



education

Department:
Education

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

PROTOCOLS FOR SCHOOL RE-OPENING IN KWAZULU-NATAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

The first challenge related to the COVID-19 pandemic in KwaZulu Natal began to be felt during the conduct of term 1 assessments. These assessments are written in the final dates of the school term before closure. This therefore means that all schools in the province had covered the 2020 term 1 work in accordance with the Annual Teaching Programme.

In his attempt to deal with the COVID-19 challenge, the President of South Africa announced a 21 day lockdown starting from Thursday 27 March 2020 and ending 16 March 2020. This is a good decision by the leadership of the country and it is in the direct interest of the population of South Africa including school children, their teachers and their parents.

Whilst the country was still in the lockdown period, the Department of Education saw it necessary to prepare protocols for the reopening of schools because the lockdown period will be lifted at a particular point. It is important to appreciate the good work of the Department of Education when it rolled out e-lessons, radio broadcast lessons and other non-contact interventions. The responses of parents and learners, show that the Department of Education was able to help learners.

This booklet purports to provide guidelines for ensuring a smooth operation of schools (public and independent) in the post-lockdown era. There is a difference between post lockdown era and the post COVID-19 era. The former refers to a time when the government of South Africa reflects of progress made in the fight against the spread of the COVID-19 virus and decide to lift the lockdown. The lifting of the lockdown can be done in many ways. The possibility is one can be a total lift of the lockdown wherein all the restrictions are lifted. It can also be done by relaxing all restrictions which are not posing a threat to the lives of people and remain with others. The government may decide to lift the lockdown for all economic activities and keep schools closed. Therefore the lifting of the lockdown itself is a complex business which depends on the successes of government programmes and the remaining risks. The second possibility is when the

government identifies the human activities which are still a risk and which can result in re-infections and more and more cases of COVID-19 and death of people. The government may, for example, decide to have schools remaining closed because it does not want to put the lives of children and teachers at risk. In doing this the government may decide to continue with some rules like the maximum number of people in one place, the principle of physical distance etc.

Post COVID-19 era means something else. It means a point when the war against coronavirus is won and people are safe or there is a vaccine to deal with it. This era will mean that all restrictions are lifted but the prevention methods remain because "Prevention is better than cure". The complication of the whole situation is in that the lifting of the lockdown does not mean the disappearance of the COVID-19 epidemic and therefore disappearance of reasons to prevent it.

2. DEFINING PROTOCOLS FOR RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS

Protocols for re-opening of schools refer to practices by the Head Office of the Department of Education, Education Districts, Circuits, Schools, Teacher Unions, Parent Bodies and other role players to ensure the creation of safe school environments as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic that led to the lockdown and subsequent closure of schools.

The Department of Education in KwaZulu Natal understands that all schools must be safe for all employees and learners so that schools do not become areas of re-infection of the virus. The protocols for the re-opening of schools include the following:

- The responsibility of districts to form the School Community COVID-19 Safety Committees which include volunteers from communities (including unemployed youth), to help schools with the implementation of safety protocols aimed at preventing the spread of the virus
- The responsibility of districts to encourage the creation of associations comprising of Parents and School Management Teams (Parents & SMT Associations-PSMTA's). Such associations must play a role in the implementation of safety

protocols which are supported by the School Community COVID-19 Safety Committees

- The responsibility of Head Office to instruct districts to call a meeting of the Parents & SMT Associations to discuss and share critical issues relating to the prevention of coronavirus infections in schools.
- The responsibility of Parents & SMT Associations to facilitate the understanding of the message on “School Re-opening Message” from the MEC of Education
- The responsibility of Parents & SMT Associations to ensure that all relevant stakeholders (Teacher Unions, Faith Based Organisations, Local Government Leaders, Local Clinic Managers, Amakhosi, Izinduna and Youth Organisations) understand the school safety protocols.

