



**Bishkek
International
School**

COVID-19 Protocol October 2021

Reviewed by the Management Board: September 2021
Previous Review: August 2021

Approved by the Governing Board: October 2021

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Remote Learning	1
3	COVID-19 Action Levels at BIS	1
3.1	Level Zero	1
3.2	Level One	1
3.3	Level Two	1
3.4	Level Three	1
3.5	Level Four	1
4	Terminology	1
5	Action Taken by the School Before Opening in August 2021	2
6	Parental Declaration Before Children Come to School	2
7	School Bus	3
8	Entering the Campus	3
8.1	Entry to the Main Campus	3
8.2	Access for Parents and Visitors	4
9	Checks During the School Day	4
10	Hygiene Procedures	5
11	Social Distancing	6
12	Extra-Curricular Activities	6
13	Leaving the Campus at the End of the School Day	6
14	School Cleaning & Ventilation	6
15	Response to Confirmed COVID-19 Cases	6
	Annexes	8
	Annex 1 – AGREEMENT FOR CHILDREN TO ATTEND SCHOOL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	8

Acknowledgements

This document draws on many sources of information, including being fully compliant with the Kyrgyz Government Order #09-732 from April 13th 2021, which provides requirements for schools. Information from the CDC and WHO, and the experiences of many schools in operating during the COVID-19 pandemic are also incorporated.

1 Introduction

COVID-19 has caused severe disruption worldwide, including major impact on school education, and has been particularly disruptive for Preschool, Primary and Middle School students in education terms and for all students in social, cultural and sporting development. BIS implemented an effective COVID-19 Protocol from summer 2020, operating as a physical school for all grades for most of the 2020/21 academic year, with very few days in remote learning due to government restrictions or quarantines. Evidence from antibody tests of all school staff, and reports of the Kyrgyz government from population testing, indicate that over 60% of the Bishkek population now has some immunity to COVID-19. Vaccination against COVID-19 is also now freely available for adults in Bishkek. This change in circumstances since the last academic year, plus the experience built up during 2020/21, allows us to modify this protocol for 2021/22.

2 Remote Learning

BIS will not provide remote learning support for students during the 2021/22 academic year, except in cases where a whole class is in quarantine or lock-down and all sessions for the class move to remote learning, or where an individual student is absent for a short period due to confirmed COVID-19 infection or exposure. Remote-learning is not available to students absent from school for other reasons.

Where remote learning is required, the approach will be similar to that provided in 2020/21, with a combination of live Zoom sessions and independent or group tasks with teacher support.

3 COVID-19 Action Levels at BIS

The appropriate action level is decided by the BIS Management Board after discussion at the BIS Health, Safety and Security Committee. Levels are not defined by specific data points, in terms of COVID-19 data in the Kyrgyz Republic, but are based on our assessment of risks and by Government requirements.

3.1 Level Zero

At Level 0, the COVID-19 risks are incorporated within our Health and Safety Policy and standard operating procedures. The school will operate in a similar way to the situation prior to COVID-19, with any adjustments as required for the long-term management of respiratory disease risks. At Level 0, this COVID-19 Protocol document no longer applies as all relevant long-term management aspects have been incorporated in the general Health and Safety Policy.

3.2 Level One

At Level 1, the school operates on all school days, following all COVID-19 Protocols set out in this document.

3.3 Level Two

At Level 2, one or more classes are moved to remote learning due to government controls or BIS imposed quarantine.

3.4 Level Three

At Level 3, all learning provision is via remote learning and the school is closed to students, except as required for academic examinations (under strict conditions) or other specific activities approved by the government. Staff may work from the school, following all protocols in this document, but are encouraged to work from home if they have effective facilities at home to provide remote learning.

3.5 Level Four

At Level 4, the school is closed to both students and staff. Remote learning continues for students and educational materials are delivered to homes as required. Staff work from home. The school has only security staff and minimal facilities staff working at school for maintenance.

