

Contents

1. Concepts of communicable diseases	4
1.1 What are communicable diseases?.....	4
1.2 Chain of infection: infective agent – source of infection – mode of transmission – host	4
1.3 Why are schools/centres* more vulnerable to outbreaks of communicable diseases? .	6
1.4 Principles of control of communicable diseases	6
1.5 What are statutory notifiable communicable diseases?	7
2. Communicable diseases in schools/centres	8
2.1 Signs and symptoms of some common communicable diseases	8
2.2 Subtle signs and symptoms of infection among children	8
2.3 Measuring body temperature	9
3. General guidelines on prevention of communicable diseases	14
3.1 Personal hygiene	14
3.2 Food hygiene.....	15
3.3 Environmental hygiene	17
3.4 Vaccination.....	20
4. Preventive measures to be adopted by schools/centres against communicable diseases	21
4.1 Standard precautions	21
4.2 Hand hygiene	21
4.3 Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)	21
4.4 Handling of contaminated articles	23
4.5 Additional preventive measures according to different modes of transmissions.....	24
5. Outbreak of communicable diseases	26
5.1 What does an outbreak of communicable disease mean?.....	26
5.2 What should be done if an outbreak is suspected?	26
5.3 What are statutory notifiable communicable diseases?	27

5.4	Is the notification requirement only applicable to confirmed cases of statutory notifiable communicable diseases?	27
5.5	General guidelines on the management of suspected outbreaks of communicable diseases	27
5.6	Environmental disinfection during outbreak of communicable diseases	28
5.7	Specific recommendations on management for some communicable diseases	28
6.	Roles of school/centre staff and related support	31
6.1	Responsibility of persons-in-charge/ the designated staff of schools/centres.....	31
6.2	Supporting telephone lines and websites	31
6.3	Notification of outbreaks of communicable diseases in schools/centres.....	32

7. Appendix

Appendix 1:	Statutory notifiable communicable diseases
Appendix 2:	Notification form for suspected infectious disease outbreaks in schools/centres
Appendix 3:	Flow chart of notification mechanism for communicable diseases in child care centres
Appendix 4:	Flow chart of notification mechanism for communicable diseases in schools/kindergartens/kindergartens-cum-child care centres
Appendix 5:	List of signs and symptoms of some communicable diseases
Appendix 6:	Guidelines for hand hygiene
Appendix 7:	Use mask properly
Appendix 8:	Five Keys to Food Safety
Appendix 9:	Procedures of preparing/using diluted bleach
Appendix 10:	Health advice on using drinking fountains
Appendix 11:	Childhood immunisation programme
Appendix 12:	Cleansing and disinfection of articles commonly used in schools/centres
Appendix 13:	Recommendation on sick leave duration for common childhood infections
Appendix 14:	Duties of staff in schools/centres
Appendix 15:	Information to be furnished to the Centre for Health Protection

Introduction

Effective prevention of communicable diseases in schools/centres* not only safeguard the health of children and staff by minimising the harm caused by the diseases, but also ensure a delightful learning environment to support the healthy development of children. It is incumbent on every school/centre staff to learn how to prevent communicable diseases.

We intend to provide some practical information on infection prevention measures in this set of guidelines for those working in schools/centres. Every school/centre staff has the responsibility to understand the guidelines and undertake preventive measures accordingly. The guidelines comprise seven major sections. While individual staff may refer to the relevant sections as necessary, person-in-charge of schools/centres and/or the designated staff should familiarise with the content to coordinate the infection control issues and prevent the spread of communicable diseases within their settings.

This set of guidelines is not meant to be exhaustive. For the most updated information, please visit the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) website at www.chp.gov.hk.

Lastly, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and the Education Bureau (EDB) for their generous and valuable advice on the preparation of the guidelines.

Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health
August 2011

*Schools/centres will be used to refer to schools, kindergartens, kindergartens-cum-child care centres and child care centres in this set of guidelines.