



Reopening Guidelines for Schools in South Sudan

22 April 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the South Sudan Academic Calendar and led to delay in school re-opening. After consultations with the COVID-19 Taskforce, it has been agreed that the Academic Year 2021/22 (AY 2021/22) and lessons will commence on **03 May 2021**. Registration process will be organised simultaneously to the start of the lessons and will end on 22 May 2021.

This guideline is to guide the State Ministries of Education, County and Payam Education Offices, as well as Head Teachers and Teachers on the implementation of the Academic Year 2021/22.

Guidance on arrangement of learning

In the AY 2021/22, all learners will be advanced to the next class.

Learners who will repeat the class will be those who did not sit or did not pass CEP/SSCSE.

Guidance on management of class overcrowding

Recommended class size remains 50 learners in primary schools and 45 learners in secondary schools. This is in line with the recommendations made in previous Academic Years and in line with the IMPACT practice through teacher-learners ratio of 1/50 was achieved.

Classes larger than 50/45 must be divided into streams of up to 50/45 learners to maintain quality of learning and physical distancing as indicated by the Ministry of Health.

It is forbidden to elevate engagement of non-payroll teachers if streams of 50/45 learners were already achieved through the IMPACT programme.

Free from harm outdoor spaces can be utilised for learning.

Guidance on registration of pregnant and nursing learners

Pregnant and nursing learners shall all be permitted to register in school, attend lessons and continue their education without any discrimination. No pregnant or nursing learner shall be refused access to education or final examination and all

pregnant and nursing learners shall be proactively encouraged to continue their education. This is in line with the 2008 Child Act and the General Education Act, 2012.

Head Teachers, School Management Committees (SMC) / Boards of Governors (BoG), teachers, school mothers/mentors and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members shall actively follow-up on the registration of pregnant and nursing learners.

Guidance on registration of learners with disabilities and functional difficulties

Learners with disabilities and functional difficulties shall be permitted to register in a school of their choice. This will typically be a school closest to their residence. All schools which will register learners with disabilities and functional difficulties, and which require support to arrange learning process for these learners shall work closely with their SMC/BoG, PES and Disability Champions to rapidly achieve that. All learners with disabilities and functional difficulties shall start attending lessons on **03 May 2021** just like other learners.

Guidance on implementation of the New South Sudan National Curriculum during the 2021 Academic Year

Upon school reopening the P1 – P7 and S1 – S3 classes will follow the New South Sudan National Curriculum.

Learners in P8 and S4 classes will follow the old curriculum.

For P8 and S4 classes, the New South Sudan National Curriculum will be implemented in 2022.

The medium of instruction in pre-primary and P1 – P3 classes is a National Language selected by the school.

The medium of instruction for P4 – S4 is English. The National Languages are taught as subjects in P4 – P8.

Guidance to schools on safeguarding, psychosocial support and wellbeing

School staff, SMC/BoG, school mothers/mentors and teachers shall pay additional attention to learners returning to school distressed, especially those returning to school after recovering from COVID-19 infection and after the quarantine period.

Learners who lost their relatives due to COVID-19 infection, or due to other causes shall be supported and provided with access to a mentor.

Schools shall introduce a zero-tolerance policy on bullying, corporal punishment, GBV and discrimination. All school-based violence shall be condemned.

Learners should be mentored through difficult situations they are experiencing and provided with support to stop bullying behaviours.

Guidance for schools on managing COVID-19 preventive measures

Health and hygiene

- 1) All learners and school staff shall be informed about COVID-19 preventive measures, and the importance of reducing the risk of COVID-19 infections.
- 2) All staff and learners must be trained on handwashing protocols. Clean water and soap for washing hands must be provided in all schools.
- 3) Staff and learners shall wash their hands prior to entering the school compound, before and after each lesson, before and after having food and after using toilets.
- 4) School staff, learners and any visitors should have their temperature checked prior to entering school compound and should wear a facemasks.
- 5) School staff and learners shall be informed that reusable masks shall be washed daily and regularly changed to maintain their functionality and safety.
- 6) All school visitors, inclusive of parents, must be authorised by the head teacher. Unauthorised or unannounced visitors shall not be permitted at the school compound.
- 7) Record and contact details of all visitors entering the school compound must be kept in a visitor's book.

School compound and school environment

- 8) School compound and all school infrastructure, inclusive of buildings and furniture, must be sufficiently aired and cleaned prior to school re-opening, and daily after the school re-opens.

Timetable

- 9) School assemblies and parades are temporarily suspended. This is to reduce gatherings of large number of persons in one physical space. All school announcements shall be made through a class teacher to individual streams/classes.
- 10) Breaks between the lessons and lunchtime shall be arranged in such a way that learners from different streams/classes do not mix and that physical distancing is enabled.

- 11) Sport and extra-curricular activities are permitted, however COVID-19 preventive measures such as monitoring participants' temperature, handwashing and mask wearing must be observed during these activities.

