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**1181. Mrs N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1)       Given that social distancing requires classrooms to be split, what plans are in place to ensure that there are enough teachers to teach all the split classrooms of the different grades;

(2)       whether more teachers will be appointed across the Republic to teach all the split classrooms of the different grades; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3)       will teachers be paid overtime for the increased workload resulting from the split classrooms; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(4)       will her department maintain the decreased ratio of learners to teachers after the lifting of the lockdown to curb the coronavirus pandemic; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

**Response**

1. It is not expected that the demand for additional teachers due to social distancing will be significant, as the main constraint is the availability of classroom space.  Schools will use  various models to accommodate learners; all of them including alternate times / days / weeks attendance, depending on the context of a particular school.  Therefore, the same number of teachers will be used to teach in terms of the trimmed curriculum and reworked timetables.

2. As indicated above, there will be a few cases where schools will require additional classroom space to accommodate learners.  On the whole, there will be no need to appoint additional educators in large numbers to accommodate social distancing.

3. The plan currently, is to maintain the workload of teachers in line with the current regulations and in terms of their conditions of service, as stipulated in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), Government Notice No, 222 of 1999, published in Government Gazette No. 19767 dated 18 February 1999 as amended.  This will be possible within the context of trimmed curricula and reworked timetables, to accommodate social distancing.  Where educators will be required to work additional hours, it will be within reasonable limits, also taking into account that all extra-curricula activities have been suspended.

4. Yes.  The details thereof, will depend on the health, safety and social distancing protocols on COVID-19, intended to curb the spread of the virus, that may have to be observed beyond the national lockdown, as they relate to social distancing.