

RETURN TO WORK POLICY AND SAFE OPERATION PROCEDURES POST PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN – WORKING POLICY Update 7 August 2020

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Working document: 7 August 2020

INTRODUCTION

This policy includes the measures Michael Oak Waldorf School is actively taking to mitigate the spread of Covid-19. You are kindly requested to follow all these measures diligently, to sustain a healthy and safe workplace in this unique environment. It is important that we all respond responsibly and transparently to these health precautions.

The following persons for fill the roles referred in this document:

SMT – College of Teachers

Administrator – Pam Schneider

Covid-19 Compliance Officer – Vincent Message

Estate Manager – Rob Howe

Faculty representatives:

Playgroup and Kindergarten - Alison Tobler

Primary School - Leigh Moore

High School - Nicola Elliott

Advisory Consultant – Jo Mostert (registered SAIOSH)

POLICY BRIEF & PURPOSE

The legislation governing workplaces in relation to Covid–19 is the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Act 85 of 1993, as amended, read with the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations. Section 8 (1) of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, Act 85 of 1993, as amended, requires the employer to provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees.

Specifically, section 8(2)(b) requires steps such as may be reasonably practicable to eliminate or mitigate any hazard or potential hazard before resorting to personal protective equipment (PPE). However, in the case of Covid–19, a combination of controls is required, although the main principle is to follow the hierarchy of controls.

However, before the implementation of control measures, current risk assessments need to be reviewed and updated, taking into account the new hazards posed by exposure to Covid-19 in the workplace. This is in accordance with Section 8 (2) (d) of the OHS Act.

Within this context Michael Oak Waldorf School has identified a management team who will ensure that implementation of controls will minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable, disruption to teaching and learning; and protect against social stigma and discrimination. The Management Team for Michael Oak Waldorf School consists of the College of Teachers.

SCOPE

This Covid-19 policy applies to all of our employees who physically work in our school and offices and all learners and authorised visitors to the school.

We strongly recommend to our remote working personnel to read through this action plan as well, to ensure we collectively and uniformly respond to this challenge.

POLICY ELEMENTS

The following documented guidance and safe work procedures outline the required actions employees should take to protect themselves and their co-workers from a potential Covid-19 infection. They include safe work procedures that will be implemented to ensure safety of learners, parents and contractors who are part of the school community.

OBJECTIVES

To continue to eliminate and prevent all employees from contracting Covid-19 whilst carrying out their duties and tasks at work.

The OHS Act read in conjunction with the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations requires the employer to provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees. All safe work procedures and this policy are governed by the Act and the various Regulations.

In order to ensure that Michael Oak Waldorf School does all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety of all members of our community we have done the following:

- Reviewed and updated our pandemic policy, procedures, and emergency operation plans
- Informed both staff and learners to remain home when sick as they will be screened on entrance and should they show any of the recognised Covid-19 symptoms they will be sent home¹
- Informed parents that they have a duty to inform the school if any person of their household is isolated with suspected or confirmed Covid-19, and to keep their children home until they have had the compulsory 10 days isolation.
- Identified through a comprehensive risk assessment the exposure hazards for staff, learners and visitors and put appropriate control measures in place
- Provided resources for hand washing, sanitisers and educational information on Covid-19

RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

The management team is responsible to the school administrator (Pam Schneider) who fulfils the role of chief executive officer (CEO) required by 16.2 of the OHS Act and the Covid-19 Compliance Officer (Vincent Message) in setting standards, and associated objectives and targets in line and referenced by Section 16 of the OHS Act.

OHS Representative(s) will monitor compliance and ensure achievement of the objectives are in line with and referenced under Section 8 of the OHS Act.

In compliance with the directives of the Department of Labour a Covid-19 Compliance Officer will be appointed to ensure that compliance with the extraordinary protocols is implemented and monitored. The Compliance Officer, Vincent Message, will report to the school's Health and Safety Committee at regular intervals.

EXPOSURE RISK

The policy is framed on the exposure risk for schools as identified by the Department of Labour and such risk assessment will be monitored and altered as required.

