
- If staff or students are regarded as close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases, they should follow the requirements from the CHP to undergo quarantine/isolation. Teaching staff or non-teaching staff under Salaries Grant in aided schools, with the relevant quarantine/isolation orders issued by the DH/Health Officer, are entitled to Paid Special Leave. The staff concerned should submit the quarantine/isolation orders issued by the

DH/Health Officer to schools for the application of Paid Special Leave as soon as possible. To minimise the impact on school operation, schools can follow the stipulations in the “Codes of Aid” to appoint teaching staff or non-teaching staff to substitute the staff who have been granted paid special leave.

- For staff who cannot submit leave applications immediately due to special circumstances, the staff concerned must, in any case, submit the application on the day of resumption of work the latest. Schools should process the leave applications submitted by the above-mentioned staff on a case-by-case basis. All applications should be endorsed and recorded by the IMCs / SMCs.
- As for contract teachers/staff of aided schools not appointed under Salaries Grant, as well as teachers/staff of KGs, Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools and private schools, schools should make appropriate arrangements in accordance with the Employment Ordinance and the contractual terms as stated in the employment contracts. If staff are required to be quarantined/isolated according to the requirements of the CHP, the health officers will issue relevant isolation orders for the employees. EDB recommends that schools should refer to our above-mentioned arrangements and grant paid leave to the employees.

#### **4.5 When there is a “Person Subject to Compulsory Testing” at Schools<sup>4</sup>**

- If a staff or student is a “person subject to compulsory testing” under the Regulation, the staff or student concerned must undergo COVID-19 test (including multiple tests as required by the testing notice) during the specified period according to the testing notice (including the compulsory testing notices of restricted areas). They must follow the testing notices

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<sup>4</sup> “Persons subject to compulsory testing” refer to persons in a situation in which the Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires those persons who have stayed in the specified areas to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing, including those staff and students who are residing in the restricted areas or specified premises, and those staff or students who have been present in the restricted areas/specified premises.

to undergo nucleic acid tests. While awaiting the results, the staff or students should undergo RAT. If the RAT result is negative, they can return to schools for work or study (including the day of testing). Schools must require the staff or student concerned to present the related proof (for example, SMS in mobile phones or laboratory testing reports, or photos of RAT results).

- If a school notices any person contravening the Regulation and returns to the school, it should prohibit the related person from entering the school premises, remind him/her to undergo COVID-19 test as soon as possible, and report the case to law enforcement officers.
- Schools should remind staff and students that the Government will sternly follow up on whether the testing notice has been strictly observed by individuals concerned. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo a test within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.
- If there is a large number of staff not being able to return to schools and the normal operation of schools is affected, schools can switch to online learning or other modes of learning after obtaining the approval from IMCs / SMCs / KG Operators. During such period, schools should remain open to take care of students who need to return to the schools because of the lack of carers to look after them at home. If the test results of staff or students concerned are positive, schools can make reference to para. 4.3 of this guidelines.

#### **4.6 Emotional Support**

- Facing the continuous occurrence of COVID-19 in Hong Kong and its impact on students' everyday life and learning, some students may display negative emotion and stress. As such, we advise schools to make reference to the EDB's guidelines on **“Providing Emotional Support for Students amid the Epidemic” (Annex 11)**, when helping students cope with emotions and adjust to school life.
- For staff and students receiving treatments, undergoing quarantine/isolation or having medical surveillance (including confirmed cases of COVID-19 / close contacts), in case they have any mental or psychological pressure, schools should provide them with emotional support and counselling. Schools should strengthen their school-based mechanism, and refer students with mental health needs to school social workers, school-based educational psychologists, guidance personnel or other professionals early to receive appropriate support services. Teachers may also make use of the services provided by the “Teacher Helplines”. To alleviate the impact on the learning of the students concerned, schools need to provide support measures for learning, such as arranging teachers to provide learning materials and advice through phone calls, emails, facsimiles and school websites.

#### **4.7 Centre for Health Protection's Advice and Guidelines on Individual Cases**

- As each case might be different, apart from the guidelines stated above, the CHP may make suggestions and guidelines according to the characteristics of each individual case when necessary. Schools should strictly observe the related guidelines and inform the EDB and parents of such arrangements as early as possible.

