

KJ to parents: If your kids are sick, don't send them to school

By Veena Babulal - March 3, 2022



Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said that this has been the practice since time immemorial not just during the Covid-19 pandemic but for all other symptoms and illnesses as well. - NSTP/SADDAM YUSOFF

KUALA LUMPUR: Parents, if your children are sick, don't send them to school.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said that this has been the practice since time immemorial not just during the Covid-19 pandemic but for all other symptoms and illnesses as well.

"If parents don't manage to do a Covid-19 test on their children in time routinely or when they are symptomatic, they should not send their kids to school," he said.

He said this has been stressed on in the national testing strategy, which states that when children are sick, especially when they are coughing, have a fever or have lost their sense of taste or smell, parents or guardians should refrain from sending them to school.

"This will help us lower and reduce the spread of cases now because there are many children going to school in a Covid-19 positive state. Here, they would spread the illness to their classmates and as such, entire classes have to close down," he said.

Khairy was speaking to reporters after officiating the World Hearing Day ceremony at the Serdang Hospital, here today.

Asked whether this would affect the children's attendance, he said the Education Ministry was aware of the requirement which was documented in the national testing strategy.

However, he said that further discussions are likely needed with regards to it.

On March 1, the ministry said 643 Covid-19 clusters had been registered since the onset of 2022, and of that, 407 were linked to educational institutions.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, who had announced this, said workplace clusters were the second highest (133), followed by high-risk group clusters (49), community clusters (28), import clusters (12), detention clusters (10) and religious clusters (four).

Earlier Khairy also said that education clusters were mostly related to hostels and schools with hostels that were not strict enough with mask-wearing and physical distancing protocols due to their routine of living together.

"We need to remind them that masking in crowded places and looking after personal hygiene is paramount."

He said that while their impact was not severe, with most cases in category 1 and 2, the ministry has nevertheless asked the schools to step up their standard operating procedure (SOP) management.

Meanwhile, Khairy also stood by the ministry's decision to lift isolation requirements for close contacts, adding that they only had to test on the first and third day of exposure because the viral loads are the highest on those days.