



# GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR CLEANING OF SCHOOLS



**This advisory information is for the cleaning of the whole school, including toilets. It is adapted and updated from a document Good Practice Guidance for Cleaning of Schools produced in partnership with the South East London Health Protection Unit, South West London Health Protection Unit and the London Borough of Lambeth**



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## General – standard requirements

The following guidelines can be used as a template for cleaning in schools nationally: they can be given to cleaning supply contractors, in-house-cleaners and caretakers.

Contractors should ensure that their employees understand and are trained to follow the guidelines, Regular supervision of cleaners should be provided by contractors.

Cleanliness and maintenance of toilets should be checked regularly throughout the day and checks should be recorded visually within the toilet facilities. These regular daily checks as well as more comprehensive daily, monthly and termly checklists are available to print out and photocopy from the Bog Standard campaign website [www.bog-standard.org](http://www.bog-standard.org). (Adult section /What you can do/ Resources). It is desirable for pupils to be actively involved in carrying out the checks.

The benefits of using cleaning products specifically designed for the job cannot be over emphasised. All cleaning supply contractors will be able to supply you with cleaning agents to meet your school's needs.

### 1. **Cleaning services to be provided**

The Contractor is to provide a daily cleaning service of the school and a twice or three times daily toilet cleansing service including between peak periods of use (such as between morning break and lunch) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. to ensure that the schools convenience blocks are kept clean, safe and hygienic. (Some schools may need less while others may need more, depending on what is currently happening in the school e.g. breakfast clubs, after school clubs etc). Toilets should not all be cleaned at the same time to ensure adequate access.

The premises officer should be responsible for opening the school including the toilets. Toilets should remain open throughout the school day. Any closures should be temporary for cleaning purposes.

The Contractor should be responsible for the cleaning service five days per week during term time and deep cleaning during school holidays.

There should be provision for extra cleaning of toilets if necessary (e.g. by premises manager) and responsibility for this should be on the relevant person's job description.

Any emergency maintenance of toilets should be carried out promptly to minimise disruption to the service.

### 2. **Prior to opening**

All major and minor defects and deficiencies should be reported to the Premises Officer.

### 3. **Cleaning in the school environment**

Organisms can survive on environmental surfaces. Viruses, in particular, can be excreted in large numbers in respiratory secretions and stools and their persistence on surfaces for hours and days is common. Environmental hygiene is thus a vital part of good infection control.

#### **Definitions:**

The level of decontamination needed depends on the circumstances and will dictate what procedures are required. A number of procedures can be used to achieve good levels of hygienic decontamination. These include:

- **Cleaning** – In many instances, e.g. for hand washing and surfaces, decontamination can be achieved by using a cleaning product (detergent) and hot water. Decontamination is only achieved if applied in conjunction with mechanical action (e.g. wiping or scrubbing) and a rinsing and drying process afterwards.
- **Heat** – Heating is an effective method of decontaminating items such as clothes, cleaning utensils and fabrics (e.g. hot washing cycle in washing machines and dishwashers). Heat is also used to reduce microbial contamination of foods to a level that is safe for consumption. Generally, the higher the temperature achieved, the more germs are killed.
- **Hygienic cleaners and chemical disinfectants** – These can be used to effectively decontaminate sites and surfaces where the above methods are inadequate or impractical, e.g. to decontaminate work surfaces or toys, to decontaminate toilets, or for use as an extra measure of decontamination when infection occurs in the childcare setting.

#### **General cleaning information**

Overall, premises should be clean and well ventilated. All areas should be cleaned regularly as part of a documented cleaning policy and rota (see Table 2). Toilets and frequent hand contact surfaces should be cleaned as frequently as is practical and especially when visibly dirty. Frequent hand contact sites, such as toilet handles, taps and doorknobs are likely to be contaminated with germs and have a high risk of transferring infection. It is therefore essential to clean and disinfect these sites regularly. All environmental surfaces and floors need to be impervious to water and easy to clean. Carpeted areas should be kept to a minimum.