### **5. Civic Education**

- Schools should explain to all staff (including staff of boarding section, if

applicable) and students the importance of personal hygiene in preventing the spread of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), stating the serious consequences of the spread of COVID-19 to the community and the whole territory. Also, schools should emphasise that everyone in the community has a responsibility for preventing the epidemic, and one should seek medical advice immediately when he/she feels physically unwell or detects suspected symptoms. In case of any confirmed infection of COVID-19, the concerned staff, students and/or their parents / persons living in the same household should NOT return to schools and have to notify the schools immediately.

- To enhance students' knowledge and awareness of prevention of communicable diseases / COVID-19, schools could make use of the curriculum resources of the EDB (the relevant teaching materials can be downloaded from the webpage of Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/resource-support/learning-teaching-resource-list/covid-19-klr-resource-lists/index.html>), school-based teaching materials, or resources provided by other organisations / online resources and suitably include the relevant topics in the related curriculum. Teachers could, based on their observation and understanding of actual situations and real cases, guide students to review and analyse the related issues, help them explore the topic of acceptance of one's social responsibility in adversities, and cultivate in them a positive attitude towards life and learning through diversified learning activities and modes. Schools can encourage students to embrace challenges and changes with courage and resilience, and remain positive and strong amid adversities.
- Besides, schools can make use of the chance to nurture students' spirit of caring about oneself and others. Students should pay attention to personal hygiene to prevent infection in the epidemic. At the same time, they should try their best to help, care about and provide support to people who need assistance from others, for example, by sharing their surplus masks to those who have urgent needs, avoiding going to crowded places to

protect the health of themselves and others, and supporting those emotionally affected by the epidemic, etc.

- Schools can exhibit health education materials on hand hygiene, cough etiquette and prevention of COVID-19 in conspicuous places. Relevant information can be downloaded from the website of the CHP <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/resources/464/102466.html#3>. Schools can set up notice boards for displaying information about local and global situations as well as statistics about COVID-19. On top of information and data, messages to encourage students to cope with the epidemic positively can be included. Inspiring stories and cases can be shared, and schools can offer opportunities for students to express their feelings and thoughts on the issue.

## **6. Parents' Participation**

- Schools can share relevant information to parents via parent letters and electronic channels (e.g. school websites, SMS, mobile applications and other online platforms). Schools may also distribute to parents leaflets or information provided by the EDB or other organisations, such as that about the hotlines and websites of the DH and the EDB, and remind parents to stay vigilant to household and personal hygiene.
- Parents should urge their children to bring tissue paper and masks to schools, take their children's body temperatures and undergo RAT before they go to school every day, and fill in the information as required by schools. Schools would request parents to provide information on students' health condition, including history of illness during the class suspension period, and to confirm if parents have taken their children's body temperatures and undergone RAT before they go to school in accordance with the EDB's requirements. For details of undergoing RAT for students, please refer to para 4.1.
- Schools should make an effort to explain to parents the symptoms of

COVID-19 and urge them to be vigilant on their children's health conditions. If their children have fever, respiratory symptoms or sudden loss of taste or smell, etc., they should seek medical advice immediately and should not go to school. If their children are confirmed with COVID-19, parents should inform the school immediately. If the children are defined as close contacts of confirmed cases, they should be put under quarantine / isolation / take COVID-19 tests as instructed by CHP, and should not return to schools and have to inform the schools immediately. If their children are defined as "persons subject to compulsory testing", they must undergo virus tests during the specified period as instructed by CHP, and obtain a negative test result before returning to schools. While awaiting the results, their children should undergo RAT. If the RAT result is negative, they can return to schools for study (including on the day of testing). For further information of "Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons", please visit the following website:

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/compulsory-testing.html>

- Schools should seriously advise parents not to allow their children to go to crowded places as far as possible. If students have been away from Hong Kong to overseas countries/regions, they should report to schools the time and places of their trips, and strictly follow the quarantine / isolation instructions of the DH. Schools should also pay particular attention to the health conditions of these students.

## 7. Support and Enquiries

### 7.1 Department of Health

- DH Hotline : 2961 8968
- CHP Hotline: 2125 1111/ 2125 1122
- Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP 2477 2772 (Fax 2477 2770)
- 24-hour Health Education Infoline : 2833 0111
- Websites of CHP <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/index.html>
- Designated website for COVID-19 of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region:  
<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>

### 7.2 Education Bureau

- Regional Education Office (according to the locations of schools)  
Hong Kong Regional Education Office: 2863 4646  
Kowloon Regional Education Office: 3698 4108  
New Territories East Regional Education Office: 2639 4876  
New Territories West Regional Education Office: 2437 7272  
Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres: 3107 2192
- EDB Hotline : 2891 0088

Service Hour: 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, closed on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays.