



OAKHILL GUIDELINES ON RETURN TO SCHOOL - COVID-19

1. PREAMBLE

Just as the public service has the legal obligation in accordance with Section 8, of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) 1993, as amended to, where reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a safe, healthy work environment that is without risk to employees, so this obligation extends to the private sector.

Regulation 53 provides that the Head/s shall establish and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for employees and service providers of the school and a safe and healthy service delivery environment for its staff, parents and pupils.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly spread by respiratory droplets. When someone infected with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes, respiratory droplets that contain the virus are expelled and can be breathed in by someone nearby. Although the virus cannot enter the body through the skin, the respiratory droplets carrying the virus can get into your airways or mucous membranes of your eyes, nose, or mouth to infect you. The virus can also be spread if you touch a surface contaminated with the virus and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth, although this is not the primary way the virus spreads.

Schools will therefore need to ensure that they apply strict health and safety protocols to ensure that the school remains open once a return to school has been approved by the government. This will include regular feedback sessions as well school signage to remind staff, pupils, parents and visitors of the basic protocols required to limit the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Oakhill School has appointed special COVID-19 Compliance Officers at the school. If any COVID-19 cases arise once school is back in session, this will be reported to NICD and the affected group of students and staff will be required to go into self-isolation immediately and all primary contacts will be required to do the same. The affected venues will be out of bounds until a deep clean has been implemented. The procedures below are therefore essential and the commitment from both staff and pupils will be pivotal to ensure that we eliminate risk as far as possible.

2. APPOINTMENT OF COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Oakhill School has appointed Mr Wayne Purchase (Head of College) and Mr James Cross (Head of Prep), as the COVID-19 Compliance Officers. They will be required to oversee the implementation of the Workplace Plan and adherence to the standards of hygiene and health protocols relating to COVID-19 at the workplace.

3. WORKPLACE PLAN TO PREPARE CAMPUS READINESS PRIOR TO A RETURN OF ALL STAFF AND PUPILS

3.1 Operating hours of Oakhill School

Working hours for Term 2 will be:

07:30 to 15:30 (teachers)

07:30 to 16:00 (Admin staff)

08:30 to 15:30 (College pupils)

09:00 to 14:30 (Prep School)

07:30 to 16:00 (support staff), until further notice.

Please note these times are subject to change in Term 3 and 4.

3.2 Dates for the proposed phased return to school

Unless there is a further directive from the DBE, provisional dates for the phased-in return of Oakhill staff and pupils to school will include:

Category of Staff	Date of Return
Head/s	From 18 May 2020
Cleaning staff at schools	From 25 May 2020
School Management Teams	From 25 May 2020
Non-teaching staff	From 1 June 2020
All teachers and other staff	25 May 2020
Learning support: remedial teachers, therapists, counsellors and Grade R practitioners.	To be advised by respective Heads
Grade 12 and Grade 7 learners	1 June 2020
Other Grades	On receiving permission from the relevant educational authorities.

3.3 Guidance for Cleaning Staff

The School's housekeeping team will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the classrooms, offices, bathrooms and communal venues prior to the return of teachers and pupils. In addition, Oakhill will facilitate the provision of sanitizing dispensers in each classroom. All offices will be provided with the dispensers as well. Bathrooms are already equipped with hand sanitizing dispensers.

In addition, each classroom will be equipped with a dedicated cloth and a 500ml disinfectant bottle with spray nozzle to clean surfaces. Cleaners will be required to use **this cloth** when cleaning the venue but will have their own disinfectant spray.

All cleaning staff will be required to wear masks, gloves and closed shoes and will be briefed on the dangers of cross contamination between venues. It is the responsibility of the Management of Oakhill to ensure that its staff follow all the prescribed procedures as per the WCED COVID-19 guidelines sent to

its owner and ensure that its employees adhere to all Health and Safety protocols as specified in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993).

Routine cleaning and disinfecting are key to maintaining a safe environment for pupils and staff.

- **Cleaning** removes dirt and most germs and is usually done with soap and water.
- **Disinfecting** kills most germs, depending on the type of chemical, and only when the chemical product is used as directed on the label.

