

# Covid-19 impact factsheet: Education

04 May 2020

## Overview

According to the Minister of Basic Education, The Education sector is comprised of 13 million learners; 12.4 million in public schools and 600 000 in private schools. Due to the large number of South Africans that are a part of the sector, the impact of the novel coronavirus on Education in South Africa was unavoidable.

In a commendable effort to minimise the impact of coronavirus on learners and staff across the country, schools were closed and continue to remain closed during the national lockdown which began on 26 March 2020. The Department of Education (DBE) has been in consultation with the National Command Council (NCC), The Department of Health, all the teachers unions and the South African Principal Association to determine what measures can be put in place to save the academic year in a way that does not put learners and staff at risk.

As at 30 April 2020, numerous interventions have been initiated via the media to assist learners in remote learning. The DBE is also in consultation with various NGOs across the country to assist in learner support programmes. The proposed school reopening plan will detail a phased approach in which learners will go back to school in phases beginning with grade 7 and grade 12 learners at the beginning of June 2020. The approved plan will be communicated to the public following the approval and endorsement of the NCC, Department of Health and Cabinet



## Timeline of Covid-19 impact on Education:

05 March 2020	First confirmed case of Covid-19
15 March 2020	President Cyril Ramaphosa declares a National State of Disaster
18 March 2020	Closure of schools
26 March 2020	National 21-day Lockdown issued
16 April 2020	National Lockdown extended by two weeks
23 April 2020	Announcement of gradual and phased relaxing of lockdown restrictions
30 April 2020	Ministers of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training announce PROPOSED sector plans
04 May 2020	Education sector to reopen to prepare for phased reopening of schools
11 May 2020	SMTs return to schools
18 May 2020	Teachers return to schools
01 June 2020	Grade 7 and 12 learners return to school

## The impact of Covid-19

- Schools closed on 26 March 2020 and remain closed.
- Remote learning is encouraged where possible.
- The academic year is affected as curriculum coverage is severely compromised.
- A multi-media learner support initiative under the banner: COVID-19 Learner Support aimed at limiting the impact of the lockdown to the school calendar was launched.
- Remote learning effectiveness currently at 20% of regular contact teaching due to limited accessibility.
- May/June Amended Senior Certificate examinations postponed till November meaning that for the first time in history more than 1 million learners will write the Matric examinations.
- Learners to be assessed according percentage of curriculum covered.

### Vandalism of schools

- Following the closure of schools during the National lockdown there has been an increased level of theft and vandalism at schools across the country.
- As at the 30th of April 2020, 962 schools across all districts in the country have been affected by vandalism and theft of school property. Items such as ICT equipment, kitchen supplies and school furniture have been stolen in schools from schools.

### Remedial measures

- Online and broadcast support comprised of subject content and a focus on Grade 12 learners and the promotion of reading for all grades
- Schools to be reopened in phases
- Upon reopening: no shared desks, masks provided, daily screening, daily sanitation of schools, limited movement, water provision, transport regulations, no sporting and extra-mural activities
- Basic sanitation and hygiene packages to be distributed
- New regulations for School Nutrition Programmes

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Coronavirus lockdown measures have partially or fully closed schools for more than 90% of the world's student population across 186 countries and territories, according to UNESCO. Below are a few country comparisons:

Country (Covid-19 @03/05/2020)	Lockdown start date	Schools closure date	Schools reopening date	Impact/ developments
<b>China (Wuhan)</b> 82 877	23 January 2020	Schools were already closed for Winter holidays	Most schools remain closed.  Final year High school learners to return on 6 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significantly decreased growth rate and increased doubling time of cases was observed, which is most likely due to Chinese lockdown measures</li> <li>• Lockdown measures are being eased however citizens are still urged to remain at home</li> </ul>
<b>Singapore</b> 18 205	7 April 2020 (for most businesses and non-essential services)	Remained open until 8 April 2020 when a second wave of infections hit as officials believed young people were not affected by the virus	Proposed date is 4 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singapore went from being a global example to having the highest number of cases in South East Asia due to the second wave</li> <li>• Schools have now adopted a full home-based learning system</li> </ul>
<b>France</b> 168 396	14 March 2020	16 March 2020	Phased approach: 11 May 2020 for Kindergarten and Primary school learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• France Education officials admitted that remote learning is challenging as not all learners have access to computers and resources. Where possible material was delivered to the learners</li> <li>• France continues to have a high daily infection rate of above 2000</li> </ul>
<b>Denmark</b> 9 523	11 March 2020	16 March 2020	Phased approach: 15 April 2020 for preschool and grades 1-5. Other grades and universities remain closed	The rate of new cases is declining. The Government decided to reopen schools to allow parents to resume work to reboot the economy. This unpopular decision has been widely criticized by the Danish people
<b>Netherlands</b> 40 571	16 March 2020	16 March 2020	Primary school children to go back to school part time starting May 11. Secondary schools can begin preparing to reopen on June 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The size of classes at primary schools will be halved. Pupils will go to school approximately 50% of the time. They will spend the other 50% of their school hours doing distance learning</li> <li>• Pupils of primary schools for special education may attend school every day</li> <li>• Parents are asked to take their children to school or childcare on foot or by bike wherever possible. This will prevent public transport becoming crowded</li> </ul>
<b>Egypt</b> 6 193	25 March 2020	15 March 2020	No school reopening announced as yet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MOETE) extended the access to the Egyptian Knowledge Bank (EKB) to students, providing content by grade level and subject (kindergarten through secondary education)</li> <li>• Grades 3-7: exams will not be conducted for students at the end of the current school year. Instead, a research project for each subject will be completed on the electronic platform</li> <li>• Grades 10-11, students will take computer-based pilot tests from home using supplied tablets. To write the year-end exam</li> </ul>
<b>Morocco</b> 4 880	20 March 2020	16 March 2020	No school reopening announced as yet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes continued either online or through TV and online</li> <li>• Tests and exams will take place normally, but later in the year</li> </ul>

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