

Health Advice for Schools on Prevention of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Make sure hands are washed under the following conditions

- After touching public installations or equipment, such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs.
- Before handling food, eating or drinking
- After visiting the toilet
- After handling objects soiled by faeces, respiratory or other body secretion.
- After playing with toys or animals/pets
- When hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions (e.g. after sneezing)
- Before touching eyes/nose/mouth

Wash hands properly

- Wet hands under running water.
- Apply liquid soap and rub hands together to make a soapy lather.
- Away from the running water, rub the front and back of hands. Massage all the finger tips properly including the thumb, the web of the fingers, around and under the nails. Do this for at least 10 seconds.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly with either a clean cotton towel, a paper towel, or a hand dryer.
- Avoid direct contact between clean hands and the tap. The tap may be turned off:
 - By wrapping the faucet with a clean towel; or
 - After splashing water to clean the faucet; or
 - By the staff.

Other related matters

- Towels should never be shared. Each used towel should be properly disposed of.
- Individuals who prefer to use their own cotton towel should make sure that their towel is not shared with others. It is preferable to have more than 1 cotton towel for use each day. The towels should be washed at least once daily.
- Rub hands with a 65-95% alcohol solution to disinfect them when hand washing facilities are not available.
- Cover mouth and nose with handkerchiefs while sneezing and coughing.
- Wash hair and shower daily for personal hygiene.
- Wear gloves when handling wounds, nose bleeding and soiled articles; wash hands afterwards.
- Never share towels, handkerchiefs, toothbrushes, or eating utensils or other personal items.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- People with symptoms of respiratory tract infections or fever and their carers should put on masks to avoid infection. Patients should seek prompt medical advice and stay at home.
- Using disposable gloves for the distribution and collection of examination papers at public examination centres to avoid direct contact.

ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

Ensure good ventilation

- Open all windows if possible from time to time to allow good ventilation.
- Keep air-conditioners well-maintained and wash the dust-filters frequently.
- Open windows and use exhaust fans to improve ventilation under crowded conditions.

Keep school premises clean

Keep toilets clean

- Cleanse toilets frequently (at least once a day) with disinfectant (such as diluted household bleach by mixing 1 part of bleach with 99 parts of water); rinse with water and mop dry before use.
- Make sure that flushing apparatus is functioning properly.
- Provide toilets with liquid soap and disposable tissue towels or hand dryers
- Never share a common towel.
- Wash non-disposable towels after use and do not re-use them before washing.

Clean and wash furniture, equipment and toys properly:

- Mop furniture, equipment and non-washable toys regularly (at least once a day) by towels soaked with disinfectant (a 1:99 diluted household bleach solution, or 70% alcohol for metallic surfaces), rinse with water and then mop dry.
- Do not use toys made of absorbent materials e.g. wool.
- Clean washable toys (at least once a day) by immersing in a 1:99 diluted household bleach solution for 30 minutes before ordinary washing.
- Soak towels and linen in diluted household bleach 1:99 for 30 minutes before ordinary washing.
- Do not wash soiled belongings/clothes of children in schools or centres; put them in plastic bags for collection by parents instead. Clean surfaces soiled by vomitus, excreta or respiratory secretion immediately with a 1:49 diluted household bleach solution (mixing one part of bleach with 49 parts of water).

Make sure that common facilities such as staircases, lifts, lobbies, refuse collection chambers, canopies and ventilation fans are cleaned, disinfected and maintained regularly.

Prevent pest infestation – proper storage of food, proper disposal of rubbish, be aware of signs of pest infestation and arrange for pest disinfections where necessary.

When using the toilet, it is essential to observe hygienic practices

- Dispose of used toilet paper in the toilet bowl;
- Before flushing, lower the toilet lid to prevent contaminated water from splashing out;
- Flush the toilet;
- When flushing has stopped, raise the lid;
- Wipe the rim, seat and lid with a cloth soaked in a 1:99 diluted household bleach solution. Rinse clean with water. Wipe dry.
- Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap. Dry hands with a paper towel or a hand dryer.

Maintain proper function of toilets, drains and pipes

- Clean the floor drain outlets regularly;
- Pour about half a litre of water into each floor drain outlet at least once a week in order to prevent foul air and insects from entering the premises;
- Then pour a teaspoonful of a 1:99 diluted household bleach solution and pour clean water down the drain after 5 minutes;
- For floor drains, spray insecticide into the drain outlets after cleansing;
- Make sure drains and pipes do not leak or are not blocked. Do not alter them without prior authorization. Repair immediately if there is a defect in the trap or smell of foul air is coming from drain outlets.

Do not spit or litter.

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS SUSPECTED OF SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME

Schools should keep good records of sick leave of staff and children.

In case of an unusual increase in absentees or having a large number of absentees with symptoms similar to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, e.g. fever, cough, headache, muscle pain and malaise, contact the staff or parents/guardian of absentees to ascertain the reasons for their absence. The Department of Health and the Regional Education Offices of this Bureau should also be notified immediately.

The telephone numbers of respective Regional Office of the Department of Health are as follows:

<u>Regional Office</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>
Hong Kong Regional Office	2961 8729
Kowloon Regional Office	2199 9149
New Territories East Regional Office	2158 5107
New Territories West Regional Office	2615 8571

Education and Manpower Bureau
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