4 Terminology

Throughout this document reference is made to "fever" and "COVID-19 symptoms." A "fever" is defined here as a body temperature ≥ 37.3 degrees Celsius. "COVID-19 symptoms" vary greatly between individuals, with

all of the following being assessed by BIS as symptoms which may indicate COVID-19: fever, dry cough, sore throat, fatigue, body aches, difficulty breathing, diarrhoea, nausea, loss of taste or smell. Note that any of these symptoms could indicate other issues, not COVID-19, however during the period that this protocol applies, they will be treated as potential COVID-19 indicators.

5 Action Taken by the School Before Opening in August 2021

Actions include:

1. All staff (including contract staff e.g. bus drivers) were tested for COVID-19 and COVID-19 IgG antibodies on August 13th 2021.
2. All staff had a negative PCR test on August 13th to start work at school. If any staff were identified with positive PCR result, they would be quarantined.
3. Any staff who do not have a full COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate in the last 12 months OR a +ve IgG antibody result (>1.0) in the last 12 months are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as soon as possible.
4. All staff are trained in COVID-19 prevention and control systems required at school, including personal protection.
5. A medical isolation unit is established outside the main building for any cases of possible COVID-19 symptoms.
6. Stores of hand soap, hand sanitizer, masks, gloves and other prevention and control materials are in place.
7. A system is in place for daily health checks and reports for all students and staff.
8. A system is in place to monitor absence due to illness, including full record of any absence of students and staff.
9. Ventilation systems are serviced and are working to enable all areas to be ventilated either continuously or for at least 30 minutes at least 3 times each day.
10. Systems are in place for cleaning and disinfection of toys, books, classrooms, libraries, cafeterias etc, with disinfection routine recorded every day, and particular attention paid to high-frequency contact surfaces such as door handles, washbasin taps, stair handrails and frequently used equipment.
11. System in place for cleaning and disinfection of dining equipment, with utensils sterilised at high temperature.
12. System in place to check hand washing and hand sanitizer stations every day to ensure they are clean, functioning properly and refilled.
13. System in place for rapid waste removal from recycling bins etc in student areas and regularly disinfecting waste containers.
14. System in place to reinforce COVID-19 messaging to all students and staff, including display signs around the school.
15. Regular meetings of the Health, Safety and Security Committee to review health reports and implementation of this policy to find areas for improvement.
16. Relocation of some activities to remote contact (e.g. staff meetings, parent-teacher meetings) to reduce personal interactions.
17. Agreement for staff to work from home when they are not required in school.

6 Parental Declaration Before Children Come to School

Parents or Guardians are required to complete and submit a declaration for each child before the student is permitted to start school (Annex 1).

7 School Bus

To maintain a safe and healthy environment on the school bus, the following protocol is followed, in addition to the normal school bus protocol:

The Bus Driver must:

1. Have no fever and/or COVID-19 symptoms;
2. Clean and disinfect the bus in the morning and afternoon before pick-up and after drop-off;
3. Make sure hand sanitizer is available for student use;
4. Wear a facemask on the bus;
5. Keep the bus windows open for proper ventilation, weather permitting.

The Bus Monitor must:

1. Have no fever and/or COVID-19 symptoms;
2. Wear a facemask on the bus;
3. Check that any student for the bus has approval to be in school (i.e. Parental Declaration signed and not on the school quarantine list provided daily by the school doctor);
4. Check student temperature before they get on the bus;

Students must:

1. Have a temperature of less than 37.3 degrees C. Any student with temperature ≥ 37.3 degrees will not be permitted to board the bus;
2. Wear a facemask on the bus;
3. When disembarking the bus, upon arrival at school, proceed immediately to their classroom without further temperature check.

8 Entering the Campus

8.1 Entry to the Main Campus

Entry to the main campus is normally only allowed for Students and Employees who have provided approved medical declarations and medical checks and are not on the quarantine exclusion list which is updated daily by the school doctor. Visitors, including parents, may be allowed on the campus during the school day by agreement of the Head of Administration only, if they have a full vaccine certificate in the last 12 months or +ve IgG antibodies in the last 12 months. Visitors may be allowed on campus outside the school day, without COVID-19 vaccination or antibody evidence, for special events or for contract work, provided they have no possible COVID-19 symptoms.