Routine cleaning and disinfecting procedures

Clean and disinfect at least daily, making use of a dedicated cloth and equipment for each venue, (no cloth or equipment may be used in multiple venues or more, depending on use patterns) frequently touched surfaces and objects such as:

- Doorknobs and handles
- Stair rails
- Classroom desks and chairs
- Internal lockers/pigeonholes in classrooms
- Tables and chairs outside classroom doors
- Lunchroom tables and chairs
- Countertops
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Equipment (e.g. projectors, remotes, smartboard pens, dusters, art, design technology, iPads)
- Push-buttons access pads
- Shared equipment for teaching
- Shared toys
- Shared remote controls
- Shared telephones
- Shared desktops
- Shared laptops/computer keyboards and mice

Note: Computer keyboards are difficult to clean. Shared computers should have signs posted instructing proper hand hygiene before and after using them to minimize disease transmission. It is not necessary to routinely apply disinfectants to surfaces that are not high-touch or high-risk (e.g., floors, bookcases, tops of filing cabinets). Soft surfaces such as carpets, rugs, and drapes can be cleaned using soap and water or a cleaner appropriate for the material.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms need to be cleaned hourly when in regular use.

Waste removal

- Waste containers in the bathrooms are required to be cleared on a regular basis.
- Classroom waste containers are to be cleared on a regular within a three hour interval.

3.5 Guidance for Grounds and Maintenance Staff

To ensure that correct social distancing amongst pupils happens during breaks, it is important that the lawns and recreational areas are clean and presentable. Breaks will be shorter and/or staggered and pupils will be briefed on the requirement of physical distancing.

Ground Staff need to ensure that the following happens:

- Mow all lawns (outside service provider)
- Turn beds
- Clean outside-bins twice daily
- Sweep/Rake up leaves in all communal areas
- Follow strict cleaning protocols after completion of maintenance repairs
- Wipe down all external tables and chairs as well as playground equipment each day
- Do not share equipment as far as possible. Wipe down with disinfectant before use.

3.6 Guidance for Catering Staff

The School's Service Provider (*Aztinamix Pty Ltd T/A Jen's Catering Creations*) will be responsible for a deep clean of the tuckshop kitchen and its equipment, including crockery and cutlery, as well as all cooking equipment.

All catering staff will be required to wear masks and gloves and must be briefed on the dangers of cross contamination as well as all the necessary health protocols which are involved in preparing food and a catering service. It is the responsibility of the Management of (*Aztinamix Pty Ltd T/A Jen's Catering Creations*) to ensure that its staff follow all the prescribed procedures as per the WCED COVID-19 guidelines sent to its owner and ensure that its employees adhere to all Health and Safety protocols as specified in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993).

Routine cleaning and preparation procedures:

[See SOPs for Food Services \(*Aztinamix Pty Ltd T/A Jen's Catering Creations*\)](#).

4. REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY MEASURES FOR PUPILS AND STAFF PRIOR TO AND WHEN RETURNING TO SCHOOL

All staff and pupils must be appraised of the following prior to and when returning to school and must ensure that they adhere to this protocol for the foreseeable future:

- a) All staff and learners must go directly to the designated screening area to be screened as they arrive at school daily.
- b) SMT could screen one another on arrival at school if the screening team is not yet in place.
- c) Requirement of physical distance between pupils and staff according to the regulations of "physical distancing" at all times during the school day as well as waiting to be screened ; and reiterate that 1.5 meters is the minimum school requirement.
- d) Minimising the number of people that are permitted to enter a school at any one time
- e) The requirement to sanitize hands at entry into the school
- f) The use of sanitiser upon entering classrooms/venues during the school day
- g) The requirement to check every person's temperature with the use of a thermal thermometer when entering on the school grounds and to do this at random intervals during the school day
- h) The wearing of cloth masks or protective visors by all people on the school grounds at all times

