

SOP FOR MID DAY MEALS AND SCHOOL SANITATION

I. MID DAY MEALS

a) Entry of Cook-cum-Helpers (CCH) in schools:

- ALL CCH should be properly educated about the dangers about COVID and precaution measures to be taken for COVID by the Head Masters and Parents Committee.
- All CCH to also give a self-declaration with regard to the wellness of self and family members before starting their work in school.
- Thermal scanning of the CCH may be carried out at the entry of the school to check the temperature. The temperature may be recorded on daily basis.
- The CCH must sanitize/ wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds upon entering in the school following the prescribed methods
- Wearing face cover/mask will be mandatory during cleaning, washing cutting, cooking and serving of meals. If handmade face covers are used, it should be ensured they are washed daily.
- Nail polish should not be worn because they can become foreign bodies and may compromise on food safety.
- No watches, rings, jewelry and bangles should be worn during cooking, serving and distribution as there is a danger of contamination of product.
- Spitting and nose blowing should be strictly prohibited within the premises by CCH or any other person during school hours and especially while handling food.
- The CCHs should be asked to wear adequate and suitable clean protective apron, and head gear for covering hair and gloves. It must be ensured that the CCHs at work wear only clean protective apron and head covering.
- The CCHs should wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands has occurred; e.g. after coughing / sneezing, visiting toilet, using telephone. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 40 seconds.
- CCH must be cautious to avoid certain hand habits - e.g. scratching nose, running finger through hair, rubbing eyes, ears and mouth, scratching beard, scratching parts of bodies etc. - that are potentially hazardous when associated

with handling food products, and might lead to food contamination through the transfer of microbes. When unavoidable, hands should be effectively washed before resuming work after such actions. Soap must be available at all times at the wash basin/hand pump/tap water for frequent hand cleaning by CCH.

- Capacity building of CCH and teachers through digital mode can be used to update them on hygiene, safety and physical/social distancing in schools.

b) Cleaning Kitchen cum Store or the place of cooking:

- The kitchen cum store/place of cooking must be deep cleaned and sanitized before 24 hours of actual cooking after reopening of schools.
- The kitchen should be cleaned before the actual preparation and cooking of MDM on daily basis.
- The floors of kitchen and the cooking top should be cleaned every day before and after the food is cooked.
- Special attention should be paid to the cleaning of difficult to reach areas including cooking areas and at the junction of floors and walls.
- It is important that surfaces in direct contact with food must be both clean and dry before use.
- Cracks, rough surfaces, open joints etc. must be repaired as soon as possible.
- There should be efficient drainage system with adequate provisions for disposal of refuse. Potential sources of contamination like rubbish, waste water, toilet facilities, open drains and stray animals should be kept away from kitchen.
- Ventilation systems natural and /or mechanical including windows, exhaust fans etc. wherever required, should be designed and constructed so that air does not flow from contaminated areas to clean areas.

c) Cleaning of utensils for cooking and serving of MDM:

- Cleaning accessories such as cloths, mops and brushes carry a very high risk of cross contamination. They must therefore be thoroughly washed, cleaned and dried after use.
- Cleaning accessories used in the cooking area should not be used in other parts of the kitchen.
- Sun drying of the cleaning accessories in a clean and tidy place should be done.
- Tables, benches and boxes, cupboards, glass cases, etc. should be clean and tidy. Cooking utensils and crockery should be clean and in good condition. These should not be broken/ chipped.
- All kitchen utensils and devices should be washed and sun-dried before using. Preferably use hot water (above 60 degrees Celsius) for washing and sanitizing.

- Clean cloths should be used for wiping utensils, wiping hands and for clearing surfaces. Cloth used for floor cleaning should not be used for cleaning surfaces of tables and working areas and for wiping utensils.
- Leftovers or crumbs from plates or utensils should be removed into dustbin by using cloth or wiper. Every utensil or container containing any food or ingredient of food should at all times be either provided with a properly fitted cover/lid or with a clean gauze net or other material of texture sufficiently fine to protect the food completely from dust, dirt and flies and other insects.

d) Checking of old stock of food grains, oil & fat and condiments before use:

- Use of left out food grains, oil & fat and condiments should only be done after careful inspection of quality and shelf life if any, as they are left in schools for the last few months due to closure of schools.
- Use of ingredients should be subject to FEFO (First Expire First Out) or FIFO (First in, First Out) stock rotation system as applicable.

e) Washing & cutting of vegetables and cleaning of food-grains and pulses etc.

