



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

RISK AND MITIGATION PLAN
for the
PHASING-IN OF THE RE-OPENING OF
SCHOOLS

A SUMMARY

11 MAY 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

This document **summarizes the common risks** across the sector. The risks and mitigation plan are categorized under the 12 identified areas:

1. Curriculum and Assessment,
2. Orientation and Training of Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff;
3. Orientation OF Learners;
4. Identification of Vacant Teaching Posts;
5. Readiness of Schools and Hostels;
6. Special Schools;
7. Learner Transport;
8. Basic Hygiene and Sanitation Package;
9. Screening, Testing and Tracing
10. School Nutrition Programme
11. Psychosocial Support
12. Communication
13. Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC)
14. Risk Assessment and Mitigation
15. Monitoring and Evaluation
16. The role of the Department of Health

SUMMARY OF COMMON SECTOR RISKS AND MITIGATION PLAN

RISK AREA 1 : CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Loss of teaching and learning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a comprehensive Curriculum Recovery Plan • Provide support for learning through electronic media (radio, television and online learning) and print media (workbooks, study guides, worksheets and reading materials)
Exams are affected (Learners may not sit for exams)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescheduled exams (amended school calendar): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - June exam combined with November exam - Amended Calendar in place • Combined exams communicated to all stakeholders
Lack of clear communication to provinces/districts/ schools on recovery plan and exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication of curriculum recovery plan and exams through different platforms. • Tasks teams to develop curriculum to include provincial officials for inputs and buy-in. • Monitoring of preparations and readiness for teaching, learning and assessment. • At provincial level, call an online meeting of District Heads of Curriculum to discuss the operational plan and its implementation strategy.
Lack of effective monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a monitoring plan for all levels from national to school levels. • Monitor the implementation of the Recovery Plan at district and school levels • Visit sampled schools to ascertain the progress in curriculum delivery.
Lack of guidance for co-ordinated teaching and learning in schools (timetables/ teacher workloads)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines for the adjustment of time teaching tables to accommodate recovery strategies • Distribution of guidelines • Orientate teachers to guidelines • Monitor implementation of guidelines
Learners are not sufficiently prepared for examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incubation camps for intensive tuition until the examinations are over
Cyber bullying in Online learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms in place to mitigate exposing learners on cyber bullying

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure equity in teaching and learning endeavour to provide alternative to online learning such as radio and television tuitions. • Provide ICT infrastructure. • Where educators are expected to in addition to normal class lesson provide lessons online post lockdown ensure that educators and labour are consulted on this requirement.
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RISK AREA 2: ORIENTATION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of sufficient preparation for the orientation and training of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an orientation programme • Develop schedule to orientate and train teachers and non-teaching staff • Communicate the schedule and programme timeously to all concerned • Prepare materials ahead of time • Establish Health and Safety Committees at every level (DBE/ PED/District and School)
Lack of facilitators to orientate teachers and non-teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed plan which indicates human sources required (SMTs and Circuit Managers) for orientation and training and a back-up plan should identified trainers not be available.
Non implementation of social distancing in staff rooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation programme to include social distancing protocols. • Communicate number of teachers allowed in staff room at any given time. • Monitor the implementation of social distancing protocols.
Teachers lack knowledge of leave relating to illness due to Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBE developed leave measures to assist PEDs in providing and maintaining a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of its employees • Leave protocols to be included in Orientation Programme (eligibility criteria for special leave in respect of COVID-19 isolation and quarantine).
Inconsistent information being communicated including misinformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent, uniform and standardised guidelines. • Explain the risk of furnishing information other than what is prescribed for the orientation program

RISK AREA 3: ORIENTATION OF LEARNERS

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of sufficient preparation for the orientation and training of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an orientation programme for the first day • Develop schedule to orientate and train learners • Communicate the schedule and programme timeously to all concerned • Prepare materials ahead of time
Non-implementation of social distancing in common areas (playground)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation programme to include social distancing protocols. • Communicate number of learners allowed in common areas. • Monitor the implementation of social distancing protocols in common areas.
Inconsistent information being communicated including misinformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent, uniform and standardised guidelines. • Explain the risk of furnishing information other than what is prescribed for the orientation program

RISK AREA 4: IDENTIFICATION OF VACANT TEACHING POSTS

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of a database of unemployed teachers and unplaced Funza Lushaka graduates.	Each Provincial Education Department to develop a data base of unemployed and teachers and unplace Funza Lushaka graduates to fill vacant posts created by teachers who do not return to school due to the infection.
Lack of teachers for some classes on the first day of reopening of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of number of absent teachers. • Ascertain severity of illness of teachers and estimate time they will need to recover. • Make arrangements for substitute teachers in classes where teachers will be away for a considerable period of time. • Schools to work closely with District Directors to fast-track provision of substitute teachers.
Inadequate staff to monitor will result in learners mingling and thus violating social distancing guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there is adequate staff to monitor that social distancing is observed at all times.

