

GOLDRIDGE COLLEGE REOPENING PLAN/COVID 19 RESPONSE PLAN

Quote *“necessity is the mother of all innovations”* commonly ascribed to Plato.

Our ideal situation as educationists is for children to be at school to continue their education. We have a responsibility to provide such. However, we cannot do so if due precautions are not in place, not least in the current COVID19 pandemic. Reopening of schools which is targeted for 28 July 2020 for the exam writing classes will be guided by Standard Operating Procedures from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Health and WHO.

Obviously for schools to reopen there are some expectations such as:

- To put in place and practice physical distancing so that pupils do not breath or touch each other.
- To ensure that people with COVID 19 symptoms or who are sick stay away from the school.
- To enable good hygiene practices.
- To keep track of people who enter the school.
- Psychosocial and mental health support.

The school will abide by the guidelines from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education so that it will not endanger all people in the school’s lives Given that the college has both day scholars and boarders the plan looks at what is needed at the school and also at the hostels. The college will have an Incident Response Team consisting of School Health Coordinators trained by the Ministry of Health and Child Care to deal with compliance issues and all suspect cases. The measures are to be taken assuming that there will be no viable coronavirus vaccine until June 2021.

INITIAL REOPENING REQUIREMENT

The school is have a well trained School Health Coordinator to attend to the health issues at the college. The School Health Coordinator will have full authority, without question or interference from non-medical persons of any designation, to implement protocols regarding sick people. (Keeping within Ministry of Health policies).

There will be manpower to operate temperature checks. The testers will have Personal Protective Equipment PPE.

PPE for the School Health Coordinator and support staff as well as testers includes: Latex gloves, surgical masks, N95 masks, face shields, goggles, gowns, plastic aprons, shoe covers, head covers, gum boots & scrub uniforms. In the event of a suspected case of COVID 19 on the campus ONLY the School Health Coordinator is to be involved with the sick patient.

The School Health Coordinator requires specialized items such as infrared thermometers and a pulse oximeter if possible (checks oxygen saturation level).

Gloves will be worn by healthcare providers, temperature testers and cleaners.

All teachers will be trained on how to effectively and safely handle themselves as well as their students on COVID 19 related matters.

TEACHERS/SUPPORT STAFF

There is need to consider and establish the extent of staff health.

Staff with existing health issues to advise school authorities for them to consider alternative action.

An indemnity shall be signed by all parents and staff. A checklist will be done and will include:

- underlying medical conditions and vulnerabilities, to protect the student/staff;
- recent illness or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, to prevent spread to others;
- special circumstances in the home environment, to tailor support as needed;
- special considerations regarding school transport as needed.

The school will establish learners and staff members with underlying conditions or special needs and keep a record of such. High risk groups include elderly staff members, elderly parents, grandparents (65years and above), and all those with medical conditions that place them in a high risk category e.g.

- Diabetes
- Asthma / chronic lung diseases / heavy smokers
- Heart conditions

- Auto-immune diseases
- Blood clotting diseases
- Immunocompromised e.g. poorly controlled HIV / cancer and chemotherapy / prolonged use of corticosteroids
- Severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)

The above need to be protected.

Staff will be trained on COVID19 to be conducted prior to any pupils returning.

TRAVELLING TO AND BACK FROM SCHOOL

All employees shall not be permitted to use public transport to travel to and back from school until the COVID 19 situation improves in Zimbabwe. They will be expected to use cars or the school buses to travel to school. This implies that the school buses shall ferry employees to school. The buses will be disinfected twice daily. Before one is allowed into the bus, he/she must be wearing a mask, be temperature screened and hands sanitised at the bus entrance. Anyone who fails the temperature check i.e. one with fever shall not be allowed to get into the bus and will be sent back home. People shall enhance social distancing by sitting one person per seat.

AT THE SCHOOL ENTRANCES

At every school entrance there shall be mandatory temperature screening for everyone who enters the school. Those with a temperature recorded above 37.2 degrees C will not be permitted on the campus. Infrared thermometers should be used to check temperatures at all entrance gates.

All those with fever will be sent to the on-site quarantine room so that they do not mix with other people. Students' parents shall be called to collect them if they fail the temperature check.

Hand sanitizer is mandatory for all pupils and staff at the entrance into the school.

Students will be expected to observe social distancing at the school entrances.

Absolutely NO pupils or staff allowed on the campus if they have symptoms of a cold / flu, are coughing and or running a fever!

Persons that have been exposed to anyone showing Covid 19 symptoms or have come into contact with persons coming from areas where there is a high Covid 19 infection rate, must stay home and observe self-quarantine regulations.

Pupils who have recently returned from any destination outside the country must observe the self-quarantine regulations and can only return to school once completed fully.

Hand washing with soap and water must also be encouraged throughout the day for all staff and pupils.

The routine wearing of face masks is now compulsory in public places, but the routine wearing of latex gloves by pupils and staff is to be discouraged.

