
Content
with WORDS

GUIDE



SANITISING PRESCHOOLS

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SANITISING

The reason why a content writer like myself is writing about the sanitisation of schools, is because part of my work is to support schools and pre-schools with their writing requirements. Post quarantine, there will be new policies and procedures developing, hence the chosen topic.

A question arose in my mind as to what the sanitary provision will be, now that schools may be dealing with pandemic-linked illnesses. The usual cleaning and disinfecting will no longer be sufficient. Staff responsibilities will be changing and educators, who have already been in the frontline in a number of ways, will become gatekeepers. Ensuring that children within their environment are not only safe, but protected from the potential spread of infection.

It's important to note that I am writing as a researcher, not a medical professional. The aim of this post is for sharing information and raising awareness. The source of this data is from the Minnesota Department of Health based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA.

Patricia Mezu LL.M, M.Ed., AMI Montessori Diploma

USEFUL REMINDERS

- ★ One of the first things that is important, is that cleaning staff should be given very clear and very specific guidance. Any good leader is advised to conduct training on the topic and ensure that *all staff* attend the session.
- ★ Further details on page 5 below and all other references are from the Minnesota document.





1. "All cleaning staff should be trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard 29 CFR 1910.1200.
2. Cleaning staff should wear uniforms (or designated work clothes) and disposable gloves when cleaning and handling trash.
3. Cleaning staff should change clothes at the end of a shift. It may be helpful for them to keep a change of clothes at work.
4. Clothing worn while cleaning should be placed in a plastic bag until it can be laundered. Laundering should be done as soon as possible and done safely at home.
5. Cleaning staff should thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after gloves are removed.
6. Staff who are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting should be trained to use disinfectants safely and effectively"

WHAT CLEANING PRODUCTS SHOULD I USE?

1. Ultimately, the decision with respect to the most suitable cleaning products to use will lie with the nursery owners / head teachers / leaders of the schools and preschools.
2. When I was leading a kindergarten with over 450 children, it was conveniently set up with a full team of very supportive cleaners, who were on hand for the full day (luxury!). At that time, though, we were conscious of the need not to use cleaning agents that were toxic, because of the ages of the children.
3. Although the same concerns exist at this time (May 2020), there are now additional considerations. Therefore you will, necessarily, make your own decisions within your own setting.

Further Guidance below on page 7.



1. Use soap and water or another detergent to clean dirty items. Then, use a disinfectant.
2. Use an EPA-registered household disinfectant and follow the manufacturer's instructions to ensure safe and effective use of *the product*. The 'EPA' is the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
3. Many products recommend:
 - (i) Keeping the surface wet for a period of time (see the product label).
 - (ii) Wearing gloves and ensuring good ventilation during use of the product.
 - (iii) Use diluted household bleach solutions, if appropriate for the surface.
 - (iv) Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date.
 - (v) Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
 - (vi) Use eye protection and/or have immediate access to an eye-wash station.
 - (vii) Leave solution on a surface for at least 1 minute.



OPTIONAL CLEANING SOLUTION

Guidance For Making a Bleach Solution*

To make a bleach solution, mix:

1. 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach per gallon of water OR
2. 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water
3. Make only enough diluted bleach solution that can be used in 24 hours. After that, the solution may not be effective.

Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol can also be used for cleaning."

There are a plethora of other cleaning agents, this is simply used as a sample, from Minnesota State.

**In the event that you choose to use this solution, or any other solutions referred to in this Guide, please note that it is done at your own risk.*

WHAT DO I CLEAN EXACTLY?

In my humble opinion, clean everything! With your chosen cleaning agent(s) clean inside and outside the preschool premises, on a strict rota, with designated responsibilities split across every member of staff.

I imagine that the first few weeks will be tense for everyone, but other preschools and schools have gone before you, thankfully. Contacting the pioneers in this area, is highly recommended.

If we go to the Minnesota guidance, they have some obvious and general ideas for what should be cleaned.

Please refer to page 10 below.



Clean and disinfect at least daily (or more, depending on use patterns) frequently touched surfaces and objects such as:

- Door knobs and handles
- Stair rails (if any)
- Classroom desks and chairs
- Lunchroom tables and chairs
- Countertops
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Handles on equipment (e.g., athletic equipment)
- Push-buttons on any vending machines and elevators
- Shared toys and other resources; (*we recommend not sharing at this stage*)
- Shared remote controls
- Shared telephones
- Shared desktops
- Shared computer keyboards and mice (that may prove to be tricky)
- Bus seats and handrails
- *Toilets, floors, windows, outdoor play equipment, dustbins etc*

In the Minnesota guide, they recommend that soft surfaces such as carpets, rugs, and drapes/curtain.blinds be cleaned using soap and water or a cleaner appropriate for the material.

The list is potentially endless, but for the purpose of this *Guide* the examples above should suffice.



Part of the mission of *Content With Words* is to support leaders within early childhood education. We understand that you wish to perform successfully not just for yourself, but also for anyone in your professional community that relies on you.

As you get ready to reopen successfully, we offer support in terms of preparing documents. In addition, our specialist educator, Ms Mezu, provides coaching sessions to allow for effective planning and preparation as you lead, which is key for high performance.

You are welcome to email us, using the contact details below, for a one-to-one coaching session.

Further details will be provided on receipt of your email. Please follow us on Instagram!

Authe Parry | Administrator

E-mail: contentwwords@zohomail.com

Dubai, UAE | Instagram - [@contentwith_words](https://www.instagram.com/contentwith_words)

Email

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