

26 September 2021

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

KEEPING OUR STUDENT CARE CENTRES COVID-19 RESILIENT TOGETHER

The Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) has announced **safe management measures (SMMs) from 27 September 2021 through 24 October 2021** to slow down community transmissions and allow time for Singapore's overall healthcare and response capacity to be appropriately augmented. MTF will review the measures two weeks after implementation and adjust these based on the community situation then. Please refer to the press release for more details: https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/stabilising-our-covid-19-situation-and-protecting-our-overall-healthcare-capacity_24September2021

2 The Ministry of Education (MOE) has also extended Home-Based Learning (HBL) for all Primary and Special Education (SPED) schools so that children will be away from schools for the next 2 weeks. Private Education Institutions (PEIs) must also implement HBL for all students aged 12 years and below from 27 September 2021 to 10 October 2021. During this period, in-person tuition and enrichment classes conducted by external vendors in the Student Care Centre for students aged 12 and below must be conducted online or otherwise be suspended.

Keeping student care centres open for parents that require the support

3 During this period, student care centres will remain open to support parents who need to work. As work-from-home will be the default mode at workplaces, we encourage **parents to keep your children at home during this period where possible**. This is especially when children have underlying medical conditions which include:

- Congenital heart disease
- Chronic lung disease
- Chronic liver disease
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic neurologic disease
- Active cancer
- Immunosuppression
- Diabetes
- Genetic metabolic disease
- Blood disorders (e.g. severe anaemia/thalassemia)

4 To support families that keep their children at home during this period, MSF will **automatically waive the 50% minimum attendance requirement for Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) in September and October 2021**. This is to allow beneficiaries to continue receiving SCFA despite not being able to attend student care in September/ October.

Tightening our COVID-Safe ABCs at student care centres

5 To reduce the risk of transmission in student care centres, we will further tighten safe management measures (SMMs) at student care centres for this period from 27 September 2021. We recognise that these revised measures may inconvenience families but seek your understanding that they are necessary to protect our children and the centre staff. In the upcoming weeks, it is important that everyone is extra vigilant and takes all necessary precautions against the spread of COVID-19 infections in Singapore. The key measures that will be tightened are:

a. Visitors into student care centres

From 27 September to 24 October 2021, only visitors, who are needed to support the running of student care centres (e.g. contractors) and those who need to perform necessary functions (e.g. MSF officers) may enter the premises. All parents, including parents of newly enrolled children, will not be allowed to enter the premises.

b. Supplementary programmes

In line with the MOE's announcement to move enrichment classes online from 27 September to 10 October 2021, student care centres will be required to move all enrichment programmes online or suspended until 10 October 2021 (or further notice). This is to reduce the risk of transmission within and across the centres.

c. Leave of Absence requirements

To curb any potential transmission early, and minimise the formation of large clusters in student care centres, the Leave of Absence (LOA) measures will be tightened (see [Annex](#) for more details):

- ☑ **[Tightened] For child/ staff with any household member who is unwell with flu-like symptoms.**

As many of the cases in student care centres so far have arisen due to household transmissions, a child/staff with household members (aged 6 years and above) who are unwell (with fever and/ or flu-like symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath) will be placed on LOA. The child may return to the student care centre after the unwell household member is tested negative for COVID-19 (either Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) or Antigen Rapid Test (ART)).

- ☑ **[Tightened] For child/ staff with household members who test positive via an Antigen Rapid Test (ART).**

From 27 September 2021, a staff/ child with household members who tested positive on an ART will be placed on a LOA and return to student care centre only after the household member has tested negative on a PCR test or ART.

Note: A student care centre staff/ child who tests positive on an ART should continue to visit a Swab and Send Home (SASH) clinic immediately for follow up and take a PCR test. This applies to both asymptomatic and symptomatic individuals. Affected staff/ child may return to student care centre only after they

receive a negative PCR test and have fully recovered (i.e. no longer displaying symptoms).

[Tightened] For children/ staff who are on Quarantine Order

From 11 September 2021, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has reduced the quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days from the date of last exposure to a COVID-19 case.

Staff and children under quarantine may return to the student care centre on Day 11 at the end of their quarantine period, **if** they test negative for their exit swab **and** can undergo daily ART from Day 11 to Day 14.

Children unable to undergo daily ART swab tests will be issued a LOA and may only return to student care centre after Day 14 of their quarantine.

6 To help us detect COVID-19 infections early, to reduce the risk of widespread transmission within student care centres, regular testing of centre staff using ART will also commence from next week. From 1 Oct, all vaccinated staff in student care centres will be tested via ART once a week. Unvaccinated staff, including those who are medically not able to be vaccinated, will be tested twice a week.

