

Department of Health

General Guidelines on Health Requirements for Registration of a New School (For Premises not Designed and Constructed as a School)

Schools are required to comply with the health and sanitation requirements as stipulated in Part VII of the Education Regulations, Cap. 279A. Please refer to the Education Regulations for details. The following paragraphs provide some general guidelines on the health recommendations for reference only. Please note that the health requirements for each application have to be considered on their own merits, taking into account the actual circumstances.

1. General Requirements

- a. Premises shall be laid on with mains water supply.
- b. Premises shall be provided with a proper drainage system.
- c. Premises shall be provided with adequate floor space for pupils.
- d. Premises shall be provided with adequate ventilation and lighting.
- e. Premises shall be provided with adequate sanitary fitments.
- f. Premises shall be maintained at an acceptable level of sanitation and hygiene.

2. Floor Space

- a. If the premises of a school not having been so designed and constructed, are in the opinion of the competent authority for the purposes of section 12 of the Ordinance nevertheless suitable for the purposes of a school having regard to the loading for which they were designed and constructed, every classroom in the school premises shall have –
 - i. a floor space at least 1.5 m in width for the use of the teacher, extending along the whole length of the wall in front of the pupils; and
 - ii. an area of floor space of not less than 0.9 m² for each pupil in the classroom.

- iii. as recommended by Education Bureau, an area of floor space of not less than 1.8m² should be provided for each pupil in the classroom for whole-day kindergarten.
 - iv. as recommended by Education Bureau, an area of floor space of not less than 1.5m² should be provided for each pupil in the classroom for computer training.
- b. If the premises of a school not having been so designed and constructed, are not in the opinion of the competent authority for the purposes of section 12 of the Ordinance suitable for the purposes of a school having regard to the loading for which they were designed and constructed, every classroom in the school premises shall follow the requirements under Para 2(a) above. In addition, if the classroom is to be used by pupils undergoing secondary or post-secondary education or any other educational course, the classroom shall have an area of not less than 1.1 m² for each pupil.
- c. In calculating the usable floor area of floor space for each pupil (irrespective of the teaching method), the following floor space shall be excluded:
- i. the floor space required for the use of the teacher under paragraph 2(a)(i); and
 - ii. any area which appears to be unsuitable for any reason (e.g. any corner area, area behind column, wall and corner, area of inadequate lighting or ventilation and area outside the visible distance of teacher or pupils).
- d. In addition, please note that according to regulation 88 of the Education Regulations, Cap. 279A, in any school providing:
- i. nursery education and full-day kindergarten education, not more than 20 pupils;
 - ii. kindergarten education, not more than 30 pupils;
 - iii. primary, secondary or post-secondary education or any other educational course (other than a school in respect of which an incorporated management committee is established under Part III B of the Education Ordinance), not more than 45 pupils,

shall be taught at one time by one teacher except in special cases with permission of the Permanent Secretary for Education. Therefore, in calculating the permitted accommodation for each classroom, it is assumed that there is one teacher in each classroom unless otherwise stated.

- e. To protect, ensure proper eyesight of pupils and to maintain effective control of pupils from the teachers, it is recommended the size of a classroom (including the area for teacher under paragraph 2(a)(i)) to be 7.9 m (maximum length) by 6.7 m (maximum width).

3. Sanitary Fitments

- a. Every school shall be provided with sufficient sanitary fitments for pupils.
- b. Every co-educational school shall be provided with separate toilets for each sex.
- c. The number of sanitary fitments that are connected to flushing system required in school are as follows:
 - i. For boys
 - 1 water closet and 2* urinals shall be provided for every 30 pupils or part thereof.
 - If urinals are not provided, 1 water closet shall be provided for every 20 pupils or part thereof.
 - 1 wash hand basin shall be provided for every 30 pupils or part thereof.

**If a urinal trough is installed, 450mm of trough length is deemed equivalent to one urinal. Each urinal should have a user standing space of not less than 450mm x 450mm in front of it.*

- ii. For girls
 - 1 water closet shall be provided for every 20 pupils or part thereof.
 - 1 wash hand basin shall be provided for every 25 pupils or part thereof.

