

24 Sep 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sanitation and Hygiene Advisory for Schools

1 In view of the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation, the National Environment Agency (NEA) strongly urges all stakeholders to take precautionary measures to continue to maintain high standards of sanitation and personal hygiene to minimise the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

2 Managers and/or operators of schools are expected to maintain high standards of hygiene and cleanliness to safeguard public health and instill confidence in parents who send their children to the schools.

3 The NEA requires the following **good practices to be implemented immediately**:

a) Personal Hygiene

Teachers and staff should regularly remind and guide students to:

- Monitor their health.
- Report to their teachers, see a doctor and stay away from fellow students if they are unwell.
- Wear a mask in accordance with prevailing regulations.
- Cover their mouths with tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Practise good toilet habits (e.g. flush toilets after use).
- Practise good personal hygiene (e.g. wash hands with soap and water before and after meals, and after visiting the toilet)
- Refrain from sharing personal items (e.g. toothbrush, toothpaste, utensils and drinking cup/bottle).
- Do not place your mouth on the dispenser when drinking from the water cooler.

Staff should be regularly reminded to:

- Monitor their temperatures.
- Report to their supervisors, see a doctor and stay away from fellow colleagues if they are unwell.
- Wear a mask if they have a cough or runny nose.
- Cover their mouths with tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Practice good toilet habits (e.g. flush toilets after use).

- Practice good personal hygiene (e.g. after clean-up is carried out, after handling refuse or other dirty items, and after visiting the toilet)
- Sanitise their hands after contact with frequently touched areas.
- Refrain from touching their exposed body parts such as eyes, nose, face and arms with soiled gloves or unwashed/unsanitised hands.

b) Housekeeping/Refuse Management

- Cleaning contractor to periodically review the cleaning regime and step-up on cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas.
- Assign a team of staff to carry out cleaning and housekeeping daily. Disinfect with disinfectant regularly, frequently touched points such as handrails, doorknobs. Please refer to the “List of household disinfectants and self-disinfecting surface coating products against COVID-19 virus” available on the NEA website for a list of disinfectants that can be used.
- Provide hand sanitisers at high human traffic points.
- Disinfect the tables and chairs in the school canteen with disinfectant daily.
- Clean and disinfect communal toys and mattresses daily.
- Keep all rooms well-ventilated and open windows to allow plenty of fresh air into the indoor environment, where possible.
- Ensure refuse bins are covered at all times and cleared daily. Tie refuse contained in plastic bags properly before disposal.
- Clean up immediately any refuse spillage.
- Engage licensed waste contractors to remove refuse daily.

Cleaning staff are expected to:

- Soak cleaning cloths in household bleach at the proper concentration according to manufacturer’s instructions and wash the cloth after use and before reuse.
- Clean and disinfect all cleaning equipment immediately after use.

c) Toilets

- Disinfect frequently touched areas such as water taps, door/towel/cistern handles, toilet bowls and their seats and cover flaps, wash basins, doorknobs, buttons and switches with disinfectant regularly.
- Provide adequate supply of toilet paper, paper towels (if provided) or hand dryers and liquid soap at all times. Where feasible, provide disinfectant, preferably dispensed through a no-touch mechanism for each toilet cubicle for users to clean toilet seats before and after use.
- Ensure toilet-flushing apparatus is functioning at all times.
- Ensure all sanitary pipes and fittings are in good working condition, and water seal are not dried-out.
- Ensure that contact information for toilet users to give feedback is easily accessible.
- Keep exhaust fans running for longer operating hours at full capacity.
- Use floor blowers to dry the toilet floors only when the toilets are closed for usage.
- Allow tap water to run longer to minimise the need for users to press on the tap multiple times.
- Ensure adequate ventilation in toilets or use air purifier, if possible. Please refer to the ‘Guidance Note on Building Air-Conditioning and Mechanical Ventilation

(AMCV) Operations Amid COVID-19 Situation' on BCA's website at <https://go.gov.sg/bca-nea-moh-guidance-bldg-aircon-acmv-ops>.

- Install one way valve lid over gully traps, if possible.

d) Air-Conditioning and Mechanical Ventilation System (ACMV)

- Purge the indoor air two hours before and after occupancy. In buildings without purging systems, operation hours of ACMV system should be extended by two hours before and after occupancy, where feasible.
- Adjust outdoor air intake to the maximum during occupancy.
 - Use toilet exhaust fans and open windows to improve the ventilation for spaces without ducted outdoor air supply system. If not possible, use portable air cleaners and make plans for mechanical ventilation, whenever possible.
- Use filters with at least MERV-14 rating for treating recirculation air in Air Handling Units. If not possible, use filters with highest removal efficiency allowable by existing ACMV system.
- Ensure filters are properly installed and maintained according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- Ensure that all ventilating and air-conditioning systems are inspected, cleaned and maintained regularly in accordance to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Please refer to the 'Guidance Note on Building Air-Conditioning and Mechanical Ventilation (AMCV) Operations Amid COVID-19 Situation' on BCA's website at <https://go.gov.sg/bca-nea-moh-guidance-bldg-aircon-acmv-ops>.

e) Food Hygiene

- Ensure all products are obtained from licensed food sources.
- Cover food properly to prevent contamination.
- Do not keep personal belongings in food preparation areas. A separate locker area should be provided for storage of personal belongings.
- Do not use cracked or chipped crockery as germs can harbour in the cracks.
- Use separate chopping boards, knives and other instruments for raw and cooked foods to prevent cross contamination.
- Use clean disposable gloves when handling food.
- Store raw food and cooked/ready-to-eat food separately.

f) Pest Control Programme

- Check the site daily and remove all potential vector breeding sites.
- Look out for signs of pest infestation such as rat droppings or burrows and cockroach droppings.
- Engage a registered vector control operator to implement a pest control programme for the site.

g) Sports Facilities

- Disinfect exercise equipment and frequently touched areas with disinfectants regularly.

4 We seek your cooperation in implementing the above practices.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

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