In summary the protocols for re-opening of schools defines what needs to be put in place in schools to ensure that learners and school staff are not infected with the virus during the school day and after school hours.

3. CONFLICTING ISSUES CREATED BY POST LOCKDOWN ERA

One of the main challenges in the basic education sector is related to physical/social distance restriction. This rule will determine what will happen to schools in future, The Department of Education is aware of the extent to which the issues of psychological/social distance.

The size of classrooms and the challenge of de-congestion: The opening of schools **MAY** require decongestion of classrooms. The size of classes (in terms of learner numbers) is a problem because it is difficult to stick to the physical/social distance principle. This becomes worse when it comes to overcrowded schools and classrooms.

Learner transport and de-congestion of busses: The opening of schools **MAY** compel the Department of Education to de-congest learner transporting busses. The challenge of physical/social distance extends to transportation of learners in many ways. For learners who are using government learner transport to schools it will be difficult to keep the physical/social distance. In most of the townships and rural areas there are vehicles

which transport learners to schools such as taxis and cars operated by the so called “OMALUME”. These cars are always congested with school children.

Teacher transportation: Some of the teachers use public transport to and from work. Restrictions in the carrying capacity of busses and taxis will pose a problem because it may take more time for teachers to reach schools. Some of the teachers do what is called “clubbing” where they pay for one car that takes them to school and back. That will also create a problem if the physical/social distance rule is still in place.

Meetings and workshops: Schools internal meetings may require more space other than the staffroom especially in schools where staff is big in a small space is a challenge. District and circuit meetings and teacher development sessions will require more space. This will affect planning, reporting, monitoring and development programmes.

Morning assembly and contact sports: It is clear that morning assemblies and sports will be affected. The physical/social distancing rule does not favour the meeting of more than a stipulated number of people in one place. Therefore activities like school choir practices, contact sport practices and other activities which are likely to violate the physical/social distance rule will be suspended.

Risk of re-infection: If the above-mentioned complications are not lifted, the risk of re-infection may escalate. Once this happens, many employees of the Department of Education and learners will get the virus resulting to more and more deaths. Such an occurrence may create more problems for the country.

4. PRE OPENING OF SCHOOLS PRIORITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In spite of the fact that there are challenges related to the school environment as against the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it remains necessary to prepare the system for the reopening of schools. In actual fact the resuming of teaching and learning will mean a need for safe learning environments, safe learners, safe teachers and safe movement of services into the schools. The following are priorities that the Department of Education regards as critical for preparing schools for re-opening.

PRIORITY 1: HEALTHY, CLEAN AND SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

The Department of Education will ensure that school campuses are in clean and good sanitary conditions. The reason for this is that school campuses need to be prepared to be spaces which are not conducive for the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This includes the cleaning and sanitation of buildings (classrooms, specialized rooms, administration blocks, school premises, food storage areas and kitchens). In toilets urinals, basins and toilet seats will have to be sprayed with disinfectants to prevent the spread of infections. The cleaning services in schools will place a huge demand on protective gears by the cleaning staff. The department of education will focus on the following areas for priority number 1.

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and school premises (Day Schools)

For teachers, learners and other employees of the Department of Education to arrive in safe environments, the Department of Education will sanitize and clean the school premises, classrooms and other rooms that support the teaching and learning function. In terms of the COVID-19 prevention the cleaning and sanitization of the school environment must be an ongoing process especially because the virus takes longer to die which requires a continuous sanitization of surfaces. The following table shows the number of **public and independent day schools** which will be cleaned and sanitized in preparation for school re-opening. It shows the total number of schools to be prepared in each district, the number of classrooms and other rooms/buildings.

PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT DAY SCHOOL SANITIZATION STATISTICS			
District	No. of Schools	No. of Classrooms	Other rooms e.g. libraries/offices etc.
AMAJUBA			
HARRY GWALA			
ILEMBE			
KING CETSHWAYO			
PINEOWN			
UGU			
UMGUNGUDNLOVU			
UMKHANYAKUDE			

UMLAZI			
UMZINYATHI			
UTHUKELA			
ZULULAND			
TOTALS			

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and school premises (Boarding Schools)

The preparation of the boarding schools will be slightly different from that of day schools. The main difference is that the former has hostels which act as temporary homes for learners. Over and above the continuous cleaning and sanitization of boarding school premises, classrooms and other rooms that support the teaching and learning function, hostels will be cleaned and sanitized. Since these act as homes of the learners, the school code of conduct must include ground rules for ensuring that all learners observe the rules for preventing the spread of coronavirus in schools. In boarding schools where there are school nurses, learner's rooms must be inspected continuously for expected standards of hygiene and sanitation. The following table shows the number of boarding schools, their classrooms and other buildings which will be cleaned and sanitized before schools re-open.

PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT BOARDING SCHOOL SANITIZATION STATISTICS			
District	Boarding Schools	Classrooms Special Rooms	No. of hostels.
AMAJUBA			
HARRY GWALA			
ILEMBE			
KING CETSHWAYO			
PINEOWN			
UGU			
UMGUNGUDNLOVU			
UMKHANYAKUDE			
UMLAZI			
UMZINYATHI			
UTHUKELA			
ZULULAND			
TOTAL			

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and offices (District and Circuit Offices)

District and Circuit offices are a source of school support. They house education specialists and managers whose task is to develop guidelines, study material and workshop material to support schools. These education specialists occupy offices located in premises across the twelve districts. Continuous sanitation and cleaning will extend to these premises and offices so that the district and circuit offices do not become breeding grounds for the spread of COVID-19. All premises of district and circuit offices will be sanitized and cleaned. The Department of Education will sanitize and clean the districts and circuit office premises, offices, tea rooms, kitchens, and other rooms that support the work of District Directors, Circuit Managers, Subject Specialists, Administration Staff and Security personnel. In terms of the COVID-19 prevention rules, this cleaning and sanitization of the district and circuit offices must be an ongoing process especially because the virus takes longer to die which requires continuous cleaning and sanitization of surfaces. If this is not done, the offices will contribute towards the spread of the virus. The following table shows the numbers offices and other buildings that need to be sanitized and cleaned per district.

DISTRICT AND CIRCUIT OFFICE SANITIZATION STATISTICS			
District	No. of Offices	Boardrooms	Other e.g. kitchens
AMAJUBA			
HARRY GWALA			
ILEMBE			
KING CETSHWAYO			
PINEOWN			
UGU			
UMGUNGUDNLOVU			
UMKHANYAKUDE			
UMLAZI			
UMZINYATHI			
UTHUKELA			
ZULULAND			
TOTAL			

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and offices (Head Office Premises)

The province has a number of Head Office premises in the form of buildings. These offices are a source of district and school support. They house the senior management of the Department of Education and the administration personnel of the system. The Head Office premises have offices of education specialists and managers whose task is to develop policy and support the whole system. Head Office personnel are located in various buildings. Continuous sanitation and cleaning will extend to these premises and offices so that they do not become breeding grounds for the spread of COVID-19. All premises of Head Office buildings will be sanitized and cleaned as part of preparation for school re-opening. The Department of Education will sanitize and clean the office buildings, offices, tea rooms, kitchens, and other rooms that support the work of employees. In terms of the COVID-19 prevention rules, this cleaning and sanitization of the Head Office buildings will be an ongoing process and if this is not done, the offices will contribute towards the spread of the virus. The following table shows the numbers offices and other rooms in the Head Office buildings.

