

Clarifying instructions by the Ministry of Education on the reopening of Private Institutes/Private Educational Centres

Following the announcement by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth (MECSY) dated the 20th May 2020 (ypp10802a) on the reopening of Private Institutes/Private Educational Centres (P.I./P.E.C.) the MECSY hereby reissues the instructions which have been published concerning the safe operation of P.I./P.E.C., with clarifications addressed to those concerned in order to ensure the proper application of health protocols.

TO THE OWNERS OF P.T./P.E.C.:

1. Every predetermined entry to each P.I./P.E.C. must be stated in order to avoid congestion. Social distancing of one metre must be maintained in case there are more persons wishing to enter the premises of the tutorial.
2. Wash solutions (with >60% alcohol content) must be placed at the entrance to each P.I./P.E.C. It is recommended that personnel and students apply proper hand hygiene when entering the premises.
3. The appointment of secretarial support is recommended in order to have in place a weekly allocation schedule for students in such a way as to avoid congestion and observe physical distancing measures during the work timetable of the tutorial.
4. It is recommended that students either test themselves at home on a daily basis or with help from their parents/legal guardians for high temperature or and respiratory symptoms which are compatible with COVID-19.
5. The owner of each P.I./P.E.C. should be responsible for the daily disinfection of surfaces (desks, chairs, door handles) after every class and change of students, as well as of all common use areas (e.g. washrooms). The cleansing of the premises should conform to the corresponding protocols of the Ministry of Health.
6. Hands should be washed both by the teaching staff and the students before entering and leaving the premises.
7. With the reopening of P.I./P.E.C. it is recommended that the students are informed about the epidemic and personal safety measures. It is suggested to run an educational class on precautionary and personal protection measures and have a planning team within the tutorial to monitor the implementation of measures.
8. It is recommended that notices are prominently displayed stating the general guidelines and hand-washing instructions (as for instance at the entrance to the classrooms, washroom etc.).
9. Waste bins should be placed in every classroom and the rubbish bags removed on a daily basis.
10. All classrooms should be ventilated continuously during lessons through an open window, which must stay open so that the air is constantly refreshed in enclosed areas.
11. Distancing measures should be implemented in the classroom (1 metre for each student per desk and 2 metres from the teacher).
12. As regards air-conditioners and fans, the instructions of the Electromechanical Services Department must be followed.
13. In the computer rooms, the students must keep the safety distance and wear gloves in entering the class, which must be disposed of in the waste bins on leaving the classroom.

Following the disposal of the gloves, hand hygiene should be applied rigorously. Students should also be taught not to touch their faces (especially when wearing gloves). In the case where the teacher must come close to the student, they should both use a mask and minimize as much as possible the close contact space. Computers should be cleansed daily during the day, if feasible, with emphasis on the keyboard, using special alcohol-saturated tissues.

14. The premises must be cleaned on a daily basis by following the practices of cleanliness with emphasis on the following:

Regular cleansing and sterilisation of frequently used surfaces such as knobs, desks, chairs and other furniture, using a disinfecting solution

Regular cleansing and disinfection of the toilets and surfaces of the premises with the use of sterilising solutions (diluted chlorine solution)

Daily cleaning of floors with disinfectant solutions (preferably diluted chlorine solution)

15. In the case where a student or tutor presents any symptoms related to the virus symptomatology, they should not come to the class and follow instead the protocol of the Ministry of Health

16. The distancing specified between the teacher and the student should be observed.

TO THE STUDENTS AND TEACHER

1. Students should occupy one desk each.
2. Desks should be placed at least one metre apart.
3. Students should not use the desks of their classmates during class instruction.
4. Students and teachers should not exchange objects (pens, exercise books, markers etc.)
5. The mobility space of the teacher should be at least 2 metres from the nearest desk.
6. The use of a mask is recommended when the distancing of two (2) metres is not observed.
7. Students should proceed directly to the classroom, which should be known to them beforehand. Primary school pupils should be received from and handed back to parents/guardians by the person responsible for the P.I./P.E.C.
8. A distance of at least two (2) metres must be observed between the teacher and the student, in order for the class to run smoothly.
9. In the computer rooms, students should not use computers during class, which have not been sterilized.
10. In classes where the use of computers is required, each computer must be used by one student only with a distance of one metre between computers.
11. Gathering of many students should not be allowed in the student reception areas in order for the safety measures to be observed while students should be urged to use their face masks.