¹ Recognised symptoms: Fever (temp 38 and above), sore throat, shortness of breath, persistent coughing

Medium Exposure Risk

“Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e. within 2 meters of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. In areas without ongoing community transmission, workers in this risk group may have frequent contact with travellers who may return from international locations with widespread COVID-19 transmission. In areas where there is ongoing community transmission, workers in this category may have contact with the general public (e.g. in schools, high-population-density work environments, such as labour centres, consulting rooms, point of entry personnel and some high-volume retail settings).”

The Department of Labour has indicated that as Covid-19 cannot be eliminated in these environments suitable engineering controls, administrative controls, safe operating procedures and PPE need to be put in place.

In order to assist with contact tracing, areas of the school will be demarcated for staff and learners dependent on grade and their work activity.

A full Risk Assessment has been completed and the following procedures will be instituted by Michael Oak Waldorf School to mitigate, as far as is reasonably practicable, possible exposure to Covid-19.

With the weather and seasonal changes, runny noses, sore throats and allergies are in the order of things, particularly with younger children. Invariably the question will arise, “Are these Covid related and should we stay at home?”

A sore throat related to Covid will cause difficulty in swallowing because of the infection

A more likely indication of Covid would be a sore throat coupled to severe headache and fatigue – this in accordance with NICD guidelines.

OPENING OF SCHOOL STAGGERED TIMELINE

Phased re-opening of the whole school will begin at the start of the 3rd term. The following phased return will occur:

Teaching staff:

One class per faculty will return at a time with each cohort phasing in on a weekly basis. Teachers required for teaching will be on premises, others will work from home unless requested to assist on site.

Learners:

To make up for teaching days lost, the 3rd Term will begin on Tuesday the 7 July. A phased re-introduction will be undertaken on a weekly basis as follows:

- o 7th July - class 12 and class 7 and KG Sunbeams
- o 13th July – class 11 and class 2 and KG Moonbeams
- o 20th July – class 10 and class 6 and Playgroup
- o 27th July – class 9 and class 3

- o 3rd August – class 8 and class 4
- o 11th August – class 1 and class 5

AFTERCARE

In house aftercare facilities will be offered as from the 7 July. Social distancing, cleaning and sanitizing will be applied according to the standard protocols.

No food or snacks will be provided by the school. Food orders can be placed and paid directly to Jade and Carmen in the Tuckshop 0766198435.

Paola Mondati – Aftercare Supervisor will bring the learner to the main gate for collection when a parent messages her on 082 755 7050.

SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS

- A social distancing minimum that can be implemented (1,5 to 2m) will be instituted at all times
- Classroom/office layouts have been set accordingly
- The number of people allowed in communal areas has been limited using staggered access
- Academic, Administration and Support staff will be restricted by work area and faculty
- The staffroom will no longer be used as a break area
- All meetings will be held remotely (online)
- Drop off, pick up, breaks, class times and lunchtimes will be staggered to ensure social distancing
- No assemblies or group meetings will be held in groups – online meetings or staggered meetings that meet social distancing requirements will be allowed

IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH-RISK AREAS

To limit the potential of transmission the health and safety team:

- Identified high transmission risk areas (excluding classrooms or offices)
- Identified suitable controls to manage the flow of traffic to maintain suitable social distancing
- Put in place a cleaning roster for high risk areas
- Put up signage to indicate high risk areas as such and remind all of protocols for social distancing and hand sanitation
- Limited access to areas such as the halls; staffroom; foyer; dining area
- Declared some areas of school out of bounds dependent on school numbers and lockdown levels. Signage will be displayed and both learners and staff will be updated in weekly Covid-19 alerts.

REMOTE WORKING PROTOCOLS

- Staff who are in the high-risk category i.e. with recognised co-morbidities and able to work remotely should do so. Decisions in this regard will be taken by the College of Teachers
- Vulnerable employees that cannot work remotely will work in a restricted space and be supplied with additional PPE.
- Online available hours will be set in a policy by the faculties and signed off
- All meetings will be held remotely (faculties to set own protocols & times); Staff may remain in their offices/classrooms and hold remote meetings from those places
- Board and College meetings to continue to be held remotely

VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES

- Vulnerable employees will be identified using the tool sent to the school by the Department of Basic Education
- A further questionnaire has been compiled to record information as required by the department of labour
- All vulnerable employees have been, where possible, given the option to work remotely
- Vulnerable employees unable to work remotely have been housed in larger venues to ensure greater physical distancing can be employed
- Access to administration and high-density areas have been restricted and will be monitored by the COVID-19 compliance officer should there be any concerns raised by a vulnerable employee
- Additional PPE will be supplied to vulnerable employees as is reasonably practicable.
- Areas of site access to be limited as far as is reasonably practicable.
- In the event of a positive case being identified, vulnerable employees who have had casual contact will be asked to self-isolate for 3 working days from their last casual contact with the positive case
- In the event of close contact with a positive case, vulnerable employees will be asked to self-isolate and contact their medical practitioner for further advice.
- All staff attending funerals please contact the COVID-19 compliance officer to discuss the policy and procedure.

