

# Reopening schools in Norway

5.1.2e

## COVID-19 and schools in Norway

- Schools and nurseries closed March 13th
- Rapid review on childrens role in spread of SARS-CoV-2, March 23rd: did not support that children have a major role in spread of disease
- Expert group evaluated pros and cons of closing schools
  - Members: The NIPH
    - The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
    - The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs
  - Conclusion: Cons outweigh pros – nurseries and schools should reopen

# Reopening of nurseries and schools

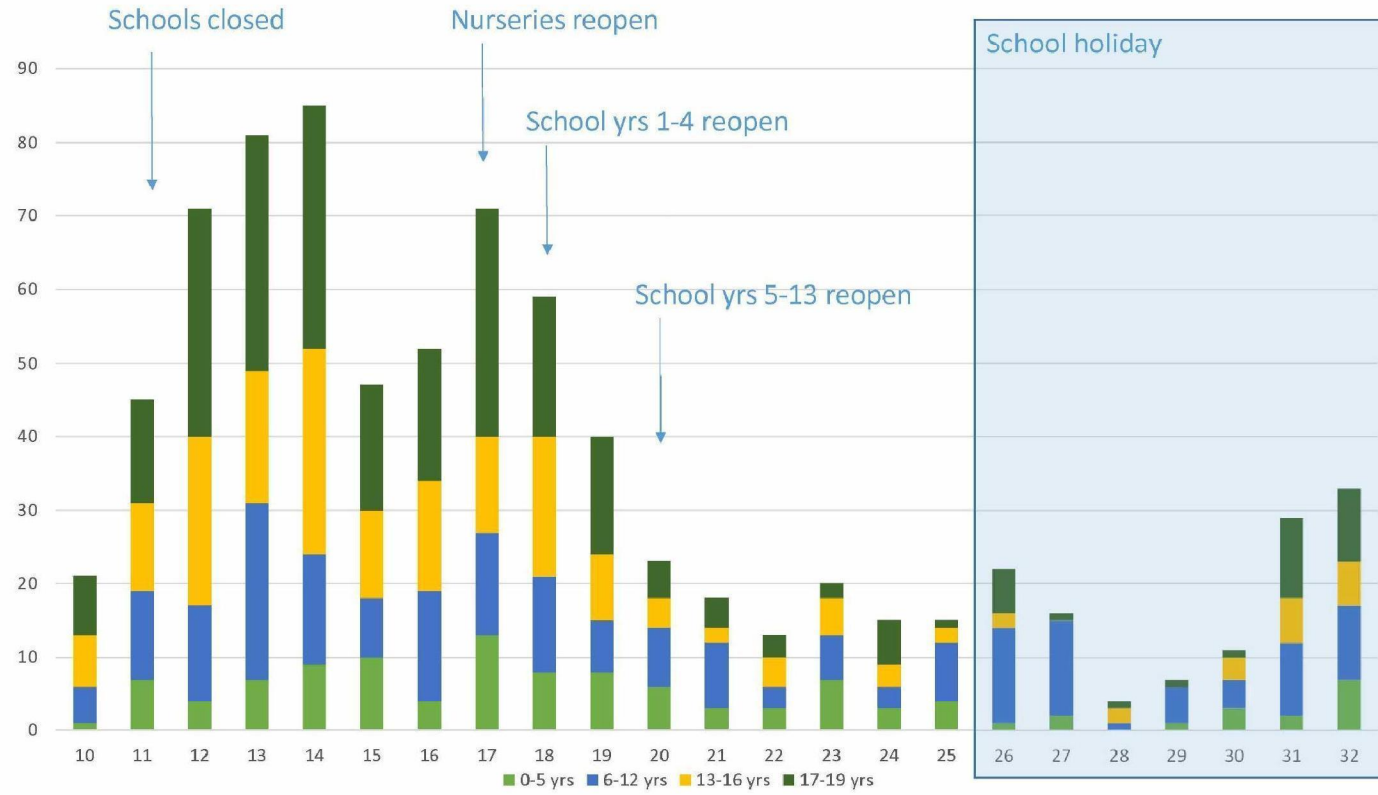
Gradual reopening declared by The PM April 7th

- Nurseries from April 20th
- School years 1-4 from April 27th
- School years 5-13 from May 11th
- Guidelines for Infection Prevention Control measures in nurseries and schools published April 15th
- Collaboration with The Norwegian Paediatric Association regarding guidelines for risk groups

# IPC in nurseries and schools

## Main measures

1. Sick children/pupils and employees should stay home
  2. Hygiene: handhygiene, cough etiquette, routines for cleaning
  3. Physical distancing:
    - Organizing the youngest children and relevant employees in cohorts (bubbles)
    - Adolescent pupils can keep at least 1m distance to each other and their teachers
- Guidelines published in Eurosurveillance in June:  
Johansen et al; Infection prevention guidelines and considerations for paediatric risk groups when reopening primary schools during COVID-19 pandemic, Norway, April 2020  
<https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2020.25.22.2000921>



## Experience: guidelines too strict in relation to COVID-19 incidence

- Need to categorize IPC-measures: low incidence should allow normal class size and increase face-to-face education
- Traffic light-model developed, implemented June 2nd

Green level: No municipalities yet

Yellow level: National level at school reentry in August

Red level: Implemented in municipalities with high incidence and evidence of community transmission

Primary school, grades 1-7	Measures
Green level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Symptomatic children/staff: stay home and self-isolate</li> <li>2) Hygiene measures: frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette</li> <li>3) Physical distancing measures: Avoid unnecessary physical contact (handshakes, hugging, high-fives) Organization of classes/ groups and school day as normal</li> </ol>
Yellow level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Symptomatic children/staff: stay home and self-isolate</li> <li>2) Hygiene measures: frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and reinforced cleaning measures</li> <li>3) Physical distancing measures: Avoid unnecessary physical contact (handshakes, hugging, high-fives) The entire class is considered one cohort* Staff can alternate/move between between cohorts*/ classes, while cohorts/ classes remain in the same classroom as much as possible After-school programs are organized based on the same grade, if not possible to maintain same cohorts as in school. Avoid assemblies and crowding Allocate defined areas for the different cohorts* in the school yard</li> </ol>
Red level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Symptomatic children/staff: stay home and self-isolate</li> <li>2) Hygiene measures: frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and reinforced cleaning measures</li> <li>3) Physical distancing measures: Avoid unnecessary physical contact (handshakes, hugging, high-fives) Divide classes into smaller cohorts* One teacher is dedicated to each cohort, avoiding alternation as much as possible Cohorts in school are maintained in after-school programs Physical distance between pupils and teachers is encouraged Avoid assemblies and crowding Allocate defined areas for the different cohorts* in the school yard Arrange for staggering the beginning and end of school day for different cohorts</li> </ol>