Parents are to drop off their children at the entrance gates. Parents will not be permitted on the campus to escort their children to their classrooms. Parents are not permitted to congregate in the car parks or in the school grounds. They must remain in or next to their cars, maintaining social distancing.

To reduce the mixing of students there shall be staggered drop off and students collection times for the parents.

Entry into the school premises will be denied for anyone who is not willing to comply with the above requirements.

Installation of physical distance markers will be completed in entrance halls, staircases, receptions and other areas where queues are envisaged

CLEANING

A major disinfection of all school buildings and grounds will be done before the school opens. School classrooms shall be disinfected twice a day.

Disinfection will be done constantly (multi-intervals) throughout the day by designated people (i.e. taps, door knobs, desks, supplies, light switches, covers of books, door frames, teaching aids, surfaces, kettles, fridge door handles etc.)

Daily disinfection of all desks in classrooms shall be carried out.

Laboratories will be sanitized regularly between lessons. This includes science laboratories and the fashion and fabric rooms and other practical subjects.

The computer keyboards will be sanitized at the beginning of each lesson.

Water containers with taps and liquid soap dispensers should to be placed in strategic positions around the school, such as entrance gates, inside and outside classrooms, around sports fields, outside tuckshops and canteens etc.

Adequate supplies of soap must be placed in all toilets / change rooms / kitchens / tuckshops / canteens etc. Designated persons should ensure that water and soap dispensers are filled daily, and soap stocks are ordered so they do not run out.

When students leave the classrooms there will be a staggering system to avoid jamming or causing congestion at the entrance.

CLASSROOMS

Social distancing to be maintained at all times i.e. between desks in classrooms, when pupils line up, and in staff rooms.

Pupils should remain in the same classroom throughout the day and limit moving around. Teachers will move between classrooms. To reduce the risk of cross contamination, each pupil should have his / her own designated individual desk.

Desks will be set at 1 metre distance from each other, where possible.

Desks must all face in the same direction, rather than facing each other. This will reduce transmission caused from virus-containing droplets from talking, coughing, and sneezing

There will be no sharing of equipment or books or resources by learners

Outdoor lessons shall be encouraged when appropriate, feasible and reasonable.

Prepare staff, parents and pupils well in advance, that there is to be no sharing of stationary items such as pencils, pens, rulers, staplers, paint brushes etc. Children must NOT share items of clothing, hats, protective art/paint aprons, or sports vests.

Maximum number of pupils in classroom shall be 35 maintaining the physical distance of 1 metre.

Pupils to enter classrooms in single file, maintaining Social Distance.

- On returning to the classroom, after break each learner and teacher will sanitize their hands on entering classrooms.
- Teachers to stagger class beginning and end to avoid overcrowding in corridors.

Each classroom will have a bin for waste disposal and such waste should be disposed of by burning or burying daily.

Each classroom will have gloves for use by learners and teachers when handling tasks and materials where there can be a risk of having their hands contaminated and such gloves will be thrown away immediately after the task.

ASSEMBLIES

The assemblies, cultural activities, choral practice, indoor games, festivals, clubs, sports and other events make school to be fun, human and social. Sadly any event that promotes grouping together shall not be done. No large gatherings, other than classes, will be allowed until further notice.

If absolutely necessary to meet with the pupils, this must be done outside, one year group at a time, maintaining Social Distancing

This implies that there will no more be school assembly, house assemblies, sports events and other cultural activities in confined space until a vaccine for COVID 19 is discovered. The assemblies and staff meetings shall be conducted through Microsoft Teams where necessary.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Pupils may participate in non-contact sports. Coaches are to ensure social distancing is maintained at all times. The distancing must be continued in change rooms. Only a few pupils allowed in change rooms at a time. Coaches to monitor.

FOOD

Learners will not be allowed to share food brought from homes since there is a risk of transmission of COVID 19 disease.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The school enrolment was not done for social distancing. The whole school model was not designed with social distancing as a major consideration. Our school corridors are crowded and students and teachers brush past each other during break and lunch. We therefore need a broad plan to meet social distancing guidelines. When the exam writing classes come on 28 July there will be 120 students and social distancing will be easily managed. To protect

each other it is mandatory for all students to wear masks the whole school day. On entering a classroom the students will have to sanitise their hands.

The required distance in classrooms and outside when wearing masks shall be 1 metre. **SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES APPLY AT ALL TIMES. All Ministry of Health and Child Care guidelines will apply.**

No physical contact such as hand shaking, fist pumping, elbow or foot taps, at any time.

Physical distancing of 2 metres for all visitors. Visitors' names must be recorded.

The following would be necessary to manage the physical distancing:

- To reduce the classes by dividing the students into smaller groups of maximum 35 per class. The challenge will be when more students come to school as our classes will not fit all of them. This is where we need to use the semi-complete school hall. Our measurements of the hall shows that the auditorium, library and other rooms on the building have enough surface area to accommodate more than 250 pupils.
- We will also offer some lessons at the pavilion to accommodate 35 students.
- We will pitch up our three big tents to create more space for the dining hall.

HUGGING AND HANDSHAKES

Hugging and handshakes must completely be avoided. Non contact greeting will be emphasised.

BREAK AND LUNCH TIMES

Classes will go to break and lunch times at staggered intervals so that social distancing can be practiced in the play ground. The teachers to monitor that social distancing is adhered to.

Each learner will be responsible for opening their own break time snack and for ensuring their lunch boxes and juice bottles are put back in their bag after break. There must be no sharing of food and drinks.

On returning to the classroom after break each learner and the teacher will sanitize their hands on entering the classroom.

Pupils to be outside during break (unless severe weather).

The concrete benches to be sprayed daily with a bleach disinfectant.
Playground equipment either sprayed with disinfectant or washed down with soapy water.

ABLUTION FACILITIES

Toilets for learners and staff will be cleaned and disinfected thrice a day, at break time, lunch and on dismissal.

CORRIDORS

We shall ensure that passages are kept open, cases and bags are not to be left along them.

Students to take their bags into the classrooms and keep them close to their desks or they can leave them in their lockers. No bags must be put together or come into contact to avoid infecting each other.

Single file only, no running, and always maintaining appropriate social distancing of 1 metre.

One-way system to be put in place.

TIMETABLE

We shall stagger class beginning and end where possible, to avoid overcrowding in corridors and playgrounds. The classes that are too large shall be divided into manageable groups that will be taught by different teachers.

SICK BAY OR QUARANTINE CENTRE

If a student or staff member develops any symptoms of illness consistent with COVID – 19 e.g. sudden onset of cough, shortness of breath, fever, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, he/she must be sent to the sick or holding bay:

- ONLY the school nurse, wearing full PPE to manage the sick person.
- Isolate the person in a separate room while they wait to be picked up to go to a health care centre or home.
- After the sick person leaves, close off the isolation area, and only reopen it after thorough cleaning and disinfecting, wearing full PPE including gloves, has been done.

- Also clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, focusing on areas where the sick person was known to have been, and items they have touched e.g. individual desk, recently used toys and any shared equipment.
- Thoroughly wash hands after removing gloves.

Anyone (staff or learner) who comes into contact with a COVID 19 case must stay at home for 14 days. The school will notify public health authorities in case of a positive COVID 19 case.

SCHOOL OFFICE

Parents who need to visit the office should make an appointment in advance and attend at the stated time. They must have masks on and go straight to the office where they will have their hands sanitized before being served. Social or physical distance of 2 metres shall be maintained at all times.

Each school office and stockroom will have a bin for waste disposal and such waste should be disposed of by burning or burying daily.

KITCHENNETTE AND WORK ROOMS

Each staff member to have his/her own mug, and to wash his/her own mug / glass.

Mugs to be kept by staff members. Staff to take packed meals all the time and not to group violating social distancing.

Grab and go during all meals will be implemented to avoid staff grouping together in a confined area.

DINING HALL

Strict hygiene and disinfection rules must be applied in the kitchen for all the food and utensils. All staff who work in the kitchen to consistently wash their hands and wear face masks and shields all the time. Social distancing rules apply. Since students remove their masks to eat, enough social distancing will be required. All surfaces they eat on must be properly sanitised before and after the meal. Our current dining hall will not be able to accommodate all students at once hence we will stagger the meal times. To provide extra space we shall use three of our big tents.

There shall be hand sanitisers at each entrance of the dining hall.

HOSTELS

Students would be spread throughout the whole hostel ensure that they sleep and observe social distancing of at least 1.5 metres. Windows to be kept open for ventilation. The Ministry of Health to be consulted before students occupy the hostels. Any student who has any of the following conditions: cold, blocked ears, cough, sneezing, chills, loss of taste or smell, and fever to be isolated and tested for COVID 19 before he/she can be accepted to join other students once the symptoms disappear.

Temperature of every student in hostel shall be checked every morning. Any student with fever or not feeling well shall be asked to go into isolation.

There shall be hand sanitisers in all hostel entry points and designated places of the hostel.

The habit of boarders to sit in groups shall be not permitted. They will be expected to sit observing social distance of 1 metre all the time.

Each hostel will have a bin for waste disposal and such waste should be disposed of by burning or burying daily.

AWARENESS

The college will hold awareness programmes to educate everyone in the school about COVID 19. These will cover prevention, appropriate and frequent hand washing, respiratory hygiene, mask use, symptoms of COVID 19 and what to do if someone is feeling sick.

The school will explain to the learners the reason for school related measures, including the scientific considerations and highlighting the help they can get from the school (e.g. psychosocial support).

School Health Coordinator to teach everyone respiratory etiquette and the correct handwashing technique. This should be done prior to return to school.

Have signs up throughout the school, in strategic positions such as change rooms and kitchens, reminding everyone of procedures including the need to:

- wash hands regularly or use an alcohol rub
- cover their face with the bend of their elbow or a tissue if they cough or sneeze. Supply tissues and closed bins to dispose of them in.

Provide contact details or a health hotline number that participants can call for advice or to give information.

School Health Coordinator to ensure continuous training of all staff and pupils.

Thank you.

Compiled by

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