SANITATION PROTOCOLS

The Covid-19 Compliance team (Vincent Message and Rob Howe) will ensure the implementation and review of sanitation protocols in accordance with the school's sanitisation and cleaning plan.

Facilities:

- Bathrooms to be monitored and checked for:

- Sufficient soap, sanitiser & paper towels
- Open bins (that do not require hand contact)
- Removal of refuse
- Bathrooms to be sanitised regularly – at least every 2 hours
- Learners and staff to use facilities as indicated by signage in each facility.
- Ensure that the provided spray-sanitiser is used to sanitise door handles, toilet flush mechanism, toilet seat when using the facilities

Classrooms:

- Sanitiser (hand) and spray sanitiser will be available at each classroom
- Academic staff to ensure that the sanitiser has been filled prior to the start of the lesson
- Class specific sanitisation to be carried out in accordance with the school's sanitisation and cleaning plan
- Staff to allocate time at end of lesson for sanitation and pack up
- Floors to be sanitised once a day – either by support staff or academic staff

STAFF AND STUDENT LOCKERS

- All lockers are to be locked when not in use
- All lockers to have name tags
- No sharing of lockers or clothing
- Lockers to be sanitised by user
- Learners will keep bags with them in the classroom at all times to prevent potential cross contamination

ACCESS TO FOOD AND DRINK

- Staff & Learners to bring own food and drink and not to share contents
- All food containers to be washed after use by user
- Drinking water: reusable bottles to be brought from home

SHARED EQUIPMENT

- Learners are not allowed to share stationery
- Learners may not share books under any circumstances
- No sharing of calculators or handheld devices
- Cell phones to be sanitised by owner on arrival and on departure
- Administrative staff to sanitise shared equipment (telephone, files etc.) before and after use

- Should learners need to use school to contact parents this will be done by the front office staff – no sharing of telephonic equipment is allowed
- Shared computer spaces to be limited to numbers allowed
- Computer classroom will have strict sanitation procedures in place
- Every computer station to have sanitation equipment that itself needs to be wiped down (bottles used by multiple people need to be sanitised after every use)
- All books taken off library shelves to be placed at librarian desk and not returned to shelves
- Books will then be isolated for a minimum of 24 hours before being returned to circulation

ACCEPTANCE OF PACKAGES/PARCELS and/or GOODS

- Protocol for decontamination of parcels & equipment has been established
- Parcels will be held in the reception area and collected by the recipient after they have been sanitised.
- There will be a logbook maintained to control the arrival of parcels

ACCESS TO SCHOOL

Visitors & contractors

- Access to the school to be monitored at the front gate by School security & Princeton Security
- Access only allowed with a form of identification (South African Identity document, driver license, or a valid Passport)
- All visitors must supply their own face masks
- All visitors/parents are to be directed to the reception area
 - All visitors to be signed in
 - All visitors to complete declaration form
 - All visitors to have temperature taken
- All visitors to be collected by the person they are to see from the reception area where social distancing (should there be more than 1) can be achieved
- Maintenance manager to limit access to essential services
- Maintenance manager to set strict access controls for essential services
- Parents & visitors only have access by appointment and must give 12-hour notice
- Gate to be informed by front of desk & Maintenance manager of expected visitors

Staff

- Only registered staff will be allowed on property
- Staff may only enter and exit using the following entrances:
 - High School teachers - Top gate (Marlow Road)
 - Main gate (Marlow Road)
 - Walk in gate (Sheerness Road)
- Entrance temperatures to be taken and setup points for each faculty and staff
- Staff may only enter if wearing masks that cover the nose and mouth
- During instruction time teachers may wear a shield as long as social distancing is maintained. When approaching a colleague or pupil a mask must be worn
- Hands will be sanitised at entrance
- If staff forget their mask, disposable masks will be made available
- Staff traveling on public transport to change clothing immediately on entering the school in the foyer bathrooms. These bathrooms will be for staff only during this period. Shower will be available. Support staff to change into school protective clothing. At the end of each day this clothing will be washed and remain at school. Shoes are also to be changed on entry and exit.

