



Ministero dell'Istruzione
Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per l'Emilia-Romagna
- Il Direttore Generale -

Allegato alla nota 11 agosto 2020, avente ad oggetto: "ANNO SCOLASTICO 2020/21 E COVID-19. MATERIALI PER LA RIPARTENZA - 16 – Rientrare a scuola in sicurezza. Checklist di supporto per le famiglie"

**TIPS FOR A SAFE COMEBACK TO SCHOOL
FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
DRAFT OF A POSSIBLE CHECKLIST, TO BE MODIFIED AND INTEGRATED AS NEEDED**

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| 1. Check your child daily for signs of illness and always take their temperature before leaving for school. If the temperature exceeds 37.5°C, the child must stay home. |
| 2. Make sure your child is not experiencing symptoms such as sore throat, coughing, diarrhoea, headache, vomiting or muscle soreness. Do not send them to school in case they show any of these symptoms or if they just do not feel well. |
| 3. Attending classes regularly is not permitted if the child has had contact with a positive case of COVID-19. If this is your case, then please follow the Health Department's guidelines on quarantine carefully. |
| 4. The school must be informed on which people they should reach out to, other than the parents, in the event of your child feeling sick. You should communicate their first and last names, mobile and home number, workplace number and/or address and any piece of information useful to get in contact with them as quickly as possible. |
| 5. When at home, practice the correct hand-washing techniques especially before and after eating, when sneezing/coughing, before putting on the mask. Explain to your child why these steps are important and if they are very young, try and make it fun for them! |
| 6. If the school themselves are not distributing water bottles to their students already, remember to provide your kid with one and label it with their name so that it is easily distinguishable. Alternatively, if any student buys said bottle from a vending machine available inside the school, they should care to write their name on it. |



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7. Developing a routine before and after school will help you manage all these important and necessary precautions and remember them. For instance, engage your child in preparing and stocking up their backpack beforehand with all items required (including hand sanitizer and a spare mask) or decide together the steps to follow once they get home (such as washing their hands and storing their mask somewhere depending if it is single-use or washable, etc.).

8. Make sure your child understands the precautions to be taken when at school:

- Washing and sanitizing their hands more often
- Keeping a safe distance from other students at all times
- Wearing a mask
- Avoiding sharing any personal equipment with other students (including water bottles, electronic devices, books, writing tools, etc.)
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9. Find out how your school will communicate to the families in the eventuality of a positive case showing up and what measures will be taken.

10. Plan your kid's trip to and from school:

- Public transport (train, bus, school bus, ...) – they must always wear their mask and never touch their face with their hands without sanitizing them first. If the child is very young, explain that they cannot put their hands in their mouth. Ensure that they understand the regulations put in place by whoever is providing transportation (they are responsible for giving passengers such information).
- Car sharing with other schoolmates – make sure once again they remember all the right precautions (mask, distancing from others, hand hygiene).

11. Be the first to always keep your distance, wear your mask and take extra care of your hygiene so you can set a good example for your child/children.

12. Learn how physical education, intermission(s) and lunch breaks work in your school. Read the rules to your child and stress the importance of abiding them carefully. You are highly recommended to enquire after how the school staff is going to create the right environment for the students to follow the teachers' directions and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Being updated on the school guidelines against the virus is a fundamental part of your contribution to this collective effort.



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13. It is best to have a supply of masks at home so to change the old ones whenever is needed. Provide your child with a spare mask, adequately stored in a bag. Remember to put in their backpack a different bag to bring the reusable/washable mask home if your child uses one.

If you and your kid use reusable cotton masks, these must:

- cover the nose, mouth and the area around them
- be secured with laces around the ears
- be made of at least two layers of fabric
- allow breathing through them
- be washable, by hand or in the washing machine, and ironed (scalding hot vapour at 90°C is a great disinfectant without any counterindication).

If you provide your child with a fabric mask, make it so that it is easily distinguishable from those of other classmates.

14. Get your child used to putting on and taking off their mask touching only the laces.

15. Explain to your kid that some of his schoolmates might not be able to wear a mask. In this case, they must keep a safe distance even more, always wearing their mask and following the teacher's instructions.

You can give them a resealable bag with their name on it to put their mask away when they are eating. Your child must know they cannot leave their mask on just any surface nor get it dirty.

16. If you have a very young kid, let them know the school environment will look and feel different: desks far apart, teachers and classmates all keeping a safe distance between them, staying in class during lunch breaks, etc.

