

FULL-FLEDGED PREPARATIONS FOR FACE-TO-FACE SCHOOL SESSIONS

By Corporate Communications Division, Ministry of Education

With the second school term starting today, schools nationwide have been preparing for the return of students to physical class sessions. Today, all students from government and private schools under the purview of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs, including five to 11 year olds, regardless of their vaccination status, will be welcomed to schools.

As COVID-19 restrictions ease in the country, the safety and protection of the entire members of the school community remain an utmost priority. Thus, with the support and advice from the Ministry of Health, all schools have prepared the COVID-19 guidelines and standard operating procedures that must be followed and adhered to by all members of the school community, especially students. These guidelines and SOPs including wearing face masks, maintaining cleanliness and hand hygiene, checking body temperature, frequent Antigen Rapid Tests (ART) and using BruHealth App will become the new school routine.

School Preparations for Smooth Back-to-School Transition



Dr Sheikh Lukman bin Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Acting Director of Schools, Ministry of Education

In an interview, Dr Sheikh Lukman bin Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Acting Director of Schools, Ministry of Education, said "The Education Affairs Committee, which was set up by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs, has provided the 'Whole School Modification Approach', comprehensive measures and guidelines for all schools in the implementation of the school reopening. These are in addition to schools' existing Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

Dr Sheikh Lukman also shared, "All primary school students will be required to perform ART screening during the first week of school. They will be gathered in a hall, in which its capacity will not exceed 300 people and will take turns at performing ART screening. This is also to ensure the well-being and safety of all members of the school community. The ART screening will be held three times a week, which is on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

"In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, schools will use the 'Ring Fencing' strategy where if a student is found positive COVID-19 or showing flu-like symptoms at schools, they will be ushered to the isolation room set up for containment before they are taken home by their parents. A detailed briefing on health and safety guidelines will also be held for all students."

"Parents or guardians are urged to refrain from sending their children who show symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, flu and so on. I also advise all parents or guardians to prepare tissues, face towels, extra face masks and home-packed food and drinks according to their children's needs for them to bring to schools," he added.

Among other preparations for students' smooth back-to-school transition include informing parents or guardians in advance regarding the current COVID-19 guidelines and SOPs, putting up posters on walls and along the hallways, providing hand sanitisers in every checkpoint and ensuring classrooms are clean, well ventilated and the seating arrangements are at least a metre apart. This was confirmed by Cikgu Afrah Izzat binti Haji Tejuddin of Sekolah Rendah Lambak Kanan Jalan 49.



Photo shows a school hall prepared for students' ART screening at Sekolah Rendah Keriam



An isolation room is ready at Sekolah Rendah Batang Mitus for a student who is found positive COVID-19 or showing flu-like symptoms

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It is fundamental for parents to educate their children, especially those aged five to 11 year olds, on the current COVID-19 guidelines and procedures. Awang Haji Razman bin Haji Usop, a parent of a student from Sekolah Rendah Serasa, Muara, expressed his confidence in bringing his child to school. He said, "Alhamdulillah, the increasing number of vaccinated students aged five to 11 year old made us parents feel more secure about bringing our children to attend physical learning in schools."

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Schools Are Safe For Face-to-Face Learning

In gaining parents' confidence to bring their children back to schools, Cikgu Afrah Izzat said, "Parents or guardians can be rest assured that their children will always be safe at schools. All hands on deck for all teachers in monitoring the students at all times.

"In physical class sessions, I believe learning can be delivered more effectively. Face-to-face learning is crucial especially for those students who need improvement in a specific subject. On top of that, we, teachers, can also finish our tasks on time and have control over students' learning and discipline. Students will also have the opportunity to do group work with their classmates," she added.

Simultaneously, parents or guardians also made school preparations for their children. Such preparations include getting essential back-to-school supplies ready such as textbooks, bags, papers, pencils and so forth. Furthermore, it is fundamental for parents to educate their children, especially those aged five to 11 year olds, on the current COVID-19 guidelines and procedures.

Awang Haji Razman bin Haji Usop, a parent of a student from Sekolah Rendah Serasa, Muara, expressed his confidence in bringing his child to school. He said, "Alhamdulillah, the increasing number of vaccinated students aged five to 11 year old made us parents feel more secure about bringing our children to attend physical learning in schools.

"For everyone's safety and my daughter's own protection, I took her to get the COVID-19 vaccination. I also made sure she understands the COVID-19 SOPs that we have adopted all this while so she can adapt to the back-to-school environment easily," he added.

In ensuring all primary students are able to adjust themselves with the new routine, school leaders and teachers will welcome them and ensure the students adhere to the schools' COVID-19 guidelines and SOPs.

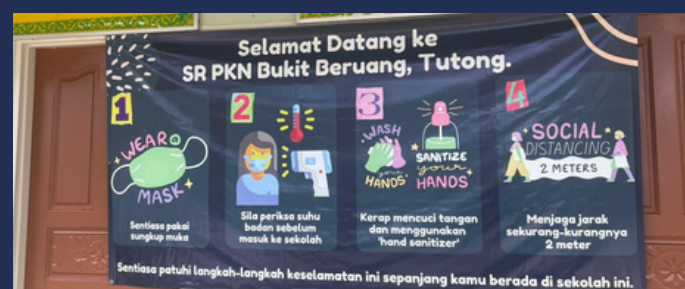
In addition, the Ministry of Education introduced the Siuknya Ke Sekolah programme which will be conducted at all primary schools. The programme comprises some fun-filled activities including ice-breaking sessions, motivational talks, Doa and Zikir sessions and many more.

According to Cikgu Dayangku Hajah Azmida Diana binti Pengiran Haji Damit, Headmistress of Sekolah Rendah Mabohai, Siuknya Ke Sekolah Programme aims to stimulate creativity, competitiveness and team-building spirits among the students. "The programme also encourages students to develop close relationships as they have not met each other for almost a year," she said.

Sharing his excitement, Mohd Asfa Mauluddin bin Mohd Dahlan, a Year 5 student from Sekolah Rendah Mabohai, said, "I look forward to meeting my friends at school.

"I want to learn in class just like before, especially when my friends are around me. I will also make sure to follow the school's SOPs to keep myself and everyone else safe."

Apart from the full-fledged preparations by all members of the school community including school leaders, teachers and staff in ensuring the safe return of all students, support and engagement from parents or guardians are highly encouraged. It is hoped that their support and involvement can create a positive impact on students' personal and educational development.



COVID-19 guidelines and SOPs posters seen at Sekolah Rendah Pengiran Kesuma Negara Bukit Beruang, Tutong (above) and Sekolah Rendah Paduka Seri Begawan Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin, Kuala Belait (below)

