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## Online learning: DPI asks schools to adhere to guidelines or face action

This comes after reports of children complaining of eye problems

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

After reports of children complaining of eye problems and schools exceeding the time limit set by the government on the duration of online sessions, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has said that strict action would be taken against managements not following the rules.

In an order dated October 22, but made available on Wednesday, the DPI said such schools will face action under Section 124 (a) of the Karnataka Education Act.

However, there are no changes in the guidelines recommended by the expert committee formed by the State government to look into the modalities of online classes. It had submitted a detailed report in July allocating screen time and fre-



The maximum screen time per session allowed is 30 minutes and 15 minutes extra for class 6 and upwards. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

quency of online classes. The maximum screen time per session that is allowed will be 30 minutes and 15 minutes extra for class 6 upwards.

Anbu Kumar, Commissioner, DPI, said the intention of issuing the circular

once again was not aimed at punishing schools but towards regulating the problem. "If schools are found to be violating it repeatedly and wilfully, we will take strict action against them," he said.

Nagasimha G. Rao, child

rights activist and Director of Child Rights Trust, pointed out that the government should have a robust mechanism to follow up or monitor the implementation of the report. "There is no information available on the number of schools conducting online classes. BEOs, DDPIs should be directed to constantly monitor schools," he said.

A father of a class 7 student enrolled in a private school said most parents were unlikely to complain if a school didn't adhere to the guidelines or question the management as it's a question of their child's education.

"I have not heard of any actions being taken against schools for violating the guidelines. Hopefully, this time the government will take action," he said.