- Vegetable, fruits and perishable food commodities should be procured fresh and storing for long time/duration should be avoided.
- The vegetables once procured should be thoroughly cleaned with water before use. Vegetables may be washed thoroughly with a combination of salt and haldi (turmeric) / 50 ppm chlorine (or equivalent solution) and clean potable water to remove the dirt and other contaminants.
- The food grains, pulses need to be washed properly before using.
- Outer sealed package /cover of condiments, pulses etc., should be thoroughly washed with soap solution and sun dried before transferring the material to the jars followed by washing of hands with soap for a minimum of 40 seconds.
- No raw material or ingredient should be accepted if it is known to contain vermin, undesirable micro-organisms, pesticides, veterinary drugs or toxic items, decomposed or extraneous substances, in other words, material which cannot be reduced to an acceptable level by normal sorting and/or processing.

f) Cooking of the Mid-Day Meals:

- Wherever possible, kitchen activities may be performed maintaining appropriate distance between activities e.g., there should be defined separations for raw material procurement area, cutting of vegetables and cleaning of grains/ pulses, cooking area, cooked food area.
- The cooks cum helpers may work with their faces in the opposite direction to maintain physical distance.
- CCHs should be asked to avoid unnecessary talk during the cooking processes and while in serving of meals.

g) Serving of Mid-Day Meals:

- The serving and dining area should also be well sanitized before and after food consumption.
- The serving of MDM to the school children may be done in a spread-out manner in batches to follow physical/ social distancing norms. The distance between each student should be of minimum 5 feet
- Students should be asked to sit only in single line.
- Teachers should be asked to handle a section of students during meals time and interfere whenever the students try to deviate from social distancing norms
- Staggering of the mid day meal distribution is to be followed to minimize physical contacts and maximize social distancing.
- Students in small groups may be allowed to sit in their classes with appropriate social distance.
- However, in case the meals are served in school verandah/dining halls, clear markings should guide the children to the seating arrangement.
- Students may be encouraged to bring their own plates and tumblers and interchanging of the plates and tumblers and food items should be avoided.
- If students want to take away their mid day meal to home in their own vessels , that may be allowed
- The CCH, while distributing the food should wear personal protective equipment such as hand gloves, face mask, head cover and shall maintain appropriate distance from the schoolchildren.
- The school children should also wear face cloth/ masks while the food is being served and at all times in the dining area except while eating/drinking.
- Students should be advised by the teachers not to speak while taking foods as a precautionary method
- Temperature of the mid-day meal when served should be maintained at least at 65°C. Therefore, food should be served to children immediately after being cooked.

h) Hand washing by School Children before and after having MDM:

- Hand wash with soap for a minimum of 40 seconds before and after eating MDM should be vigorously promoted.
- The schools should define an area for hand washing where children can wash their hands while maintaining physical/social distancing. For this purpose, empty plastic bottles can be filled with liquid soap and diluted with water.
- Children should wash their hands for minimum 40seconds.
- The teachers need to monitor the process of hand washing carefully.
- Wherever proper hand washing facilities are either not available or inadequate for all children, buckets and mugs can be used to supplement the available facilities.

i) Drinking Water supply:

- Continuous supply of potable water should be ensured in the school premises. In case of intermittent water supply, adequate storage arrangement for water used in food or washing should be made. Water used for cleaning, washing and preparing food should be potable in nature.
- Water storage tanks, if available, should be thoroughly cleaned before the reopening of schools and further periodical cleaning should be done.
- Non potable water pipes should be clearly distinguished from those in use for potable water.

j) Management of waste:

- Adequate waste disposal systems and facilities should be provided and they should be designed and constructed in such manner that the risk of contaminating food or the potable water supply is eliminated.
- Waste storage/tanks should be located in such manner that it does not contaminate the food process, storage areas, the environment inside and outside the kitchen and waste should be kept in covered containers and removed at regular intervals.
- Periodic disposal of the refuse/waste may be made compulsory.

k) Involving stakeholders:

- Under the prevailing circumstances, active positive involvement of parents, community, SMC members and teachers is of crucial importance in providing nutritious meals to children in a safe and hygienic manner.