- i) Ongoing reasonable level of cleaning of the school on an ongoing basis
- j) Any person feeling ill must not attend the school until the nature of the illness is clarified
- k) Ongoing training of everyone on general hygiene requirements such as cleanliness, how to cough and sneeze and how to correctly wash hands
- l) A separate designated space in the school should there be any doubt and the need for someone presenting as ill to then be quarantined while awaiting transportation from the school

On an ongoing basis, pupils, teachers, support staff, parents and communities should do the following:

- 1) Heed the directives by the President and the guidance provided by the Ministry of Health;
- 2) Cloth face masks are to be worn at all times except when eating and drinking in designated spaces. Each staff member and pupil must have a minimum of two cloth face masks. This allows one to be available for use while the other is being washed and ironed.
- 3) Practice good hygiene to prevent becoming infected including wearing a fresh set of clothes each day
- 4) Avoid public gatherings of over 50 people as the disease is spread through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person which are generated through coughing and sneezing;
- 5) Avoid shaking hands, hugs and direct contact;
- 6) Wash hands frequently with water and soap. Where water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser to disinfect hands;
- 7) Minimise touching the face (i.e. eyes, nose, mouth) with your hands. The COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours. However, simple cleaning of surfaces with disinfectants can kill the virus.
- 8) Consult a healthcare facility if you suspect an infection of COVID-19;
- 9) Inform the Education and Health Department authorities immediately if a learner, educator, support staff or parent/caregiver has been in direct contact with an infected person, or if they are diagnosed with COVID-19; and
- 10) Eradicate all forms of stigma and discrimination in the education sector including in schools and childcare facilities.

5. PROCEDURES REGARDING RETURNING STAFF AND PUPILS

- All pupils need to enter through the main entrance (circle) of the school and go to the designated screening area to be screened.
- All staff who park at the top staff parking area will need to be screened for temperature at the top staff parking. These staff will be screened by the All Sound Security guard stationed at the entrance with the use of an infrared thermometer. Security will be trained to use thermometers and guided on how to deal with a positive case.
- Staff parking at the Admin end of the school need to go to the designated screening area to be screened.
- All Oakhill academic staff and pupils who **walk** into school will be required to enter via the main circle to the school and go to the designated screening area to be screened

- All Support staff who **walk** to school will be required to enter through the main circle at the school and go to the designated screening area to be screened.
- Any pupils, staff or visitors arriving after the morning start need to report to the designated screening areas to be screened at the Main Security Office / Admin Block Reception
- The nominated screeners will be required to do the following:
 - Screen any staff, pupils and visitors on the arrival on the school campus, to ascertain whether they have any of the observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever, cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);
 - Require every person screened to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness; and
 - require every staff member and pupil to immediately inform the respective Compliance Officers if they experience any of the symptoms above during the school day.
 - Use a thermal thermometer on each person entering the campus and if their temperature exceeds 37.5 degrees instruct the individual to return home and remain there until she/he has no temperature. (All the above must be recorded by the screener on a checklist that will be provided). In the case of pupils, the parent is called to collect them immediately. Whilst waiting for the parent to arrive, the pupil will wait in a separate designated area.
 - If a staff member walks to work, it may be necessary for the school driver to take the staff member home or to the nearest screening station. It is imperative that the driver takes all precautions necessary to avoid contamination if COVID-19 is suspected.
 - The staff member/ pupil may only return to school when she/he has a medical clearance certificate from a doctor stating that she/he does not have Covid-19, or that she/he is fully recovered and cleared if she/he has tested positive.
 - The name of the person must be recorded by the screener and the respective Compliance Officer notified immediately should a person not pass the screening process.
- Academic Staff will be required to sanitise their hands at the beginning of every lesson and when entering the teaching venue in the college and at regular intervals in the Prep and Little Oaks.
- Ground Staff and Maintenance Staff are to practise physical distancing when getting changed and only two staff members may be in a restroom at any given time. The Housekeeping Manager and Maintenance Managers are responsible for ensuring that this happens.
- ALL Staff are to wear masks at all times. The School will provide each staff member with two masks to use when travelling to and from work. See attached [ANNEXURE D](#) for mask care.
- The following basic principles will apply to ALL staff and pupils:
 1. No physical contact, including shaking of hands or hugging allowed. A social/physical distance of at least 1.5 meters must be maintained between all persons
 2. Hands must be sanitized with the provided school sanitizer or personal hand sanitizer at least every 40 minutes
 3. Additional handwashing with soap and running water is required:
 - After going to the bathroom
 - Before and after eating
 - Before, during and after preparing food