- d. The numbers of latrines and urinals that are connected to flushing system required in boarding school are as follows:
- i. For boys
 - 1 water closet and 1 urinal shall be provided for every 15 boarders.
 - ii. For girls
 - 1 water closet shall be provided for every 15 boarders.
- e. The toilet should be provided with an opening or openings into the external air having a total area of at least one-tenth of the area of the floor of the toilet. Alternatively, an exhaust fan should be installed if the opening is less than at least one-tenth of the area of the floor of the toilet.
- f. The toilet should provide adequate liquid soap and disposable tissue towels or hand dryers for hand washing.
- g. Every wash hand basin should be provided with an adequate and constant supply of water and connected to water drainage system.
- h. The toilet floor should be non-slippery.
- i. Every room used for latrine accommodation should not be used for other purposes.
- j. If a school is situated in a commercial building and sanitary fitments are not provided within the premises, communal toilets in the building, which are within reasonable walking distance from the school, for the use of pupils of the school may be accepted for consideration. In this regard, a certified toilet plan and a certificate of communal toilets for such purpose shall be submitted with the application. Furthermore, toilet key and location plan of the toilet should be displayed in a conspicuous place in the school premises.
- k. If shower or bath facilities are provided in school, they should be kept clean and adequately ventilated.

4. Lighting and Ventilation

- a. The premises of every school shall be adequately ventilated and lighted.

- b. All classrooms and the blackboards therein shall be adequately illuminated and the blackboards shall be so placed as to cause the least eyestrain to the pupils and shall not have a surface that reflects light.
- c. No cubicle or partition which obstructs the free passage of light or air should be erected in any classroom.
- d. Fluorescent tubes should be placed with their axis parallel to the teaching board.
- e. Premises should be provided with independent ventilating system for the kitchen, toilets and classrooms. If air conditioners are provided, they should be installed in such a way as not to cause any noise, hot air or water dripping nuisance.

5. First Aid

- a. At least one first aid box should be provided. The first aid boxes should be maintained fully equipped at all times. (Please refer to the Recommended List of First Aid Items at Appendix 7b.)
- b. For a school which has more than 100 pupils, a suitable room for medical inspection should be provided.
- c. At least 1 suitable room should be set aside to be used solely as a sanatorium or sick room in a boarding school.
- d. The following facilities should be provided in the medical inspection room/ sanatorium or sick room :
 - i. a bed/couch with clean blankets, sheets, pillows and pillow cases;
 - ii. a fully equipped first aid box; and
 - iii. hand hygiene facilities: handwashing basins, water, liquid soap, as well as disposable paper towels, and lidded dustbins, or 70-80% alcohol-based hand rub.
- e. All environmental surfaces used to carry out procedures should be smooth and impervious to allow thorough cleaning and disinfection.
- f. Linen or paper towels covering the surface of the examination or procedure area

should be clean and changed between patients. Soiled linen should be replaced immediately.

- g. Use pre-packaged, disposable, single-use items whenever possible.
- h. Single-use items, or items that cannot be reprocessed, should not be reprocessed or reused, and should be discarded after use.
- i. Sterile items must not be used beyond their expiry date.
- j. Assess the integrity of the packaging of sterile items prior to use. Sterile packages should remain sealed until immediately before use to prevent contamination.
- k. Any cuts or breaks on the hands should be covered with waterproof dressings.
- l. Nails should be kept short. Artificial nails, nail polish, rings, wrist-watches and bracelets should be removed.
- m. Healthcare providers with respiratory symptoms, such as cough or sore throat, should wear a surgical mask and seek medical advice.
- n. Hand hygiene should be performed according to the “Five Moments for Hand Hygiene”:
 - i. Before touching a patient
 - ii. Before a clean/aseptic procedure
 - iii. After body fluid exposure risk
 - iv. After touching a patient
 - v. After touching patient surroundings
- o. Liquid soap and alcohol-based hand rub must not be used beyond their expiry date.
- p. Waste must be handled properly and safely according to written policies and procedures promulgated by the Environmental Protection Department pursuant to the Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354).

6. Furniture

- a. Seats with backrests and desks of suitable size for the pupils and with no safety hazards should be provided to all classrooms.
- b. For schools where afternoon naps are allowed, clean beds with clean sheet, blanket, pillow and pillow case should be provided for each pupil.