Anyone who comes to school with a temperature of 37.3°C or higher, or with a cough, or with any possible flu like symptoms, will be sent home, or placed in isolation until they are collected and taken home. Exceptions may only be made for students with possible flu-like symptoms if they have known pre-existing conditions for asthma/allergies, and only if approved by the school doctor.

Any student or staff member sent home from school due to high temperature or possible COVID-19 symptoms, will not be allowed to return to school for 10 days, or until after symptoms have disappeared and they have a negative PCR test result taken within 72 hours of return to school.

Any student or staff member who is absent from school for 4 or more consecutive school days for any reason, will not be allowed to return to school without a medical 'spravka' to state that they are healthy. The school doctor may also require a negative PCR test result taken within 72 hours of return to school, in case of possible COVID-19 symptoms during school absence. Exceptions to the 'spravka' requirement may be allowed by the school doctor if the absence is clearly not related to any possible infectious disease (e.g. a broken leg or scheduled exam leave).

Only official school buses, and private cars with preschool and/or lower primary age students, are allowed to enter the parking area at the front of the school..

Preschool Student entry:

1. Student entry to the Preschool is via an entrance at the south west corner of the main building. Preschool students are met by Preschool teachers at the south west entrance gate.
2. Parents whose children do not easily adapt to school are allowed into the Preschool outdoor play area during morning arrival to support their child transition during the first few days of school.
3. Parents are not allowed into the school building and must leave the Preschool play area before 9:00 am each day, to allow children out to play.

Primary/Middle/High School Student entry:

1. Students enter via the main entrance at the south-east corner of the main building.
2. Students are no longer temperature checked at entry as all students are temperature checked upon arrival in their Homeroom/Form classroom.

Employee entry:

1. Entry to school is permitted for those who have completed a Staff COVID-19 Declaration Form, passed all required medical tests, including COVID-19 tests, and have medical approval to be at school.
2. Employees are no longer temperature checked at entry as all staff are expected to be responsible to not come to school if they are ill. Infrared thermometers are available for staff to self-check if they are concerned about their temperature.

8.2 Access for Parents and Visitors

Parents, suppliers, and any other visitors are not allowed into the main campus during school working hours under normal circumstances, in order to minimise the number of personal interactions for our students. Suppliers and any contract workers for repairs are arranged for outside school hours. The only exceptions for parents are for special events, with specific invitation and individual parent sign-up. If these special events take place during the school day (07:45 - 16:30), in order to enter the campus, parents must submit a copy of their full COVID-19 vaccination certificate or +ve IgG antibody result (>1.0) issued in the prior 12 months. If they do not have this information, then a negative result from a PCR test taken no more than 48 hours before the event.

The school has an external reception building opposite the main gate with security, reception, cashier and meeting room for all meetings with parents or visitors to the school. All visitors entering this building are temperature checked on entry (must be ≥ 37.3 degrees C for entry) and should use hand sanitizer at the entrance.

9 Checks During the School Day

All classes have an infrared thermometer, used by Homeroom/Form or Co-Teachers to check student temperatures as required. All preschool and primary students have their temperature checked and recorded on entry to the class in the morning, and again before going for lunch. All Middle/High School students are checked once in the morning. Anyone with a temperature reading of ≥ 37.3 degrees C, or presenting any COVID-19 symptoms, will be immediately escorted to the medical isolation unit for further checks. If the reading remains above 37.3 degrees C, they will be held under observation until collected by parents.

All staff are instructed to observe all students in their care for fatigue, cough or any signs of fever, and all students are instructed to immediately report any feeling of higher temperature or illness. Any student showing any sign of illness will be escorted to the school doctor for checks. Any student with confirmed fever or possible COVID-19 symptoms will be held under observation until collected by parents, or sent home by public taxi if requested by parents. Students who were in the class with any student sent home in these circumstances, will be given further temperature checks by the school doctor. The school office will inform parents of these students and update them of any changes in conditions. Any classroom and location that the affected student is known to have used during the day will be completely disinfected.

All medical data and treatment decisions will be formally recorded and reported to relevant school personnel

(e.g., Management Board and relevant Teachers) and if required, to government authorities.

10 Hygiene Procedures

Good hygiene habits are best practice in normal times but they are especially important during times in which we work together to control the spread of disease, including the COVID-19. To emphasize the importance of good hygiene, the essential expectations are listed below.