II.SANITATION

a) Entry of Sanitary Workers:

- All Sanitary Workers should be properly educated about the dangers about COVID and precaution measures to be taken for COVID by the Head Masters.
- All Sanitary Workers to also give a self-declaration with regard to the wellness of self and family members before starting their work in school.
- Thermal scanning of the Sanitary Workers may be carried out at the entry of the school to check the temperature. The temperature may be recorded on daily basis.
- The Sanitary Workers must sanitize/ wash their hands for minimum 40 seconds upon entering in the school following the prescribed methods
- Wearing face cover/mask will be mandatory Sanitary Workers while in the schools. If handmade face covers are used, it should be ensured they are washed daily.

- Spitting and nose blowing should be strictly prohibited within the premises by Sanitary Workers during school hours.
- The Sanitary Workers should be asked to wear suitable clean protective gear
- The Sanitary Workers should wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands has occurred; e.g. after coughing / sneezing, visiting toilet, using telephone. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 40 seconds.
- Sanitary Workers must be educated and to be cautious to avoid certain hand habits - e.g. scratching nose, running finger through hair, rubbing eyes, ears and mouth, scratching beard, scratching parts of bodies etc.-. When unavoidable, hands should be effectively washed. Soap must be available at all times at the wash basin/ hand pump/tap water for frequent hand cleaning.

b) Cleaning toilets, urinals, wash basins and change rooms:

- The toilets, urinals, wash basins and change rooms must be cleaned and sanitized before reopening of schools and on daily basis.
- The toilets, urinals, wash basins and change rooms should be cleaned frequently, after every interval given for a batch of students in the proposed staggered intervals. This will ensure the spread of virus through these places.
- Care must be taken to clean the places and points which are prone for frequent touching like door handles, latches, buckets, mugs, water taps, faucet handles, health faucets, flush tank levers, etc
- Special attention should be paid to the cleaning of difficult to reach areas including the junction of floors and walls, cracks, rough surfaces, open joints etc..
- There should be efficient drainage system with adequate provisions for disposal of waste. Potential sources of contamination like rubbish, waste water, open drains and stray animals should be kept away.
- Ventilation systems with natural and /or mechanical including windows, exhaust fans etc. should be facilitated
- Teachers should be made in charge for each of the staggered intervals to monitor the students and to intervene, if the students try to flout the social distancing norms
- In charge teachers and head masters shall check the toilets frequently and personally to check whether the sanitary workers clean and maintain the toilets and take precautionary measures as above.

c) Hand washing by School Children after using toilets:

- Students should be allowed to use toilets in staggered manner.

- Students should be asked to follow Queue with a distance of 3 to 5 feet between each student, while going to toilets.
- Hand wash with soap for a minimum of 40 seconds after utilizing the toilets should be vigorously promoted.
- The schools should arrange for hand washing where children can wash their hands while maintaining physical/social distancing. For this purpose, empty plastic bottles can be filled with liquid soap and diluted with water.
- Children should be asked to wash their hands for minimum 40seconds.
- The teachers need to monitor the process of hand washing carefully.
- Wherever proper hand washing facilities are either not available or inadequate for all children, buckets and mugs can be used to supplement the available facilities.

d) Involving Stakeholders:

Under the prevailing circumstances, active involvement of parents, community, parents committee members and teachers is of crucial importance in maintaining the sanitation in schools and taking precautionary methods as the toilets, urinals and wash basins are the places frequented by people/ students

e) Cleaning materials:

Cleaning Materials may be purchased from the available funds under media and community mobilization grants, youth and eco- club grants and school composite grants available in schools but not more than 10% of grants duly maintaining the procedure and proper records.