Learners

- Only registered learners allowed on property
- Only entrance & exit will be used
 - Main Gate (Marlow Road)
 - Top Gate (Marlow Road - High School learners)
 - Gibson Road - KG and PG entry only
- Temperature to be taken of every student that enters the property
- Hands will be sanitized at entrance
- Learners may only enter if wearing masks that cover the nose and mouth.
- Playgroup learners will be required to enter and exit wearing a mask but will not be required to wear masks or shields while on the school property.
- The KG learners will be required to wear either a mask or shield while in the classroom but may remove their mask or shield during outside play as physical distancing will be encouraged and monitored by the teacher on duty.
- Learners are to take masks home every day to be washed
- If learners forget their mask, disposable masks will be made available.
- Should the supply of masks become excessive the school reserves the right to implement payment for masks and will inform the parents when this is put in place

- Learners will report to their classroom where a hand sanitiser will be available at entrance
- Learners will use the spray sanitiser supplied to spray their hands.
- Class specific sanitisation will be carried out in accordance with the school's sanitisation and cleaning plan
- All learners and families who have attended a funeral are required to self-isolate for a period of 7 days.

RETURN TO WORK SAFETY PROTOCOLS

First day protocols

- Initial Screening Procedure to be put in place
- Staff and Student Health and Safety Induction to be organised in small groups in an area where social distancing is allowed
- Initial Induction will inform to:
 - The appointed Covid-19 Manager
 - How to use PPE
 - Controls to ensure traffic flow for each class
 - Identification of areas which have been declared limited use/out of bounds
 - Sanitising procedures
 - Timetable changes to allow for staggered break periods
 - Use of shared equipment & sanitation requirements
 - Bins for the disposal of bio-hazardous waste (paper towels used to dry hands etc.)
 - Management of Masks
 - Social Distancing protocols which have been put in place
 - Signs of possible infection and what to do
 - Access to the school counsellor

SPECIFIC WORK PROCESS PROTOCOLS

Access to school on opening

Based on the information supplied by the Education Departments the basic protocols are the following:

Public and shared transport

- All passengers to wear masks that cover the nose and mouth, while using public or shared transport
- Social distancing (where possible) is to be enforced by the driver
- No eating/drinking on public or shared transport
- Limited social conversations (as far as is reasonably practicable)
- Car-pooling by parents is discouraged and follow the Government stipulated required limits while in state of emergency
- No shared equipment to be used while in transport (cell phones, laptops, books, carrying of each other's bags etc.)

On arrival

Recognising that the Western Cape faces inclement weather during winter all screening areas will be under cover.

In order to facilitate social distancing on school the following procedures have been put in place:

Staff – Administrative and Academic

- All staff will enter through the allocated gate
- Daily temperature testing will take place
- Staff will immediately report to the front desk to sign register and self-screening protocol
- Staff will move to their classroom areas to begin cleaning protocols with learners
- Staff to ensure desks are correctly placed to ensure social distancing
- Class timetables will be available to staff on return to school to which have been set up to allow for staggered use of the school facilities
- Staff will have access to tea and coffee making facilities in the dining room. Staff to bring their own utensils

Learners

- Learners will enter through the allocated gate which will be manned by trained screeners who will screen temperatures.
- Learners will then be screened for the following Covid-19 systems:
 1. Persistent cough
 2. Sore throat
 3. Aches pains and headaches
 4. Diarrhoea

A student who has a temperature of 38 degrees and above or display more than one of the Covid-19 symptoms as indicated by the NICD would be required to return home. After completion of screening all learners will immediately go to their allocated class area

- Hand sanitiser will be available at the door
- Learners will be requested to sanitise their allocated seating space, bags and any electronic equipment they bring to school

- Break times will be staggered, and learners will be informed of their break area and protocols of social distancing during break periods
- Learners who remain later than the end of lessons must remain in the classroom allocated to them until they are able to leave