Food and drinking water

- 12) Schools with a school-feeding programme shall follow the safety measures set by the Ministry of Health and communicated separately by WFP or other partner supporting the school feeding.
- 13) To avoid the spread of the virus and other communicable diseases, food, drinks, utensils, cups, bottles, and other personal items shall not be shared.
- 14) Potable water must be provided for learners and teachers. Cups used for drinking of water must not be shared. All learners and teachers must carry their own cup or a bottle.

Inspection of COVID-19 protocols at school

- 15) SMC/BoG should form a sub-committee on health and hygiene. This sub-committee shall perform daily and periodic inspections of COVID-19 preventive measures and protocols.
- 16) Any suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 cases at the school must be immediately isolated in a safe room arranged in the school.
- 17) All suspected and diagnosed COVID-19 cases shall be reported to the **Payam Education Supervisor** (pre-primary, primary, Community Girls' School and Accelerated Learning Programme); and to an Inspector of the **County Education Office** (secondary and ASEP).
- 18) The responsible State Ministry of Education shall be immediately notified about the suspected/diagnosed COVID-19 case. In case of difficulties in reaching PES, CEI, SMoE, the national **6666 phone line** can be contacted to facilitate further communication.

Non-compliance with COVID-19 protocols

- 19) Non-compliance with the safety and COVID-19 protocols is an offence and may lead to a disciplinary action.

Guidance to schools on 2021 Academic Calendar

Chapter IV of The General Education Act 2012, Standards and Quality of Education, Paragraph 10, sets the beginning date of each Academic Year in February and the end date in December. Due to the COVID-19 pandemics, the Academic Year 2021/22 did not start as planned.

The 2021 Academic Year will commence on 3 May 2021.

To enable fulfilment of the New South Sudan National Curriculum within the directives of the General Education Act 2012, and despite delayed school opening, the school week in the Academic Year 2021/22 will be **five days** a week and will run from **Monday to Friday**. School holidays will be shorter than ordinarily. Public Holidays will be observed.

The MoGEI set the start date of the 2021/22 Academic Year on **03 May 2021**. The end of the 2021 Academic Year is **18 March 2022**. There will be **207 instruction** days in the Academic Year 2021/22. There will be days reserved for an in-service, school-based teacher training.

- Term one will begin on **3 May 2021** and will end on **01 August 2021** with **62** instruction days. There will be one-week term break between 02 and 08 August 2021.
- Term two will begin on **09 August 2021 and end on 31 October 2021** with **60** instruction days. There will be one-week term break between 01 and 07 November 2021.
- Term three will begin on **08 November 2021 and end on 18 March 2022** with **85** instruction days. There will be one-week break after the Academic Year 2021/22.

According to the New Assessment Framework, formative assessment will take place throughout the year. There will be no end-of-term exams.

Candidates who are repeating P8 and S4 classes will undertake their exams in February 2022 (P8) and March 2022 (S4). Exam calendar for Candidate classes will be published separately.

AY 2022 will begin on 04 April 2022.

Guidance on Public Holidays

In line with the list published by the Ministry of Labour, the observed Public Holidays will be:

- Eid el Fitr, 13 May 2021 (Thursday), 1 working day
- SPLA Day, 16 May 2021 (Sunday), 0 working days
- Independence Day, 09 July 2021 (Friday), 1 working day
- Eid el Adha, 20 July 2021 (Friday), 1 working day
- Martyr's Day, 30 July 2021 (Friday), 1 working day
- Christmas Holiday, 25-26 December 2021 (Saturday-Sunday), 0 working days
- New Year Day, 01 January 2022 (Saturday), 0 working days

The 2021 Academic Year will be arranged according to the below calendar:

Term	Start date	End date	Public Holidays	School Holidays	No. of instruction days
Term 1	03 May 2021	31 July 2021			62 instruction days
Eid el Fitr Holiday	12 May 2021	12 May 2021	Wednesday	1 working day	
SPLA Day	16 May 2021	16 May 2021	Sunday	0 working days	
Independence Day	09 July 2021	09 July 2021	Friday	1 working day	
Eid el Adha	20 July 2021	20 July 2021	Tuesday	1 working day	
Martyr's Day	30 July 2021	30 July 2021	Friday	1 working day	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day	TBC	TBC	TBC	1 working day	
End of term holidays	02 August 2021	08 August 2021	Sunday – Sunday	5 working days	
Term 2	09 August 2021	31 October 2021			60 instruction days
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day	TBC	TBC	TBC	1 working day	
End of Term 2 Holiday	01 November 2021	07 November 2021	Sunday – Sunday	5 working days	
Term 3	08 November 2021	18 March 2022			85 instruction days
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day (Before Christmas)	TBC	TBC	TBC	1 working day	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day (After New Year)	TBC	TBC	TBC	1 working day	
Christmas Break and New Year Holiday	20 December 2021	02 January 2022	Sunday – Sunday	10 days	
Total					207 instruction days