HEAD OFFICE SANITIZATION STATISTICS			
Building	No. of Offices	Boardrooms	Other e.g. kitchens
ANTON LEMBEDE			
TRURO HOUSE			
NED BUILDING			
HAWARD BUILDING			
MALGATE HOUSE			
DOKKIES			
TOTAL			

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and offices (New and ready to occupy schools)

KwaZulu Natal has 10 schools which are new and some have been re-constructed. They are ready to be opened and occupied by learners. It is very important that the Department

of Education prevents these premises from being environments in which the virus can thrive and make its way to the nearby communities. The Department of Education must prepare these new schools for teachers, learners and other employees to arrive in safe environments. The Department of Education will sanitize and clean the school premises, classrooms and other rooms that support the teaching and learning function in these schools so that when they are opened, they are ready to be used without promoting the spread of the virus.

NEWLY BUILT SCHOOLS SANITIZATION STATISTICS	
District	NEW SCHOOLS
PINETWON	LA MERCY SCIENCE
ZULULAND	HOLINYOKA PRIMARY SCHOOLS
KING CETSHWAYO	KWAMBONAMBI SECONDARY SCHOOL
UMKHANYAKUDE	NEW HAHLABENI PRIMARY
UMKHANYAKUDE	KINDI JOBE HIGH SCHOOL
UMKHANYAKUDE	ZIMELE HIGH SCHOOL
HARRY GWALA	NTSHONGO SECONDARY SCHOOL
UMZINYATHI	MBONGELENI PRIMARY SCHOOL
UTHUKELA	GOODHOME SECONDARY SCHOOL
UTHUKELA	MKHAMBA GARDENS PRIMARY SCHOOL
TOTAL	

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of buildings and offices (ECD centres outside the schools)

The ECD centres which are outside schools are an important component of the general schooling system. They are mainly occupied by infants who are very much vulnerable. They are supposed to be protected against coronavirus even more than adults because they are still independent. The Department of Education in partnership with the Department of Social Development will facilitate the sanitation of ECD centres to ensure that they are safe for occupation by children.

SANITISATION & SCREENING STATISTICS FOR “OUT OF SCHOOL” ECD CENTRES

District	Number of Centres (sanitization)	Number of Practitioners (screening)	Other personnel (Screening)
AMAJUBA			
HARRY GWALA			
ILEMBE			
KING CETSHWAYO			
PINEOWN			
UGU			
UMGUNGUDNLOVU			
UMKHANYAKUDE			
UMLAZI			
UMZINYATHI			
UTHUKELA			
ZULULAND			
TOTAL			

Continuous cleaning and sanitization of facilities (Learner Transportation Facilities)

The Department of Education wants to leave no stone unturned. In this way learners who use government transport to and from school must travel in clean and sanitized busses. The Department of Education will facilitate a continuous sanitization of busses on daily basis so that learners do not get the virus within the transportation facilities. Bus owners will have an obligation to ensure that safety of learners extend to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 virus.

LEARNER TRANSPORTING BUSES SANITIZATION & SREENING STATISTICS		
District	Number of busses (Sanitization)	Carrying Capacity (Screening)
AMAJUBA		
HARRY GWALA		
ILEMBE		
KING CETSHWAYO		
PINEOWN		
UGU		
UMGUNGUDNLOVU		
UMKHANYAKUDE		

UMLAZI		
UMZINYATHI		
UTHUKELA		
ZULULAND		
TOTAL		

PRIORITY 2: PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT SCHOOL RE-OPENING

Message of responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus in schools

In case of an announcement by the President of Republic of South Africa to lift the lockdown and open schools, the Department of Education in KwaZulu Natal has *prepared* plans to keep schools safe from the infection of teachers, learners and other personnel by the coronavirus. In doing this the Department of Education is hereby requesting communities (parents, learners, community leaders, religious leaders, traditional leaders, teachers, school administration staff, school security staff, teacher unions and other role players) to work together and make schools safe places of teaching and learning. The Department of Education will send/deliver the following message to communities.