7. Kitchen (if any)

If a school prepares meals at its kitchen, the following should be provided: -

a. Structure of kitchen

- i. The kitchen should be of reasonable size:
 - catering for 50 pupils or below, kitchen area should not be less than 10m²;
 - catering for 51-99 pupils, kitchen area should not be less than 15m²;
 - catering for 100 pupils or above, kitchen area should not be less than 20m².
- ii. The floor of the kitchen should be surfaced with non-slippery material. The kitchen walls should be surfaced with non-absorbent material to a height of not less than 2m.
- iii. The height of partition walls of the kitchen should be from floor to the ceiling level.
- iv. The internal surfaces of walls or partitions of kitchen shall be surfaced with smooth light coloured non-absorbent materials or tiles to a height of not less than 2m. The junctions between walls and floor should be coved (i.e. rounded). Remaining surfaces of walls and ceilings shall be limewashed or painted in a light colour.
- v. No manhole should be located in any food room. Any manhole situated in the premises must be provided with a double-seal cover. Any soil/waste/rain-water pipe inside any food room or premises shall be enclosed in pipe duct constructed of impervious rust-proof material. Suitable inspection openings shall be provided to such enclosure(s).
- vi. A door should be provided in the entrance of the kitchen so as to prevent pupils from entering into the kitchen unnoticed.

b. Facilities/ Equipment in kitchen

- i. At least one exhaust extraction hood should be installed over the cooking stoves in kitchen. The exhaust must be arranged to pass through a grease filter before discharging into the external air in such a state as not to create any nuisance.
- ii. All extraction fans installed on the premises must be discharged into the open air at a height of at least 2.5 m above the ground or street level and such discharge shall not cause any nuisance.
- iii. A sterilizer of not less than 23 litres capacity should be provided inside the kitchen for sterilization of all crockery, glassware or other utensils used in the preparation and consumption of food. Perforated metal or wire dipping trays should be provided for holding the utensils (which are) being sterilised. Alternatively, a mechanical dish washer or bactericidal agent of a type approved by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department may be used.
- iv. The washing and sterilizing facilities for eating and drinking utensils in the food room of the premises shall be arranged in such a manner and position satisfactory to the Director of Health.
- v. At least one wash-up sink of adequate capacity and one wash-hand basin should be installed inside the kitchen.
- vi. The wash hand basin and wash up sink should be connected to public mains water supply and fitted with a waste pipe, which in turn is fitted with a bottle trap or a U-trap and connected to a proper drainage system.
- vii. Liquid soap in dispenser should be provided in the kitchen.
- viii. A box-type grease trap should be installed under the sink to prevent the discharge of grease or oil into any drain or sewer.
- ix. Adequate cupboard space should be provided inside the kitchen for storing clean utensils, crockery and cutlery used in the school.
- x. Adequate number of refrigerator(s) must be provided for the purpose of storing all perishable food at a temperature not exceeding 4°C. A thermometer shall be provided to each refrigerator indicating the temperature at which the food is being stored.

- xi. The use of electricity or town gas as fuel is recommended for cooking purpose. Approval from Fire Services Department should be sought if L/P gas is to be used.
- xii. The top of tables used for food preparation must be made of close-jointed hardwood or other impervious material. Chopping blocks or benches of smooth close-jointed hardwood and free from cracks must be provided for cutting up food.
- xiii. Sufficient dust-bins with close-fitting lids should be provided for storage of all refuse and other waste matter awaiting disposal.
- xiv. Adequate dust-proof and pest-proof showcases / containers should be provided for storage of finished food products.
- xv. All metal hood(s), ducting, extracting fan(s), grease filters of the exhaust system should be maintained in a reasonably clean condition and in an efficient working order at all times. The system must be in operation during the hours of cooking meals.

c. Food handling/ preparation

- i. Separate cutting boards and knives should be provided for the preparation of raw food and cooked food to prevent cross-contamination.
- ii. Raw and cooked food shall be stored separately from each other. All raw materials should be stored at least 300 mm above the floor.
- iii. Food handlers should keep all parts of their bodies and clothing clean and used eating utensils must be washed and sterilized before re-use.
- iv. Fish and meat with a lot of bones should be avoided in the preparation of meals. Meat should be lean and tender. Fruits and vegetables should be included in the menu as often as possible. The nutrients of food should be preserved as much as possible during cooking. Hot, spicy and fatty food is not recommended.
- v. All food for consumption and all crockery and utensils used in the consumption of food, whilst being conveyed from kitchen to pupils, should be kept in suitable food containers of impervious materials.
- vi. Personal effects such as clothing, footwear, luggage, umbrellas and other articles must not be stored or left in any food room.

