



ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL – Abu Dhabi

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2024- 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

St. Joseph's school provides a healthy and safe environment for our staff, students, and visitors. The Principal and governing board share ultimate accountability for the health and safety of the school. Additionally, they share responsibility which extends to the provision of healthcare services to students. This policy sets out the basic requirements for school health and safety.

2. PURPOSE

SJS meets the health and safety requirements set out by ADEK, Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC)/ Department of Health (DoH) and all other relevant government and regulatory entities.

SJS safeguards the health and safety of the students, staff, contractors, sub-contractors, visitors, and other relevant stakeholders by putting in place clear and compliant policies and procedures for all on-site and school-related activities.

SJS ensure all staff and students receive adequate training, information, and supervision in relation to the hazards present within the school environment and within the specific area of work.

SJS promotes a culture of responsibility and accountability towards protecting everyone from dangers (e.g., fire accidents, laboratory accidents, etc.) and spread awareness through effective communication and consultation with employees and staff.

SJS provides access to high-quality health services to all students through school-based clinics, without any additional cost to students, in compliance with ADEK and DoH regulations and requirements.

3. DEFINITIONS

A. Additional Learning Needs

Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented).

For example, a student with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.

B. Anaphylaxis

A sudden and severe allergic reaction and medical emergency that occurs within minutes of exposure and requires immediate medical attention (MedlinePlus, n.d.)

C. Basic Health Screening

Annual health screening of students in all grades, conducted by the school nurse, including review of medical history, measurement of body mass index, and vision testing (Al Hajeri, 2020).

D. Governing Board

The governing body of SJS, appointed by the school owners, and including qualified representatives and parents. The governing board is the senior authority of the school, with responsibility for the overall governance of its activities.

E. Comprehensive Health Screening

An in-depth health screening for students in Grades 1, 5, and 9. The screening is conducted by visiting health professionals and includes a medical check-up by a licensed medical doctor, a hearing screening, and an oral health examination for students in Grades 1, 5 and 9, as well as a blood count test by a phlebotomist for all students in Grade 1 and for female students in Grade 9 (Al Hajeri, 2020).

F. Emergency Plan

Systematic instructions and procedures that clearly detail what needs to be done, how, when, and by whom before and after the time an anticipated emergency event occurs.

G. Health and Safety

Requirement for school to ensure that students, staff, contractors, sub- contractors, relevant stakeholders, and visitors are kept safe and healthy in school and school-related activities.

H. Individual Healthcare Plan

A written description of a student's medical requirements, health status, and healthcare plan, developed by the school nurse.

I. Nurse

A full-time (internal/contracted) employee of the school, with a valid Department of Health (DoH) healthcare professional license, whose role is to oversee the school medical clinic and the healthcare of students in the school.

J. Parent

The person legally liable for a child or entrusted with their care, defined as the custodian of the child as per the Federal Decree Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights.

K. Visitor

For the purpose of this policy, a visitor is any temporary visitor (e.g., a parent or a relative of a student, prospective student and their parents, inspectors, contractors, etc.) entering the school premises.

An invited visitor is anyone visiting the school on a temporary basis to interact with students (i.e., a speaker, career fair representative, etc.) and includes volunteers, who are engaged by an educational institution on a non-remunerated basis to interact with students (e.g., parent chaperones, etc.).

L. Wellness

The quality or state of being in good physical and mental health.

4. Policy

School Health and Safety Policy

Policy Requirements: SJS shall develop and implement a Health and Safety Policy that is aligned with ADEK’s regulations and requirements. SJS also ensures the Health and Safety Policy is available on school website in both Arabic and English language.

This policy shall set out the following:

- The responsibility of the Principal and the governing board for the health and safety of school operations and any school-related activities.
- The roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community, including students, staff, health and safety officers, contractors, sub- contractors, relevant stakeholders, and visitors, in relation to health and safety.
- The procedures for ensuring the health and safety of school and extracurricular activities, including those that take place off-campus.
- The resources and processes in place to ensure a healthy, safe, and secure school environment including promoting a culture of responsibility and accountability.
- The provisions for educating students and training staff on health and safety.
- The procedures for preventing injury and ill health.
- The provision for risk assessments, maintenance of the risk register, implementation of control measures, and monitoring and review of systems.