SCHOOL RE-OPENING MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – KWAZULU NATAL

In view of school re-opening communities are requested to work together before learners return to school and do the following:

1. Communities must establish “School Health and Safety Committees” which will include School Management Teams and Teacher Representatives and Learner Representatives (where necessary).
2. School Health and Safety Committees must ensure that each returning child has had no contact with a suspected COVID-19 patient in the last 14 days before schools re-open.
3. School Health and Safety Committees must compile a list of names and contact details of parents/guardians/caregivers so that the school can contact them urgently in case the child shows symptoms of COVID-19.

4. School Health and Safety Committees must facilitate the cleaning and sanitization of the school buildings, classrooms, specialized rooms, toilets and other specialized buildings.
5. School Health and Safety Committees must collect the school safety and hygiene supplies from the District Offices and prepare a safe storage thereof. The supplies will include ***thermometer for temperature taking, hand washing basins or buckets, soap and chlorine for hand washing and cleaning, basic leaning and reusable protective equipment, health and hygiene promotion material (posters, charts and other hygiene promotion material).***
6. School Health and Safety Committees must ensure that the school has clean water for use in morning, during the day and at the end of the school day.
7. School Health and Safety Committees must create communication lines with the nearest clinic/hospital/health centre to set up a referral plan for the school.
8. School Health and Safety Committees must inform learners to treat other learners with respect and not to stigmatize any schoolmate who has any form of sickness.
9. School Health and Safety Committees must prevent any person with notable COVID-19 symptoms from entering the school and use the communication line of the nearest clinic/hospital/health centre to report the case for screening.
10. School Health and Safety Committees must ensure that teachers observe the behaviors of learners during teaching, learning and assessment and inform the principal to follow up quickly on unusual behaviors.

Community and school partnership to create awareness and promotion of health and hygiene

The Department of Education understands that learners come from communities and that the prevention of the spread of coronavirus must start from communities from which learners come. It is a fact that parents have fears about their children. The re-opening of schools leaves them with questions such as:

- Is the school environment suitable for the safety of our children against COVID-19?

- Is it safe for our children to get into busses, trains, taxis and other modes of transport in view of COVID-19?
- Do schools have enough water and other sanitation equipment to keep the school environment in line with COVID-19? Prevention protocols?
- Do schools have systems of identifying learners/teachers/staff members with symptoms of COVID-19 so that quick action can be taken to save the rest of children and staff from infection?
- Do school principals, teachers and other school staff have necessary skills to handle cases of learners with COVID-19 symptoms?

These are just few questions that parents may have in relation to the danger of the infection of their children when schools re-open. The Department of Education will ensure that a school re-opening programme includes community awareness of the situation and on how the schools will be prepared for COVID-19 safety.

The Department of Education will also facilitate community awareness in terms of activities to make schools safe from COVID-19 infections. This comes from an understanding that clean and well sanitized school environments will be useless in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 if their parents, guardians and communities behave in a manner that reverses what the schools are doing.

In order to balance the safety behaviors at school level with safe communities, the Department of Education will facilitate awareness training which will include School Principals, School Governing Bodies, School Teachers, Office Based Educators, Teacher Unions, Faith Based Organisations, Amakhosi, Izinduna and other relevant role players. This training will be used to lead the awareness campaigns for communities from which learners come.

**PRIORITY 3: CREATION OF HYGENIC SCHOOLS THROUGH WATER
AVAILABILITY AND SANITATION**

Availability of water

Generally clean and running water is a scarce resource in South Africa especially in rural areas where the majority of schools in KwaZulu Natal are located. There are two departments which are involved in the provision of water i.e. Department of Education and the municipalities. The role of the Department of Education will identify schools without water tanks. Once this is done, a list will be compiled for the office of the MEC. The MEC will work with municipalities to facilitate the process of availability of water from municipalities. Education districts will submit the following information for the provision of water tanks and water.