Surfaces such as floors, walls and furniture generally offer a low risk of contamination and a low risk of germ transfer. To maintain this low risk, these surfaces should be regularly cleaned (e.g. daily), kept dry and well maintained.

Any carpeted areas should be vacuumed daily as well as steam cleaned on a regular basis (e.g. every 2-3 months and/or as necessary).

Where there is known blood or body fluid contamination (e.g. spills of vomit or faecal material), spills should be cleaned immediately and any contaminated surfaces cleaned and disinfected.

General purpose utility rubber gloves should be used for general environmental cleaning tasks. These should be changed when there is evidence of peeling, cracking and tears. Hands should always be washed after removing gloves/cleaning.

Environmental cleaning cloths should be disposable, made from a non-shedding fibre and used within a colour-coded system (e.g. red for toilets, blue for general areas, green for kitchens). If re-useable cloths have to be used they must be decontaminated after each use and at least once a day. They should also be routinely replaced. Cloths can be decontaminated by hot machine washing (at least 60°C) and then drying them as rapidly as possible either flat or hanging. Cloths/mops used to clean the toilet area must not be used in other areas of the school.

Ideally, mops with heads that can be removed should be used and then washed at high temperatures in the washing machine (as above) at the end of each day. If this is not possible, mop heads should be cleaned and rinsed with a disinfectant, wrung as dry as possible and then dried quickly, preferably at high temperatures and stored with mop head facing upwards (inverted) or hanging. They should not be cleaned in a sink that is used for food preparation nor should they be left soaking in dirty water. All mop buckets should be easily cleanable (plastic) and kept clean and dry after use.

## **Chemicals**

All chemicals should be handled and stored in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and product safety data sheets. These can be obtained free from product manufacturers. Any staff who handle chemical cleaners should be given instructions on their safe use. These instructions should also include the first aid measures required in the event of accidental ingestion, inhalation or contact with skin or eyes. Contractors should be aware of the requirements of Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations. All chemicals on the premises should be stored in an identified cool, dry and well-ventilated place (room/cabinet) that is lockable; out of reach of the children/visitors/the public; in their original containers. Expiry dates should be routinely checked.

It is important when using bleach (hypochlorite), in particular, that COSHH regulation and manufacturers' instructions are adhered to. Gloves should always be used when handling bleach. Any contact with bleach to skin, eyes and mouth should be avoided and bleach should not be used on urine spillages, carpeted, metal or wooden surfaces. Bleach should always be used in a well-ventilated room/area.

It is important that the correct type of cleaning agent (see Table 1) in the correct concentration is used for the type of decontamination/cleaning required, as per manufacturers' instructions. Manufactured detergent/disinfectant product containers with spray nozzles should ideally be purchased for easy use. Commercial brands are advocated over 'home made' squeezable bottles or containers with spray nozzles which can readily become contaminated during the 'topping up' process.

If the latter are used they must be labelled with the safety instructions and hazard warnings that appear on the original container and fresh solutions used daily. These spray bottles should also be washed and dried daily. Always clean an area after removal of disinfectant with a freshly prepared solution of detergent and water.

#### 4. Protocol for cleaning

**Table 1: Recommended cleaning agents for the environment**

Recommended Cleaning Agents for the Environment	
Disinfectant spray	Used for cleaning surfaces between use
Detergent + hot water	Used for cleaning surfaces at end of sessions/day
Cream cleaner	Used for cleaning surfaces
Bleach (hypochlorite)	<b>For environmental cleaning</b> 1000 ppm (parts per million) available chlorine – a 1 in 100 dilution of household bleach. Not for use on metal surfaces.

**Table 2: Example of Protocol for Environmental Cleaning of Premises**

ITEM	FREQUENCY	METHOD
<b>General environmental surfaces</b>	Regularly (at least daily)	Surface area manually cleaned and dried between uses and/or at end of day (depending on surface) using general purpose detergent & hot water. Use disposable cloths/paper towels. Dry thoroughly.  Disinfectant/hypochlorite to be used if known infection risk and then rinsed.  <b>NB</b> disinfectants will not work on dirty surfaces.
<b>Hand wash basins, sinks, urinals and toilets. Frequent hand contact sites, such as toilet flush handles, taps and door knobs. Drinking water</b>	Regularly (at least daily and it is advisable for toilets to be cleaned twice daily)	As above re: detergent and hot water. Cream cleanser can be used for sinks and basins. Ensure both sides of toilet seats and handles are cleaned, as well as sink taps and door knobs. Attention should be made to the underside of hand dryers.  All surfaces of urinals are to be washed down using a detergent and hot water. Attention should be paid to the underside and surround of the urinal.