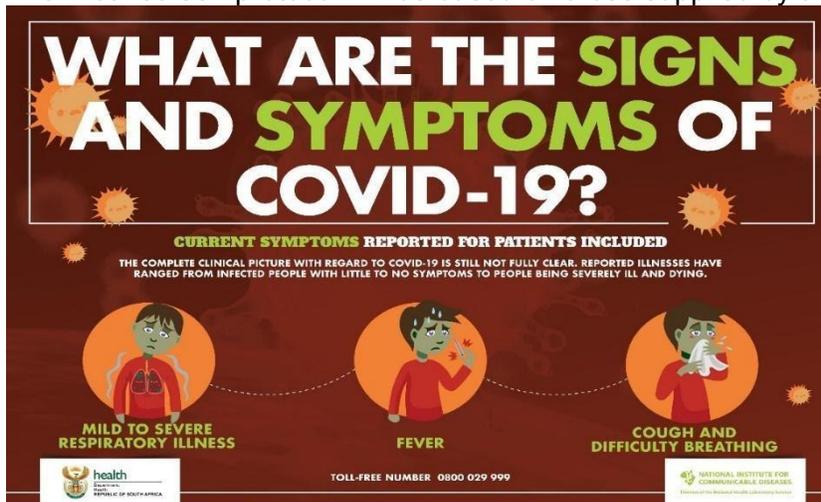
Screening

Isolation Areas

- The upstairs office or meeting room will be used as the on-site isolation facilities to be made available
- The school counsellor will assist with the staff member or student until they are able to leave the property
- Staff must be requested to leave site as soon as possible and self-quarantine
- Parents will be contacted to pick up child

Screening Protocols

The initial screen protocol will be based on those supplied by the NICD:



They will also refer to contact protocols which include but are not limited to:

- Living with a person who has a confirmed case of Covid-19
- Have come into contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the last 14 days

Initial screening will be followed up by self-examination and daily temperature measurements on entrance to school.

While at school, staff and learners will report to the Covid-19 compliance Officer if they show symptoms of possible Covid-19 infection during the course of the day.

Potential Infection Protocol

The National Health Department and Western Cape Education Department will be informed immediately should there be a positive case of Covid-19, on school premises. The Health Department will then inform of any additional protocols which may need to be put in place.

Parents and staff will be referred to the nearest testing centres:

Rosemead Medi Clinic

Life Kingsbury Hospital

Should a staff member or student show signs of potential infection they will be:

- Taken to an area which has been dedicated as an isolation area (stated above). Separate isolation areas will be identified for learners and staff which will be sanitised daily and immediately after an occupation of a suspected case of Covid-19.
- Parents will be immediately informed to pick up their child for the purposes of isolation and checking of symptoms.
- Staff who do not have their own means of transport will remain in the isolation area until we are able to transport them home or find suitable transport for them.
- Contact with a staff member or student will be maintained ensuring they may only return to duty after 10 days.
- Suitable screening centres will be identified, and staff and parents will be notified as this information becomes available
- Should a staff member or learner test positive, the school will take the following steps:
 - Contact the parents of all children in the relevant class and request them to take their children home and to remain at home for 10 days
 - Conduct an in-house contact tracing to identify other classes, faculties or staff who have been exposed or potentially exposed to risk of infection;
 - Communicate to the school that there is a confirmed case without identifying the person by name and advise as to any further steps that will be taken in conjunction with the regulations set out by the Department of Health.
 - Clean and sanitise the faculty area where this child was traced to be present
 - The school may only be closed by the Administrator who has been instructed by the Education Department or the Department of Health and comply with any additional closure and sanitation protocols required by either Department

SCHOOL OUTINGS, SPORT, EVENTS

The above have been cancelled until further notice.

CONCLUSION

The Administrator will complete a CEO declaration form confirming that the necessary risk assessments have been completed and that the school is compliant with applicable regulations and directives to allow for the return of staff and pupils to the school.

ALL employees will also be requested to complete an employee declaration and information form on their return to work.

Finally, this document will be placed on the school's website and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to confirm that they understand and will comply with procedures herein, on behalf of himself/herself/themselves and his/her/their daughter/son(s).

The policy will be updated regularly, and the changes will be immediately communicated to staff, learners and parents as required.

Links to relevant information:

WCED updates: <https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/wced-news>

Department of Basic Education updates:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/MediaReleases.aspx>

Department of Health: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>