5. Regulatory Compliance:

SJS shall ensure that the Health and Safety Policy complies with the policies, procedures, regulations, frameworks, compliance checklists, circulars, and special instructions and their amendments issued and supervised by ADEK, ADPHC/DoH, Abu Dhabi Civil Defence Authority (CDA), or any other relevant authority in the UAE regarding school activities, operations, buildings, facilities, and equipment used. This includes:

- Submission of periodic reports, audits, and action plans.
- Submission of relevant forms, including incident reports and management systems.
- Compliance with given timeframes.
- Displaying the policy in prominent locations throughout the school and ensuring it is readily accessible to all stakeholders (including staff, students, visitors, etc.).

SJS meets all requirements for obtaining necessary licenses and permits and maintain valid contracts to conduct operations from ADEK, ADPHC/DoH, Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), Integrated Transport Centre (ITC), Monitoring & Control Center (MCC), CDA, the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA), and/or any other relevant government or regulatory entity regulating areas related to health and safety.

SJS maintains inspection records, observations, and notifications made by relevant authorities, in line with the ADEK Records Policy and shall meet all applicable compliance requirements.

SJS ensures that every digital incident is recorded, documented, and signed by the Principal, and stored for auditing purposes, in line with the ADEK Digital Policy and the ADEK Records Policy.

SJS adheres to appropriate school transportation and traffic management, in line with the ADEK Transportation Policy, at a minimum:

- SJS develop, maintain, and update a traffic management plan, detailing internal/ external traffic flow to ensure the safety of the school community, specifically during peak hours (drop-off/ pick-up timings).
- SJS deploys a trained task force, composed of sufficient numbers of current staff that are assigned the task of directing traffic flow during pick-up and drop-off timings to effectively manage the daily traffic operations on or near the school grounds.
- SJS Maintains school bus inspection records and acquire relevant licenses for school buses, bus drivers, and bus supervisors.
- SJS develops and maintain an updated transport emergency and communication plan which shall be communicated appropriately to all stakeholders.

Mandatory Recruitment of a Health and Safety Officer and Resources: SJS has appointed a Health and Safety Officer to effectively implement, oversee, manage, and monitor Health and Safety Policy.

SJS Health and Safety Officer is a dedicated full-time in school.

A deputy is assigned by the members of the Health and Safety Committee to cover shorter leave periods.

SJS Health and Safety Officer is required to remain on the school premises at all times during the school day.

SJS Health and Safety Officer is adequately trained to implement the policy.

6. Health and Safety Officer Responsibilities:

SJS Health and Safety Officer adheres to the following responsibilities, in line with OSHAD-SF risk classification, requirements, and updates:

- Develop, implement, and maintain an occupational safety and health management system including ADPHC/DoH fulfillment of periodic submissions, together with other relevant authorities' requirements, based on school risk classification.
- Establish a clearly defined leadership structure of health and safety related matters within the school including delegation mechanisms and linkages with external stakeholder requirements.
- Ensure relevant staff training including appropriate handover and induction training for new employees and contractors.
- Carry out hazard identification, risk assessment, and control measures to ensure risk mitigation in crucial areas (for example, school bus services, parents pick-up and drop-off, traffic flow management, etc.).
- Develop, maintain, and periodically update both an Emergency Response Plan and an Occupational Injuries Register.
- Establish a School Health and Safety Committee to handle all related matters.
- Maintain records of incident investigations as part of an incident register and report (via ADEK and ADPHC electronic OSH reporting system) on a timely basis.
- Liaise with the school's Safeguarding Committee or Lead, in line with the ADEK Safeguarding Policy, to maintain sufficient supervision and monitoring of students, with full visual coverage, to safeguard against and tend to incidents.
- For detailed requirements as per the school's risk classification, refer to the OSHAD-SF and its latest system framework updates.