Hand Washing:

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds using the 7-step method:

- After using the toilet;
- Before touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
- Before and after eating;
- After sneezing or coughing or using a tissue;
- Before and after using any school equipment, including computers;
- After contact with garbage or a high exposure area such as a door handle, bannister, elevator buttons;
- After touching shoes;
- Before leaving for school and as soon as you get home from school;
- Between classes;
- When hands are dirty.

Hand Sanitizer:

'Hands-free' hand sanitizer stations are provided in every room in school, in every corridor, and at every entry to the school. If you are unable to wash your hands in any of the circumstances listed above, you should use hand sanitiser instead.

Face Masks:

1. In accordance with the Kyrgyz Government Order #09-1996 from September 6th 2021, all students and staff in Grade 1 and up should wear face masks when at school.
2. Students and staff should have their own masks available for this purpose. Disposable masks will not be provided by BIS in 2021/22 due to the adverse environmental impact of single use masks.
3. Students and staff who are unable to follow the Government mask regime should provide a medical note to the school doctor to provide an exemption from this requirement.
4. Used masks should be disposed of in the yellow waste bins provided.

Bathroom Hygiene:

In addition to general good hygiene in bathrooms, students and staff should ensure:

1. Hand wash areas are not crowded i.e. maintain a social distance in the hand wash areas, and if an area is busy, find another bathroom or wait outside until the area is clear;
2. Always close the toilet lid before flushing, to minimise any aerosol spray as the water flushes.

General Hygiene Rules:

1. Cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow or a tissue if you need to cough or sneeze. Tissues should be disposed of properly.
2. Do not hug or kiss or shake hands with anyone. Maintain some degree of social distance to minimise direct contact.
3. Do not share food or drinks – always have a personal water bottle that you clean thoroughly each day with soap and water.
4. Use disposable alcohol wipes to clean your cell phones and laptops.
5. No spitting at any time.
6. No spitting or snorting into the washbasins. Use a tissue!

11 Social Distancing

Staff and students are encouraged to maintain some social distance to avoid direct transfer of any possible COVID-19 infection, however it is recognised that full social distancing is not realistic in the Primary Years Programme or in many classes for Middle and High School, or during snack and lunch times.

All snacks and lunches will be served in the school café or dining room from August 2021. No packed lunches or snacks will be served, except as required for educational visits outside the school campus.

12 Extra-Curricular Activities

Students have the opportunity to participate in creative, sporting and academic clubs in mixed year groups. Parents may take this into account when deciding on sign-up for ECAs.

13 Leaving the Campus at the End of the School Day

At the end of the school day:

1. Students should leave at the end of the day around 15:30 if they have no ECA or at 16:30 if they have an ECA. School buses leave at both 15:20 and 16:40 for students who have reserved spaces. Afterschool supervision is provided until 17:30 if required. All students must leave by 17:30.
2. Designated staff escort young students to designated buses, or to assigned pick-up locations for parents, or private drivers.

14 School Cleaning & Ventilation

School cleaners thoroughly clean and disinfect all classrooms and classroom surfaces each morning and afternoon, and common spaces and surfaces (including door handles and railings) every 2 hours. Toilets and bathrooms are cleaned at least three times a day.

All windows and doors should be open as far as possible (except in bathrooms) to maximise natural ventilation and outside air exchange. This COVID-19 protocol overrules the normal air-quality control protocol. Under the COVID-19 Protocol, windows should be open if possible, provided the outside AQI is below 100.

All external air ventilation systems are on at all times to maximise fresh air in the school. In bathrooms, doors and windows should be closed and extraction fans on all day to extract air from the bathroom to outside.

Air filters should be on if windows are closed for any reason.