- After blowing your nose
 - Coughing or sneezing
 - When hands are visibly dirty
 - After handling animals or animal waste
 - After handling worksheets / books.
4. Glove use is strictly prohibited unless specifically required as part of an identified risk's control measures.
 5. Gloves are generally only a requirement when handling chemicals, contaminated or dirty items, or certain maintenance tools and equipment.
 6. Unless otherwise advised, at the moment masks are to be worn at all times
 7. When coughing and sneezing, nose and mouth must be covered with a flexed elbow or tissue. The tissue must be disposed of thereafter in a closed bin.
- For teachers: Engaging pupils in the classroom and common areas
 - Pupils need to line up outside the class using the appropriate physical distancing protocols
 - Pupils must wear a mask before being allowed in the class and for the duration of the lesson
 - When pupils are entering the class/ venue the teacher needs to spray the school supplied sanitizer on their hands for sanitization.
 - Check the desk arrangement in the class. Desks should be at least 1/ 1.5 metres apart
 - Remind pupils of the prevention of the spread of the virus
 - Pupil discipline in the class is utmost importance, so identify what is required of them to ensure their safety
 - Teachers to observe the 1.5 metre distance between themselves and pupils and other teachers
 - Request pupils to prevent crowding in toilets or when outside during breaks.
 - Ensure pupils adhere to the physical distance protocols on playgrounds and common areas.

6. PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

All commuter transport services including the school bus, taxi services and private cars transporting pupils to school must adhere to the Regulations issued in terms of Disaster Management Act 2002 (Act no 57 of 2002) and all directives set out in the schedule to address and contain the spread of Covid-19 including:

Loading capacity of learner transport: Regulation 11C as amended by the substitution Regulation by a; b and c below:

- a. All Minibuses must reduce seating capacity by capacity to mitigate the spread of the virus.
- b. Bus services, taxi services and e- hailing services shall not carry more than 70% of the licensed capacity;
- c. Private vehicles shall not carry more than 60% of the licensed capacity, and that all directions in respect of hygienic conditions and the limitation of exposure of persons to COVID -19, are adhered to.

Provision of improved access and hygiene, disinfection control on pupil transport.

All operators of pupil transport facilities must on regular intervals provide adequate sanitisers or other hygiene dispensers for washing of hands and disinfection equipment for pupils.

Embarkation of pupils in the vehicles

- All operators must ensure that public and school transport vehicles are sanitised before picking up and after dropping off pupils.
- Operators must ensure that all pupil transport vehicles door and window handles, armrest and handrails are sanitised before picking up and dropping off pupils.
- Operators must ensure that all pupil transport vehicles are clean and tidy.

- All pupils transport operators must provide disinfection information materials and procedures.
- All drivers and pupils must wear a mask.
- Pupils will be required to sanitise their hands, using the sanitiser provided, before entering the vehicle
- The sanitisers used to sanitise all pupil transport vehicles must have a minimum of 60% alcohol content.
- Operators of Oakhill transport vehicles are required to screen pupils/ employees at collection points as per screening protocols.