Keeping student care centres safe is a collective effort

7 We seek the support of parents and guardians to work together with your child's student care centre to implement these enhanced safety measures. Parents should:

- Inform your child's student care centre immediately** once your child or any household member:
 - Has tested positive for COVID-19 (be it via ART or PCR)
 - Has been issued with Quarantine Order
 - Has been issued with Stay-Home Notice (SHN)
 - Has been placed on Leave of Absence (LOA) or phone surveillance
 - Is undergoing mandatory COVID-19 tests
 - Has been issued with Health Risk Warning or Health Risk Alert

- Monitor your child's health regularly** and look out for symptoms such as fever (e.g. body temperature more than 37.5°C) and/or respiratory symptoms such as sore throat, runny nose, cough and breathlessness. Self-testing with ART is a quick way to have peace of mind if you are worried about possible contact with a positive COVID-19 case.

- Keep your child at home if your child is unwell and see a doctor immediately. Do not self-medicate.** Inform your student care centre if your child is unwell and only send your child back to student care centre when your child's medical leave period is over, and your child has fully recovered (i.e. no longer displaying symptoms). This is regardless of whether your child has a negative ART result. This is to protect the health and wellbeing of other children and staff in the student care centre.

- Encourage your child (aged 2 years and older) to wear a mask or face shield for their protection and in the interest of other children/ staff.**

8 Let's stay safe together by playing our part and take the necessary precautions to keep student care centres safe and enable our children to learn and thrive. We will continue to review and adjust the measures in line with the national posture for the health and well-being of everyone in the student care centre. For information on safe management measures in your child's student care centre, please contact your child's student care centre principal.

Yours faithfully,



Denise Low (Ms)
Director
Service Delivery and Coordination Division (SDCD)
Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)

Leave of Absence (LOA) Requirements in Student Care Centres

	Scenario	If Child is ...	If Household member is ...
Quarantine Order			
1.	Under <u>Home Quarantine Order (HQO)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child may return on Day 11, at the end of their quarantine period, after they test negative for their exit swab provided that they undergo daily ART from Day 11 – Day 14. If your child is unable to undergo the daily ART swab tests from Day 11 – Day 14, he/she may only return to student care centre after Day 14 of their quarantine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child will be placed on LOA, aligned to the period of household member's HQO <u>and</u> the household member has tested negative for the exit swab.
2.	Serving Quarantine Order (QO) at Government Quarantine Facilities (GQF)	<p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your child has been in student care centre at any point in time within 14 days before the start of QO, parents from the same class will be informed and encouraged to keep their children from the SCC until the child/ staff on QO tests negative for their entry swab test. If your child was recently unwell in student care centre before the start of/ within 2 days from start of QO, your child's classmates will be placed on LOA until your child tests negative for the entry swab test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child will be placed on LOA until the household member is conveyed to GQF <u>and</u> tests negative for their entry swab test Your child may return to student care centre only after the household member receives a negative test result and has been conveyed to GQF.
Stay-Home Notice			
3.	Issued with SHN in line with ICA's prevailing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately and keep your child at home for the duration of the SHN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child will be placed on LOA aligned to period of household member's SHN
Health Alerts by MOH			
4.	Undergoing <u>mandatory COVID-19 swab test</u> required by MOH and awaiting results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child will be placed on LOA until he/she receives a negative test result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your child's student care centre immediately Your child will be placed on LOA until household member receives a negative test result.

	Scenario	If Child is ...	If Household member is ...
	<i>* excludes the Rostered Routine Testing that is carried out in some sectors (e.g. airline crew, construction)</i>		
5.	Health Risk Warning (HRW) Persons identified to be a casual contact of a COVID-19 case, or have visited specific higher-risk hotspots on the same day as a COVID-19 case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child will be placed on LOA for the duration of the HRW. • Your child may return to student care centre when he/she receive a negative <u>exit</u> Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child will be placed on LOA until household member receives a negative <u>entry</u> PCR test result.
6.	Health Risk Alert Persons identified to have visited hotspot areas or their vicinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child may attend student care centre if well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child may attend student care centre if well.
Leave of Absence/Phone Surveillance			
7.	Issued with Leave of Absence (LOA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child may attend student care centre after the LOA duration has ended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child may attend student care centre if well.
8.	Placed on phone surveillance by MOH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child may attend student care centre if well. 	
Children or Household Members who are unwell with flu-like symptoms			
9.	Unwell with flu-like symptoms (with fever and/or flu-like symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • You should bring your child to see a doctor. Do not self-medicate. • Your child may attend student care centre only when your child's medical leave period is over, and your child has fully recovered (i.e. no longer displaying symptoms). This is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child will be placed on LOA until the unwell household member receives a negative COVID-19 test result (either PCR or ART test).

	Scenario	If Child is ...	If Household member is ...
		regardless of whether your child has a negative ART result.	
Children or Household Members who receive a positive ART test result			
10.	Received a positive ART test result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • You should continue to bring your child to a Swab and Send Home (SASH) clinic immediately for follow up and to take the PCR test. This applies to both asymptomatic and symptomatic individuals. • Your child may return to student care centre <u>only after</u> they receive a negative PCR test and have fully recovered (i.e. no longer displaying symptoms). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your child's student care centre immediately • Your child will be placed on LOA, until the household member has tested negative on a PCR test or ART.