15 Response to Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

If any student or staff member has confirmed COVID-19 at any time, we will:

1. Identify all members of the school community who may have been exposed to the infected individual (defined as at least 15 minutes of close interaction within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms).
2. Inform potentially exposed individuals (if the individual is a student, their parents will also be informed) and the wider school community while protecting the confidentiality of the person who is ill, with recommendations for any actions to take in response to this information.
3. Require all potentially exposed individuals to quarantine for a 10-day period, without attending physical school, if the potentially exposed individual does not have either a (i) COVID-19 vaccination certificate, or (ii) a +ve IgG antibody result (>1.0), dated within the last 12 months.
4. Close off any potentially contaminated areas of the school, which the infected individual visited in the 48 hours prior to symptoms, and deep clean these areas with approved disinfectants and full ventilation prior to reopening them for school use.
5. Typically begin remote-learning provision within 2 days of notification of quarantine, and parents and students will be informed when this will begin.

If someone living with a student or staff member (member of the household) is diagnosed with COVID-19, the quarantine period for the student or staff member will follow [US Government recommendations](#) which provide for:

1. **Ten-days quarantine** from school from the first day the other person is ill, **provided there is no further close contact with the person who is ill**. Close contact can be avoided by not sharing the same rooms as the person with COVID-19, and not meeting this person.
2. The ten-day period starts again if someone else in the household gets COVID-19 and this person has been in close contact with the student or staff member, but have no further contact after getting ill.
3. **Twenty-four days quarantine** from school from the first day the other person is ill, **if there continues to be close contact with the person who is ill**. This includes 10 days for a period of possible infectivity from the person who is ill, plus a possible 14 days incubation period in the student or staff member.
4. A shorter period of 7 day quarantine if a PCR test is taken on day 5/6 and is negative, and there has been no contact with someone with symptoms.

BIS also allows for no quarantine, provided there is no further contact with the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person has either a (i) COVID-19 vaccination certificate, or (ii) a +ve IgG antibody result (>1.0), dated within the last 12 months.

Annexes

Annex 1 – AGREEMENT FOR CHILDREN TO ATTEND SCHOOL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Names of Parents/Guardians signing below: _____

I/we declare that:

1. No family members have recently displayed any symptoms that might reasonably be considered as possible COVID-19 symptoms.
2. If our child(ren) have a high temperature (≥ 37.3 degrees Celsius) they will be kept home from school for minimum 48 hours.
3. If our child(ren) are sent home from school due to high temperature or possible COVID-19 symptoms, they will only return to school after 10 days or until after symptoms have disappeared and they have a negative PCR test result taken within 72 hours of return to school.
4. If our child(ren) are absent from school for 4 or more consecutive school days for any reason, they will only return to school when they have a medical 'spravka' stating that they are healthy. I/we understand that the school doctor may also require a negative PCR test result taken within 72 hours of return to school, in case of possible COVID-19 symptoms during school absence, and the school doctor may also waive the need for a 'spravka' in case absence is clearly not due to infectious disease.
5. I/we will immediately inform the school if one of our children, or other immediate member of the household, shows any COVID-19 symptoms.
6. If any member of our household has COVID-19, our child(ren) will be kept at home for 14 days and will only return to school when they have a medical certificate stating that they are COVID-19 free.
7. I/we will urgently collect our child from school if the school administration contacts us to inform that our child has a high temperature or any other possible COVID-19 symptoms.
8. Our child(ren) understand that they must follow all general health and hygiene guidelines stipulated by the school, as indicated in the BIS COVID-19 Protocol.
9. Our child(ren) understand that they will be excluded from school if we or they refuse to follow the BIS COVID-19 protocol.
10. My 'family group' will endeavour to avoid high risk activities for catching COVID-19 in our personal life, for example: crowded public transport; indoor social events with many people (e.g. weddings, funerals, parties), especially if we do not have evidence of COVID-19 IgG antibodies or are not vaccinated against COVID-19.
11. I/we will consider testing ourselves and our child(ren) for IgG antibodies, and will provide our child(ren)s results to the school, if positive, to avoid the need for quarantine from school if our child(ren) come into contact with a COVID-19 case.
12. I/we will consider vaccination against COVID-19 if we do not have IgG antibodies, to reduce the risk of infection and spreading COVID-19.
13. I/we understand the risks involved in attending physical school and I/we will not hold BIS responsible in any way if our child(ren) contract COVID-19 at school.

Parent/Guardian Signatures:

Date: _____

Name(s) of our child(ren) at BIS covered by this agreement:
