

COVID-19 RISKS

Online learning should continue

IT was reported that the Education Ministry (MoE) will close schools with Covid-19 cases if the infections force a large number of teachers to be quarantined and affect the efficiency of school operations.

Parents are worried for the safety of their children. The MoE may have comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOP) at schools, but the problem actually begins with school transport, such as vans and buses.

Students are cramped inside the vehicles. Following the opening of schools, there are reports of Covid-19

infections among students that use these transport services. Infected students have been told via WhatsApp to stay at home.

Through WhatsApp groups, one could see the rise of infections among students, causing parents to stop sending their children to schools, hence resulting in lesson disruption.

There must be more awareness about students in class. Students are wearing face masks for five to six hours. Have we asked our children how they feel during this period?

Some might feel sleepy and tired,

others have severe headache and even complain about difficulty in breathing. Thus, their absorption during lessons decreases.

Their face masks can also be contaminated and when bacteria or fungus accumulates, this will trigger upper respiratory tract infections. Prolonged use of the face mask gives children discomfort.

Some argue that children need to interact with others in school but wearing face masks limit their interactions as they find it difficult to make themselves understood.

Teachers are also wearing face masks and students cannot see the former's friendly and assuring smiles, which are important in the teacher-student relationship.

Hence, there is a lack of normal classroom environment and experience. There could be psychological effects on young students on the prolonged usage of face mask in schools.

As we approach the holy month of Ramadan, with the weather which is getting hotter, it will make the students more uncomfortable with the prolonged use of face mask. I believe in this situation, it is best if online classes are resumed until the Covid-19 curve has been flattened.

Students will be able to breathe well and concentrate on the lessons better. Don't wait until the virus spreads in schools again.

ARIFF SHAH R.K

Penang



Parents still worry about Covid-19 risks for their children in school. FILE PIC