



RHENISH GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR LEARNERS ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES

With the phased-in approach of opening the school, certain sustainable measures need to be in place in order to ensure the health and safety of our learners and that of the greater community, and to ensure that the academic year is completed successfully.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus needs to be combatted effectively in the following ways:

- Stay home if you are feeling ill.
- Sneeze and cough in the crease of your elbow or in a tissue and dispose of it immediately.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly.
- Clean surfaces regularly.
- Avoid physical contact with people.
- We appeal to each learner to bring her own sanitiser so that she can sanitise her hands on a regular basis. The school will provide sanitiser at the sanitiser stations around the school.
- It is important that learners bring their own sanitising wipes (or sanitiser) to wipe their own desk at the start of each lesson. The school will provide paper towels as far as possible.
- The wearing of a mask is compulsory for all staff and learners. Each learner will receive two masks from the school.

Face masks

The use of face masks

DO NOT SHARE CLOTH MASKS AMONG MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY! MAKE SURE THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO CLOTH MASKS PER PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD, INCLUDING CHILDREN.

A cloth mask must be worn when in public areas or gatherings. It should be treated with care when putting on and taking off because the outer surface might be contaminated and then will contaminate your hands and transfer the virus to your mouth, nose or eyes, or to others.

1. Wash hands thoroughly before putting on your mask.
2. Place the mask with the correct side facing your nose and mouth and covering both well.
3. Tie the strings behind your head, or if you are using elastic bands, make sure these are tight.
4. Make sure it fits well. Move it around to get the best fit.
5. Once you have put on the cloth mask and you are comfortable with the fit, DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE again until you take it off.

6. When you take it off, undo the ties, and carefully fold the mask inside out OR
7. Hold it by the strings and place the mask in a dedicated, big enough container ready to be washed.
8. Wash hands thoroughly and dry before doing anything else.
9. Wash your cloth mask daily to reduce the chance of it becoming contaminated with bacteria and viruses.

Maintaining the mask

- Get or make at least two per person so you will be able to wash one and have a clean one ready for use.
- Hand or machine wash the mask daily in soap and hot water (as hot as can be tolerated). Rinse thoroughly and dry.
- IRON THE MASK - this is the best and cheapest means of disinfection!
- DO NOT SOAK THE MASK IN CHEMICALS AS THESE GET ABSORBED AND MAY BE INHALED CAUSING DAMAGE TO THE RESPIRATORY TRACT.

There are various ways in which we are going to ensure the safety of our learners and staff:

- The school will enforce the washing of hands with water and soap or sanitising hands on a regular basis.
- Staff and learners are responsible for sanitising their own personal space.
- There are hand sanitising stations all around the school (see map attached). We request learners to use these with discretion.
- We will not have assemblies, sport events etc.
- Social distancing will be maintained and there may be no physical contact (handshakes, hugs etc.).
- The school will be sanitised on a regular basis, especially high-risk surfaces such as staircases, door knobs and bathrooms.
- We will follow a daily cleaning programme by using certain chemicals and specific processes.
- **We will be following the normal school time table.**
- We will maintain a metre distance among learners and the teacher in classes. Teachers will not be able to teach with masks and will therefore ask the Grade 12s whether they are happy for them to remove their masks and ensure they stay 1.5 metres from the learners. Staff will not move in between the desks at all.
- It is important that learners attend school, if they are not ill. Our priority is to complete our academic year successfully.
- Learners and teachers, who feel ill, must stay at home. If COVID-19 is suspected, such an individual must be tested for COVID-19 and the school must be informed.

- Stigmatisation will be curbed by detailed information-sessions for learners.
- The temperatures of all teachers and learners will be checked in the mornings and they will have to respond to certain questions.
- Teachers and learners who contract COVID-19, must by law be reported to the Health Department and the school. In such cases, we need to trace people with whom the person has been in contact, in order to curb the spread of the virus. Your co-operation in this regard is of the utmost importance.

Protocol for the arrival of learners at school:

- **Learners must report to school between 7:00 and 7:45.**
- Learners (initially only grade 12) will meet in the Ebenezer Hall and when other grades are phased in, we will communicate where they will meet.
- Before a learner may access the school premises, she must wear her mask and sanitise her hands.
- Learners must answer the following five questions:
 1. Do you have a cough?
 2. Do you have a fever?
 3. Do you have shortness of breath?
 4. Do you have a sore throat?
 5. Within the past 14 days, have you had direct contact with someone known to have contracted Coronavirus (COVID-19)?
- If a learner has not responded negatively to all of the questions, she will be sent to the isolation room (breakaway-room next to the bursar's office).
- Learners maintain the 1 metre distance while are being monitored for fever.
- The reading must be recorded.
- If a learner records a high fever, she will be isolated immediately in the isolation room.
- Such a learner's parents will be contacted immediately, after which the parent must fetch her/his child.

Learners who have own transport to school (motorcar/bicycle):

These learners need to use the front entrance gate to gain access to the premises, turn right immediately to park on the grass area next to the Principal's house. The same procedure will be followed as above.

Hostel learners:

The same safety measures will be followed at the hostels. Learners will be screened at the hostel and then at the school to be sent to class immediately if cleared.

Procedures that must be followed if someone is ill:

- Learners and staff who become ill at school or who arrive ill at school will be sent home immediately.
- A learner or staff member, who is ill, will be isolated immediately, until such person has left the premises.

Health and Hygiene-training:

- Specific training about the hygiene programme will be given to teachers and learners.
- Our LSU Department (LSU), led by Ms Conchar, will be available for emotional support regarding anxieties, fears and uncertainties.

Control list for the school:

- A cleaning programme for teachers and learners.
- Regular waste removal.
- Identifying high-risk surfaces such as telephones, door knobs, bathrooms, window panes, electronic equipment and desks and chairs in classrooms.
- According to doctors, good ventilation is important. Despite winter approaching, we will make sure that windows are open for ventilation.
- Posters concerning COVID-19 and good health practices will be displayed on the school premises and at the hostels.
- There will be a support network for learners and teachers. This will address both emotional and academic well-being.
- Utensils like pens, erasers, books, rulers, pencils, etc. must not be shared amongst learners and/ or teachers or placed in the mouth.

School attendance:

Although we urge learners who have COVID-19 symptoms to stay at home, it is important that healthy learners attend school. We have lost valuable academic time during the lock-down. Therefore, learners should not be absent from school unnecessarily. We also respect the decision of parents' to not send a learner to school. Guidelines from the WCED regarding comorbidities / risks for learners are attached for your information.

What is the procedure in case of an outbreak of COVID-19 in school:

- There will be immediate communication with the parents.
- The relevant parties will have to be tested immediately.
- The relevant parties must be in isolation for 14 days.
- The relevant parties must provide a list of names of people with whom they have been in contact.
- The Management of the school does not have the authority to close the school. This is the decision and responsibility of the Department of Health and the WCED.

Follow the necessary procedure when an ill person has recovered:

According to information at our disposal, the average recovery time for a person with light symptoms, is about two weeks. In more severe cases, it could take anything from 3-6 weeks.

When may a learner return to school?

- Learners who display symptoms of or have tested positive for the virus, must stay at home for 14 days.
- After 14 days, or if the learner has no symptoms of the virus anymore, she must be tested again.
- The parents of the learner must inform Ms Slabber and provide the negative test result as well.
- The learner will then be allowed back at school.

Test for COVID-19:

Stellenbosch: New Mediclinic: Trumali House, Trumali Street, Harrington's Place, Stellenbosch
Somerset West: Arun Place Block 6 Unit F, Csherrywood Gardens, Sir Lowry's Pass
Stellenbosch Oewerpark: Stellenbosch Oewerpark, Suite 12A Rokewood Road, Die Boord, Stellenbosch
Testing with Lancet Laboratories costs R1 400 per test.

Contact the Covid-19 hotlines for health queries:

National hotline: 0800 029 999 The National Institute For Communicable Diseases (NICD)
Provincial hotline: 021 928 4102
Email: doh.dismed@westerncape.gov.za
WhatsApp "Hi" to 060 012 3456

Procedure for visitors (including parents):

Everybody who gains access to the school premises must be subjected to the same precautionary measures to protect our community. Therefore, the procedure will be as follows:

- Visitors will be allowed only on appointment.
- All visitors must sanitise their hands at the entrance.
- All visitors are compelled to wear a mask.
- Visitors will be screened once they enter the foyer
- All visitors must read the protocol at the entrance of the school, before accessing the premises.

School practices and COVID-19:

- **Learners will be screened every day.**
- **Management of breaks:** Specific areas will be allocated to different grades to avoid crowding.
- **Tuckshop:** The tuckshop will be closed until further notice. Therefore, learners **MUST** bring their own lunch packs to school.
- **Buses:** Buses will follow the necessary sanitising and precautionary measures to ensure the safety of our learners – this is the responsibility of the bus companies and is according to the agreement reached between parents and the bus company.

COVID-19 communication at school: The most important way to safeguard our community against the spread of the virus is to establish sound hygienic habits. This can only be achieved if our school community sees these sound practices on a daily basis. Therefore, there will be posters in all classes and in corridors to remind learners of these practices. The following issues will be addressed:

- Effective ways of washing hands.
- Surfaces that need to be avoided.
- Avoid physical contact.
- Maintain a safe social distance.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Maintain sound hygiene practices.
- Sneeze and cough in the crease of your elbow or in a tissue, which must be discarded immediately.

With everyone's co-operation, we will ensure the safety of our school community. The School will take all the necessary precautions and staff and learners have a responsibility to work together. The school is virus free and the virus can only be brought into the school from outside; however; the school cannot guarantee that this will not happen.

COVID-19 Rhenish Girls' High School - Health & Safety Officers:

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- Dr Bennie: Alison.bennie@rhenish.co.za