- vii. Only clean paper or other clean, new wrapping material shall be used for wrapping finished products.
 - viii. It is the responsibility of the school authority to seek the approval of the Buildings Department and/or Housing Department for the addition, alteration and drainage connection.
- d. If meal boxes for pupils attending the school are supplied by a food supplier, the school should submit a copy of valid Food Factory Licence issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), with endorsement for the supply of lunch boxes. To ensure food safety of school meals, please refer to the “Practical Guide for Ensuring Food Safety in Schools and Childcare Facilities” published by the Centre for Food Safety of the FEHD:
https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/school/guide_for_ensuring_food_safety_e.pdf

8. Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools

It is incumbent on every school staff to learn how to prevent and control communicable diseases, please refer to the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools / Kindergartens / Kindergartens-cum-Child Care Centres / Child Care Centres published by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of Department of Health for practical information on infection prevention measures. The guidelines can be obtained from CHP’s website at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guidelines_on_prevention_of_communicable_diseases_in_schools_kindergartens_kindergartens_cum_child_care-centres_child_are_centres.pdf.

9. Processing Time

The Department of Health will contact the school for inspection arrangement within 10 working days after receiving referral from the Education Bureau. It will inform the EDB of the assessment, including any health requirements and recommendations for the school, within 7 working days after the school inspection. The EDB will then convey the health requirements and recommendations to the school for compliance and request it to report completion of work for follow-up inspection by the Department of Health, if applicable.

Recommended List of First Aid Items¹

1. Items recommended
 - a. Sterile normal saline or distilled water (for cleaning wounds)
 - b. Single-use latex or nitrile gloves (to avoid direct contact with wounds or blood)
 - c. Surgical masks and face shields
 - d. Sterile dressings / dressing packs / gauze (individually packed)
 - e. Sterile antiseptic wipes
 - f. Elastic tensor bandages (of different widths)
 - g. Triangular bandages
 - h. Cotton sticks and cotton wool²
 - i. Sterile plasters (for wounds) (of different sizes) and surgical tape (for securing dressings / bandages / gauze)
 - j. Scissors
 - k. Forceps
 - l. Spray bottles or eye cups for washing eyes*
 - m. Cold pack³
 - n. Electronic thermometer

¹ To note the purchase or expiry dates of various first aid items and to make supplements or replacements.

² Sterile dressings or gauze should be used for cleaning a wound. Where practicable, avoid using cotton wool for cleaning a wound because of loose cotton fibres that might stick to the wound.

³ Some cold packs must be stored in the freezer of a refrigerator; safety guidelines on the use of cold packs can be obtained from Department of Health's website at https://www.mdd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/information-publication/hot_and_cold_eng_20200121_v6_with_photo.pdf

- o. CPR face shield (disposable) or CPR pocket masks for resuscitation*
- p. Emergency helpline information (such as contact phone number of the nearby ambulance station)

**preferable items*

2. Additional items recommended:

Automated External Defibrillators (AED) (schools are encouraged to install an AED to provide extra protection to their students, staff, etc.)

3. The person(s) in charge of the first aid boxes should ensure that:

- a. the first aid box content list is included;
- b. all the medicines are labeled properly;
- c. the contents are checked regularly to see if any refill is needed; and
- d. the expiry dates of medicine are checked so that replacements can be made accordingly.
- e. Unopened sterile items should be stored in enclosed cabinets, with expiry dates checked regularly. Opened sterile items that are not used immediately should be discarded. Storage areas should be maintained clean and dry.
- f. All reusable items must be reprocessed after each use.
- g. Cleaning is the first step in reprocessing a device after use. Cleaning refers to the removal of visible soil, organic material, and inorganic material from objects and surfaces. This is normally accomplished manually or mechanically using water with detergents or enzymatic products. Designated sinks should be used for cleaning.
- h. Reusable items that enter mucous membranes or sterile body cavities are defined as critical items and must undergo sterilisation after cleaning. Reusable items that are in contact with mucous membranes or body fluids are defined as semi-critical items and must undergo at least high-level disinfection after cleaning. Reusable items that contact intact skin are considered non-critical and should undergo at least low-level disinfection (for example, using 70% alcohol) if necessary after cleaning.