PROVISION OF WATER TANKS AND WATER		
District	Number schools with water	Number of schools needing water tanks
AMAJUBA		
HARRY GWALA		
ILEMBE		
KING CETSHWAYO		
PINEOWN		
UGU		
UMGUNGUDNLOVU		
UMKHANYAKUDE		
UMLAZI		
UMZINYATHI		
UTHUKELA		
ZULULAND		
TOTAL		

Facilitation of the installation of stations and facilities for washing hands and taking of temperatures

Checking of temperatures and washing hands are two of the most important pre-requisites for fighting the spread of covid-19. The COVID-19 School Safety Committee will install stations where learners wash hands as per requirements during the day. However, in most schools sinks will be used in toilets. Other stations can be used for washing hands even if learners did not get to toilets. The identified hand washing stations and toilets must have soap and wiping tissues as well as disposing bins.

Addressing school staff (teachers, administration staff and security staff) about their role in preventing COVID-19 infection

As they get back to schools, teachers have their own perception about the situation in the country. They have justified fears about working in a congested classroom and touching various surfaces during teaching and learning. Their knowledge of how the virus spreads leaves them with a number of questions. The Department of Education will outline the role that teachers will play in preventing the rate of COVID-19 spreading in schools. All schools will deliver this message to teachers before learners arrive.

Message 1: Teachers must know that the Department of Education has made detailed plans for ensuring that schools are safe places and there are measures in place for preventing the spread of COVID-19 to teachers, learners, administration staff and security staff. In order to ensure that every school is safe, the Department of Education has formed partnerships with local clinics, hospitals health centres and other institutions to:

- ✚ Disinfect , sanitize and clean school premises, classrooms and other exposed areas of the school
- ✚ Work with municipalities to ensure that schools have water available since COVID-19 prevention depends of availability of clean water
- ✚ Provide financial resources to provide schools with sanitizers, soap and other perishables needed to ensure high standards of hygiene
- ✚ Provide awareness charts to promote the hygienic behavior in staff members and learners
- ✚ Prepare an information session for learners to be delivered in Life Skills and Life Orientation periods

Message 2: Teachers will have to keep schools safe by doing the following:

- ✚ Not coming to school if they have fever accompanied by very high temperatures, coughing and breathing difficulty
- ✚ Ensure that they know the symptoms of COVID-19 so as to identify learners with such symptoms

- ✚ Quickly and timeously report any learner or staff member who shows symptoms of COVID-19 to the COVID-19 School Safety Committee
- ✚ Follow the School COVID-19 Safety and Health Plan when noticing that a staff member or a learner get sick with fever accompanied by very high temperatures, coughing and breathing difficulty
- ✚ Ensure that the school contacts the parent/guardian/caregiver when the child is sick
- ✚ Keep the sick child or staff member in an area that has been identified by the COVID-19 School Safety Committee
- ✚ Assist in the checking of the temperature of every learner when they enter the school and monitor the washing of hands in designated stations available at school
- ✚ Work with community leaders, teacher unions, parents and other relevant organisations to keep the school safe from the COVID-19 virus

Message 3: Teachers must avoid a situation where any sickness spread in school and must ensure that everybody at school observes the following hygiene rules

- ✚ Washing hands regularly with soap and water
- ✚ Avoiding the sharing of personal things such as cups, plates, food and clothes with others
- ✚ Avoiding touching others especially with unwashed hands
- ✚ Avoid touching different kinds of food with unwashed hands
- ✚ Remind learners to avoid touching their eyes, noses and mouths with unwashed hands

5. SCHOOL RE-OPENING PRIORITIES

School reopening means that the school premises and buildings have been left without daily activities since the announcement of the lockdown. The return of learners from the COVID-19 lockdown means that the school environment must convince learners that and

parents that the school is a safe environment and that children are not going to get sick and perhaps die.

PRIORITY 5: MANAGING THE SAFETY OF LEARNERS

When all pre-opening programmes are done, it will be necessary for the Department of Education to ensure that learners are safe within school premises. This will include the change of mindset of learners so that they are not disrupted by the fear of COVID-19 infection. Such fears have been created by all what they were hearing from the radios, reading from newspapers and watching on televisions during the lockdown period. When school re-open they may be psychologically disrupted by their thinking of the risk involved in staying at school. The other issues that may occupy the minds of learners will be issues such as availability of sanitizers (which they were getting at home), social distance etc. The following are priorities related to the opening of schools.