17. Keep yourself involved in your child's school life and well-being by checking in on them. Ask them about these big changes, the effect they are having on the class, and help them express any discomfort by letting them know you are listening. Immediately alert teachers or the Headmaster in case the child reports inappropriate/dangerous behaviour from other classmates.

Pay attention to mood changes like excessive crying or frustration, excessive worrying or sadness, notice if they take on bad eating or sleeping habits and short attention span. These are all potential symptoms of stress and anxiety. Be mindful and do not become the source of stress and unnecessary pressure yourself.



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18. Try and attend all school meetings even if you are doing it from home. Keeping updated and connected to other people experiencing the same situation might allow you to decompress and feel less anxious, offering you an outlet to express your worries and rationalize them.

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More tips for families who have kids with disabilities

Health issues related to the virus

- Consult your child's neuropsychiatrist and general practitioner and determine if there are factors in your kid's condition that might endanger him more than others in respect to the spread of the virus (e.g. gets easily infected, issues with medications and prescribed drugs, behavioural problems, etc.). Talk to the school about specific solutions that might need to be carried out.
- If you know about any particular condition of your child that could complicate helping them at school, please let the teachers and the emergency service 118 know the course of action recommended by the kid's doctors. Being prepared in situations like these is important to avoid making dangerous mistakes.
- If your child has a weak immune system or health issues that make it impossible for them to attend school physically should the risk of contagion increase, have your doctors release a medical certificate. Submit the document to your school and ask them to set up an Integrated Digital Learning and Home-Schooling programme, so that whenever necessary it can be put in action without further delay.

Hygiene rules: do not give up teaching them, no matter how hard they are to learn

- Always provide your child with a supply of paper tissues and instruct them on throwing the tissues away after using them. Put in their backpack some sanitizing wipes as well and tell them when and how to use them.
- Tell your kid not to drink from sinks and remember to give them a labelled water bottle to bring to school.



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- When in a public place, make sure your child always sanitizes their hands before touching their face.

Personal protection devices

- “Students with different types of disabilities which are not compatible with wearing a mask constantly, are not compelled to use one”. Consult your doctor to determine if your child falls or not under this category. If they are in fact able to wear a mask, it is very important they do so and especially that you teach them how to wear it, for their own safety.
- If your kid’s condition is incompatible with both mask and face shield, let them know the people around them (teacher and educators) will have to wear the devices. School staff must be protected as every other worker.
- If your child is deaf and they lip-read, it is advisable to ask that the school provides see through face shields to them and their class, rather than masks. See through masks are available on the market too, but it is possible they might not be more practical to your child.

School transport

- If your doctors think there might be difficulties for your child in using the school transport because of the contagion, have them write down formally specific requests for the transport and bring this issue (and the document) to the city administration offices. Also inform your school about it.
- Check if the regulations for waiting for the transport and getting off it are compatible with your doctor’s instructions/requests and eventually ask for changes if they are not.

Other needs

- If in your doctor’s opinion your child needs special measures taken for his protection (e.g. access to school grounds, going outside, lunch breaks and intermissions, physical education classes, etc.), these have to be formally requested by the doctor themselves and presented to the school. Together you will find a solution that accommodates both parties as much as possible.



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Hygienic services

- Find out how the school has set up toilets for handicapped students and let them know if you have any suggestion.
- Teach your child to disinfect door handles, toilet seat and the knobs/lever on the sink with sanitizing wipes before touching them, if possible. Also tell them to sanitize their hands before returning to class.

Covid-19 posters around the school

- Make sure the informative posters are clear and that your child can read them and understand them. If there is any issue in this regard, work with your school to find alternatives, for instance Augmentative and Alternative Communication.
- Pay attention to horizontal signals on the floor useful to direct the students in separate flows inside the halls, help physical distancing, indicate assembly points. Verify they are all clear to your child and ask to integrate them if needed.

Other measures of organization

- Bring to your school further suggestions useful to improve your child and their classmates' protection.

Other tips for families who have kids with learning disabilities

- Ask the school to send you a copy of their safety guidelines against the virus, written in a clear, intelligible way, complete with a vocal recording of the document read out loud. In case your school have not produced the recording yet, offer to do it yourself and collaborate with them, this is a sign of responsible parenting.
- Make sure all organisational and safety regulations are clear and that your child understands them (e.g. those for using labs and workshops).
- Check that your kid has a clear picture of the new organisation and what they need to put in their backpack every morning. Help your child write down a calendar with new activities and what they will need to bring to school day by day



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- Remind them not to lend their equipment to other classmates nor borrow anything from them as a safety precaution, not an act of selfishness.

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