7. PROCEDURES IF A STAFF MEMBER OR PUPIL PRESENTS TYPICAL COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

a. Responding to a person with positive results

- i. If a staff member or pupil presents or reports typical COVID-19 related symptoms:
 - a) She/he will not be permitted to enter the school or report for work;
 - b) if the staff member or pupil is already at work, she/he will be immediately isolated, and provided with a surgical mask, and will be transported in a manner that does not place other staff or members of the public at risk, for a medical examination, for testing or to be self-isolated;
 - c) if the staff member does not need hospital admission, she/he will be sent home, and is required to self-isolate at home if appropriate;
 - d) the school will provide counselling and support to employees or pupils as per Oakhill's guidelines/standard operating procedures (SOPs);
 - e) the school will immediately assess the risk of transmission and if appropriate, will temporarily close to disinfect the classroom or area;
 - f) the school will refer other staff members or pupils who may also be at risk for symptom screening;
 - g) the school will place an employee on paid sick leave, or if sick leave has been exhausted, will make application for illness benefits from the UIF in terms of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020; and
 - h) will ensure that the employee or pupil is not discriminated against on grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19.

- ii. The Business Manager will report all alleged, presumed and confirmed cases of COVID-19 related occupational disease to the Compensation Commissioner in the prescribed format using the relevant documentation as required in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993 (COIDA) in order to facilitate procedures for all worker's compensation benefits available to employees, including:
 - a) leave for temporary disability;
 - b) assessment by an occupational medicine specialist in cases of complex disease that may result in permanent disability;
 - c) cover of medical expenses for the treatment and testing, as well as permanent disability assessments; and
 - d) compensation to dependents in case of death.

b. Returning to work after testing positive for COVID-19

If a staff member or pupil has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and isolated in accordance with the Department of Health Guidelines, the staff member or pupil may only return to work/school if:

- a) The staff member or pupil has undergone a medical examination confirming that s/he has been tested negative for COVID-19 after at least 14 days isolation;
- b) the staff member or pupil wears the minimum of a surgical mask at all times for the remaining period of 21 days from the date of initial testing;
- c) the employer/ school ensures that the staff member/ pupil adheres to physical/ social distancing, hygiene and cough etiquette; and
- d) the employer/school closely monitors the staff / pupil for symptoms on return to work/ school.

8. LIST OF EMPLOYEES

Below is a list of employees that have been given permission to work from home due to:

- the nature of their work;
- those employees who are older than 60; and
- those who have health conditions or comorbidities.

An employee may fall into more than one of the above categories.

NAME OF EMPLOYEE	REASON FOR WORKING ONLINE AT HOME

9. ARRANGEMENTS OF VISITORS

- No physical contact is allowed between employees or between staff members and visitors (inclusive of parents, suppliers, contractors, etc).
- Visitors should sanitise their hands upon entering the school campus with alcohol-based hand sanitiser (with an alcohol content of at least 70%).
- Visitors must wear face masks or other facial protective equipment when entering the premises and are not allowed to take it off whilst on the premises.
- Visitors must practice physical/ social distancing of at least one-and-a-half metres away from any staff members or other visitors in all circumstances.

- Any visitor to the school campus must complete the attached travel history report ([ANNEXURE E](#)) that will be kept on record for a period of 12 months.
- Visitors shall be screened for any symptoms associated with COVID-19 at the Main Security office (TBC) at the Gate to the school and will not be permitted on campus if any such symptoms are displayed. These visitor names will be recorded on a visitor screening register. ([ANNEXURE F](#)).
- Visitors will also be required to indicate whether or not they are suffering from the following additional symptoms, namely, body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness and, if this is the case, they will not be permitted in the workplace.

10. CONCLUSION

The Head/s will complete a CEO declaration form ([ANNEXURE A](#)) confirming that the necessary risk assessment has 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 staff who are permitted to return to work will be provided with a Permit ([ANNEXURE B](#)), which is to be kept on their person at all times so that it can be shown to the necessary authorities, should it be requested.

ALL employees will also be requested to complete an employee declaration and information form ([ANNEXURE C](#)) 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 child/ren.

[adapted with permission from Herschel Girls School - 21 May 2020]

References:

- [Western Cape Education Department circular COVID -19/ 20200517](#), 15 May 2020
- Occupational Health and Safety Act and the regulations in particular Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents
- Government Notice from Department of Cooperative Governance R480 of 2020
- Government Notice from Department of Employment & Labour R479 of 2020
- Guidance issued by the Department of Employment & Labour - Workplace Preparedness: COVID -19 (SARS-CoV-19 virus)