RISK AREA 5 : READINESS OF SCHOOLS AND HOSTELS

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of data on school infrastructure	Work with data base from NIEMS and EMIS to get data on school infrastructure
Lack of classrooms due to vandalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alternative venues for affected classes • Provide mobile classrooms
Lack of cleaners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit on the number of cleaners required in all schools • Costing of hiring cleaners done • Appointment of cleaners through EPW programme
Schools are not cleaned to receive staff and learners	Provinces, Districts and Schools advised on the cleaning of schools and hostels prior to the return of learners.
Identified persons to clean schools and hostels do not know the expected processes to clean schools and hostels	Training and supervision of cleaners with support from DoH.
Absence of a programme designed for boarding schools	A special programme for dealing with staff and learners at school hostels during the COVID-19 period developed and implemented.
Inadequate capacity to have all classrooms and offices cleaned in time for the reopening of schools.	Work out a schedule using the phased in approach, starting with PED offices, District and Circuit Offices and schools
Lack of water and water facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database of schools needing water and water facilities • Work with Rand Water and Department of Water and Sanitation to provide water tanks and water through an emergency water provision programme • Identify the number of washing stations required and work with partners (Reckitt Benckiser the manufacturers of Dettol in South Africa and Unilever) to provide washing stations to 1000 schools.
Classrooms not cleaned in accordance with hygiene guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all classrooms are properly cleaned and sanitised.
Litigation for exposing the learners to COVID-19 virus were norms on mitigating COVID-19 are not complied with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strict adherence to the COVID-19 norms
Possible litigation due to lack of provision of water and proper hygiene working ablution facilities thereby exposing learners to COVID-19 virus. Also	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure access to clean water and properly constructed, working and hygienic ablution facilities.

RISK AREA 6: SPECIAL SCHOOLS

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Inadequate plans to phase in reopening of special schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a return to school plan for each special needs school according to unique needs.
Schools don't implement plan accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor phasing-in of reopening of special needs schools.
Litigation due to not adequately providing for the different needs of learners with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all reasonable accommodation needs are provided to cater for every learner with a disability. • Ensure that separate and extraordinary arrangements have been made which will at least entail large numbers of caregivers/supervisors and special facilities

RISK AREA 7: LEARNER TRANSPORT

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Inadequate data on numbers of learners requiring transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provinces to develop a database of number of learners requiring transport • Data on routes for the different trips identified • Number of trips costed to accommodate social distancing
Learner Transport is managed by the Department of Education and in some provinces by the Department of Transport- no common understanding of expectations of health and hygiene requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two Departments to meet and to discuss dates when transport will be required and sanitisation and social distancing protocols discussed to reach common understanding. • Discuss new requirements for transportation of learners with service providers of buses and taxis (sanitisation, wearing of masks and social distancing)
Litigation against the Department whereby private transport contractors do not meet the hygiene and sanitisation norms required vis a vis observing social distancing, wearing masks, and providing sanitisers and sanitising the vehicle after every load of learners transported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents must be sensitised on why it is essential for them to monitor the transport that their learners are using. There must take responsibility for the well-being of their learners

RISK AREA 8 : BASIC HYGIENE AND SANITATION PACKAGE

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of analysis of needs of COVID-19 products required per item for the safe school re-opening	Conduct an assessment of needs and order items according to school size and draw up order accordingly.
Unavailability of certain items	Scan the market and get alternative service providers
Delays in the delivery of basic sanitation package	Monitoring of readiness to include daily follow ups on delivery of basic hygiene and sanitation package
Litigation due to non-compliance with basic hygiene requirements and norms for mitigation the spread of COVID-19	Ensure that every school has the required PPE supplies and comply with the basic requirements of hygiene and cleaning. Ensure that there are measures in place to observe social distancing.

RISK AREA 9: SCREENING, TESTING AND TRACING

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of preparedness for screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a schedule to screen all learners and staff on arrival • Prepare screening records in advance • Ensure that screeners are available and are trained to use thermometers etc • Ensure that the timetable changes to accommodate screening is communicated to learners and staff
Learners present with symptoms of infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure quarantine space is identified • Work with DoH to assist with testing of learners identified with symptoms of infection.
Adequate quarantine facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure quarantine space is identified • Work with DoH to assist with testing of learners identified with symptoms of infection. • Refer affected person to a health practitioner for further testing as it is not the responsibility of the school.
Litigation for noncompliance with social distancing, provision of masks, sanitisers and other PPE's.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all PPE's are available at every school. • Monitor closely that all social distancing is observed.
Officials identified to conduct scanning are not properly trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train identified personnel on how to use the scanners and how to identify symptoms.