<p><b>outlets and facilities.</b></p>		<p>Disabled persons' grab rails should be cleaned with detergent and hot water.</p> <p>All surfaces to be cleaned with detergent and dry polished. The detergent needs to be safe for children to be able to drink from the fountain.</p> <p>Disinfectant/hypochlorite to be used if known infection risk and then rinsed.</p> <p><b>NB</b> disinfectants will not work on dirty surfaces</p> <p>Hand soap, preferably liquid soap, should be available for all hand washbasins.</p> <p>Drinking water facilities (including taps, fountains and coolers) must not be located in toilets areas.</p> <p>Drinking water facilities should be cleaned daily, including outdoor facilities.</p>
<p><b>Floors</b></p>	<p>Daily</p>	<p>Wash with hot water and detergent.</p> <p>Suction clean carpeted areas i.e. vacuum clean to remove dust. Steam clean regularly (e.g. every 2-3 months)</p> <p>Disinfectant is required only after contamination with blood spillages</p>
<p><b>Bins</b></p>	<p>Daily</p>	<p>Empty bins daily. Clean inside with hot water and detergent, if contaminated. Liners to be renewed daily.</p>
<p><b>Dining tables</b>  <b>This includes classroom tables if packed lunches are eaten in the classroom</b></p>	<p>Before and after use</p>	<p>Wipe with hot, soapy water and dry thoroughly both before and after use.</p>
<p><b>Dining chairs</b></p>	<p>After use</p>	<p>Wipe with hot, soapy water and dry thoroughly after use.</p>
<p><b>Walls/ceilings/  windows/  lights/mirrors/  air vents/  fittings/  pipework</b></p>	<p>Periodically</p>	<p>Routine cleaning not required. Clean periodically with hot water and general purpose detergent. Clean with bleach if contaminated with blood  Mirrors to be polished  Stainless steel should be kept bright.</p>

## Management Checklist – daily cleaning audit tool



Date:

Check list undertaken by:

	Yes	No
<b>General environment</b>		
Surfaces are clean		
Furniture is clean and in a good state of repair		
<b>Toilets (this includes washrooms)</b>		
Toilets are cleaned at least twice daily		
Toilet areas are clean and tidy		
Toilets are well ventilated, including adequate mechanical ventilation		
Toilets and washbasins are clean and free of extraneous items		
Toilets are in a good state of repair, including cubicle locks		
Toilets seats are securely fixed, are not cracked or broken		
Toilet paper (on holders) is available in each cubicle		
Soap is available for all washbasins and in sufficient supply		
Hand drying facilities are clean, working and in sufficient supply		
Bins are emptied at least daily and cleaned daily		
Sanitary bins are emptied on a regular basis by a registered company		
<b>Drinking Water Facilities</b>		
Fountains and taps are working, clean and not located in toilet areas		
<b>Floors</b>		
Carpets and rugs are vacuumed every day		
Carpets are washed after soiling and steam cleaned at least once a year.		
Hard floor surfaces are washed daily		
Mops, buckets and cleaning equipment are labelled or colour-coded to identify the area in which they are used and stored inverted		
<b>Chairs/dining tables/dining rooms</b>		
Dining tables are clean & regularly washed before and after meals		
Chairs are clean & regularly washed after meals		
Floors are swept and washed after meals.		
<b>Bins</b>		
Bins are emptied and cleaned daily		
<b>Walls/Ceiling/windows etc</b>		
The school environment is clean (including tiles, walls, windows)		
Cleaning products are stored in a locked cupboard away from children and are in date		
<b>Other:</b>		