Addressing learners about their role in preventing COVID-19 infection

Learners will be given the following instructions by the School Management Team.

Instruction 1: Do not keep quiet if you are feeling sick at home and do not come to school if you have fever or feeling very hot or coughing

Instruction 2: You must have your temperature checked all the time you enter the school premises

Instruction 3: Inform your teacher if you or any of your classmates if he/she has fever or feeling very hot or coughing

Instruction 4: You must always wash your hands with soap all the time when you enter the school premises, after you have used the toilet, before you eat and after you have eaten

Instruction 5: You must avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. You must not do same to other learners

Instruction 6: To prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the school you must do the following

Instruction 7: Do not share personal things such as cups, spoons, food and clothes with others

Instruction 8: You must ensure that you wear cleaned clothes (uniform, and underwear when you are at home and when you come to school

Instruction 9: Do not crate close contact with someone who have fever or coughing or sweating

Instruction 10: Treat all your schoolmates with respect and do not make fun of them

Instruction 11: Listen to COVID-19 related instructions given by your teachers

For this address about the role of learners in preventing the spread of the virus in the school must use the first period of Life Skills (Grade 1-6) and Life Orientation (Grade 7-12). In these periods teachers will be able to respond to questions from learners.

PRIRITY 6: DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC RECOVERY PLANS

The decision to close schools was taken by the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Cabinet of South Africa with an intention to arrest the spread of COVID-19 in the country and resultant death of citizens. The announcement to close schools came as a surprise because no one was expecting it and the majority of people has never experienced a lockdown before. The Department of Education rolled out good programmes for teaching learners. The programmes were so good that learners who took advantage of them were able to benefit. However, some limitations warrant the recovery plans at school level.

LIMITATIONS	INHERENT ACADEMIC RISK
The participation of learners in radio lessons and other forms of learning platforms could not be monitored and guaranteed	A risk is that there are learners who were not taking advantage of the programmes and therefore the last day of school was their last day of learning. These have made themselves to be left behind.
Whilst learners may be learning there is a very limited scope for written work yet written work is part of the learning process	The nature of distant lessons is such that learners are unable to ask questions of clarity and therefore there may be

	knowledge gaps which are unattended to.
There is no differentiation in terms of fast learners and slow learners and this is compounded by the presence of the progressed learners	Slow learners may have been disadvantaged because tutors were working on assumption that all learners are at the same level. Progressed learners may have got lost on the way.
The element of learner assessment is limited by the fact that learners are not in one location	Although tutors made examples of assessment questions, the aspect of face to face learner assessment was missing. The risk is that learners may be unable to apply the content knowledge that was taught to them.
More than any of the limitation, it is a reality that the model of e-learning favour the children of families with access to technology, space and time	A known digital divide between the rich and the poor and between rural and urban has deprived learners of useful e-material and lessons. Such learners have missed out in a way.

With the limitations mentioned above, it is clear that schools must develop recovery plans for all grades. The Districts will help schools to calculate the loss time and manage the processes of development of school academic recovery plans.

6. AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES FOR SAFE AND HYGIENIC SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

The following resources will be provided by the Department of Education to ensure that schools remain clean and safe for learners, teachers and all other people who work in school premises.

- ✚ Water tanks and water for sustainable water supply
- ✚ Fumigants for sustaining the cleanliness of school premises
- ✚ Toilet cleaning perishables for a sustained safety of schools
- ✚ Disinfectants and sanitizers for ensuring clean and safe school premises
- ✚ Quantities of soap to ensure that learners are able to wash hands
- ✚ Thermometers for taking temperature readings
- ✚ Special bins for disposing wiping material used after handwashing