RISK AREA 10: SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of good hygiene practices that could lead to spread of infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of basic hygiene package to food handlers • Orientation of Food handlers • Communication of orientation schedule and guidelines • Cleaning of kitchens before start of feeding programme begins • Provide protocols for regular sanitation
Late delivery of food items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor ordering and delivery of food items • Implement consequence management for serial defaulters
Dates for reopening of nutrition programme not communicated timeously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring communication of schedules from province to district to school. • Written communique followed up by phone calls to ensure communication reaches schools in time
Street vendors outside school that sell food that was not prepared with proper hygiene guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper monitoring of the presence of street vendors must be conducted. • Social distancing must also be controlled where street vendors are present.
Litigation from unhygienic handling of food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation of service providers, Chief Food Handlers and Volunteer Food Handlers (when schools re-opens) • Collaborating with the Department of Health to provide guidelines and advocacy material

RISK AREA 11 : PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of guidelines and training to provide support to teachers and learners, infected or affected by Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for psycho- social support developed and identified personal trained to manage affected learners and staff • Provide advocacy materials iro psycho- social support and wellbeing
Inadequate number of psychologists and social workers to provide support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and train volunteers to perform the support roles • HIV Aids counsellors in districts to be trained to do trauma debriefing and support

RISK AREA 12: COMMUNICATION

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Lack of a cogent strategy to communicate Covid19 messages to all levels of the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a multi-pronged strategy that targets a wide range of stakeholders especially schools and learners
Lack of communication on key matters dealing with Covid 19 leading to stigmatisation of Covid 19 infected or affected persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop weekly messages and use different platforms (website, twitter, Instagram and facebook) to demystify Covid19 and prevent fake news.
Delays in responding to incorrect information on Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an “on the spot” rapid response team to correct perceptions timeously.
Misinformation and misinterpretation of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consistent and correct messaging

RISK AREA 13: QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING CAMPAIGN (QLTC)

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Education, which is meant to be elevated to be a societal issue remains a DBE matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate QLTC structures at all levels in the system which includes a wide range of stakeholders from communities, schools, parents, business etc
The code of conduct which describes the responsibilities and disciplines required of them - the Non-negotiables are not internalised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An aggressive marketing and advocacy strategy to be developed • The campaign should be made visible at all levels • Key messages developed and disseminated, in line with key activities on the education calendar to reinforce society’s commitment to quality learning and teaching.
The QLTC structures do not participate in reinforcing the protocols iro COVID 19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QLTC structures to recognise that they are powerful catalysts in ensuring that all protocols are implemented. • QLTC structures to make the messaging on implementation of the protocols as key activities in their workplans. • Key message should co-incide with major developments/events e.g. schools reopening
Parents do not play their role in protecting their children and ensuring that their children take the necessary precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy campaign to ensure parents understand their responsibilities • Strengthens community and other stakeholder involvement and participation on education activities • Strengthening of monitoring by district

RISK AREA 14: RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Effective, efficient and transparent risk management system not in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a risk management system to manage all aspects of risk management in line with Risk management Policy and Strategy • Risk assessment workshops to ensure understanding of the risk management process • Dedicated structure and reporting to the Accounting Officer
Risk assessment is not conducted regularly to identify emerging risks of the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct risk assessment regularly so that emerging risks can be identified and dealt with timeously. • Strategic Risk and Operation Risk registers are maintained and align to the strategic objectives of the department • Risk Registers are updated by every line function • The risk register need to monitored regularly by each line function in the department in terms of the progress on action plans (National, Provincial, Districts and Schools) • Regular reporting to the Accounting Officer, Risk Committee and Audit Committee
The risk management strategy is not clearly communicated to all officials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent Risk Management Strategy to guide the DBE on how to implement its Risk Management Policy through the Risk Management Implementation Plan and communicate to all concerned.
Inadequate risk identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment workshops to ensure understanding of the risk management process

RISK AREA 15 : MONITORING AND EVALUATION

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
Monitoring and evaluation plan for all processes dealing with the phasing- in of the reopening of schools not in place at National level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that details the planned critical activities at DBE, PEDs, Districts and Schools. • Establish monitoring teams to monitor and report against the plan.
Monitoring of readiness for the phasing-in of the reopening of schools at provincial and district levels not in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings with HoDs to report on readiness of Provinces and Districts to phase-in schooling and challenges identified. • Measures put in place to unblock challenges identified
Monitoring of school readiness to phase in reopening of schools not in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed readiness plans with check lists to assess readiness for school reopening are in place • Provide weekly reports of preparations for screening and provision of PPEs, sanitising of schools, provision of water etc
Monitoring of the first day of reopening of schools not in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a schedule to monitor the reopening of schools to check on readiness to receive learners, audit of teacher absence, sanitisation of schools and learners; scholar transport procedures etc • Report on areas of challenge and provide solutions to ensure health and safety of learners and staff

RISK AREA 16: THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

SECTOR COMMON RISKS	MITIGATION PLAN
The DBE and DoH work in silos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a working relationship with DoH to discuss protocols; get advice on documents; advocacy materials relating to protocols and guideline on comorbidities
Lack of support for schools from the DoH	<p>Enlist the support from DoH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to implement hygiene and infection control measures, and to communicate effectively with learners, parents and other role-players. • assist schools to screen learners, school officials and others. • ensure that learners, school officials and others who are symptomatic, are tested, managed and referred appropriately.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where cases are identified, provide contact tracing, and advice with regards to any additional actions that are required. • Develop a Standard Operating Procedure for screening at schools.
<p>Health and Safety Committees at all levels do not have DoH representatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Health and Safety Committees are established at National, Provincial, District and School levels with critical role players such as DoH represented on the Committees.