SJS sets aside adequate resources (e.g., financial resources, necessary infrastructure, etc.) to appropriately implement this policy.

7. Education and Training:

Student Education:

SJS educate all students on health and safety, including teaching road safety, risk management, fire safety, using personal protection equipment, emergency and evacuation procedures, basic first aid training, and personal physical awareness.

Staff Training:

SJS ensures that all staff receive training to equip them with the foundational knowledge (including reporting hazardous and health and safety- related incidents) and practical skills to safeguard student health and safety, in line with the ADPHC/DoH and OSHAD-SF guidelines.

This training includes, but is not limited to:

Procedures for safeguarding students in the case of an emergency on campus or during a school-related activity (e.g., in the event of a fire or security incident), in line with the ADEK Safeguarding Policy.

SJS conducts a risk assessment to determine the type and level of health and safety-related training (e.g., first aid, fire safety) that staff would require, based on the risk assessment and as per Abu Dhabi and UAE regulations, where applicable.

8. Health and Safety Requirements:

General Health and Safety Measures: SJS ensure that:

Procedures relating to the secure storage and safe use of potentially dangerous substances and equipment (e.g., laboratory chemicals and equipment, biological materials, cleaning substances, workshop tools, and maintenance equipment) are meticulously followed, as per CDA, ADPHC/DoH, ADAFSA, and/or any other relevant government or regulatory entity.

All equipment used by SJS is regularly tested and maintained in safe working condition, in line with regulatory requirements and manufacturer recommendations.

Regular safety assessments are carried out (e.g., fire safety systems/ equipment, emergency evacuation plans, emergency lighting, emergency response equipment), as required by ADEK, ADPHC/DoH, and all other relevant authorities.

SJS site is equipped with fully functioning and effective security and systems to prevent and detect crime, vandalism, unlawful behavior, and inappropriate conduct; and surveillance provisions are in place in line with the ADEK Digital Policy and the Manual of Surveillance Devices (MCC, 2022).

SJS is equipped with fully functioning and effective fixed and portable protection systems for fire prevention and detection (see Section 3.4 Fire Protection).

Weight Limits of School Bags: SJS adheres to maximum weight limits for students' school bags and ensure that this policy is communicated to parents.

A student's school bag shall not exceed 5-10% of a child's body weight when packed (considering individual factors such as the student's overall health, physical strength, and any

existing health conditions) to avoid adverse effects on their spine or body as per Table 1. Maximum Backpack Weight Limit per Grade.

Grade	Max. Backpack Weight*
Gr 1	Not exceed 2 kgs
Gr 2	
Gr 3	Not exceed 3 to 4.5 kgs
Gr 4	
Gr 5	
Gr 6	Not exceed 6 to 8 kgs
Gr 7	
Gr 8	
Gr 9	Not exceed 10 kgs
Gr 10	
Gr 11	

*Maximum school bag weight was calculated based on the American Chiropractic Association (ACA) recommendations.

Smoke-free campus: SJS maintains a smoke-free environment, within the school premises or in the perimeter outside the school premises as defined by ADPHC/DoH, by enforcing a strict no-smoking policy (e-cigarettes/ vaping included) for all students, staff, and visitors.

Fire Protection: SJS is equipped premises with integrated and effective systems, both fixed and mobile, for fire protection and detection, including fire detection systems, fire suppression systems, and fire sprinkler systems.

SJS systems are fully compliant with the specifications set out by the CDA and obtain the necessary valid licenses for such systems.

SJS maintains inspection records and notifications relating to fire protection and detection systems, in line with the ADEK Records Policy.

SJS has installed the HASSANTUK system (if directed by the CDA and/or relevant authorities) to ensure timely response to fire and life safety emergencies.

Emergency Planning:

SJS prioritizes student safety in an emergency.

The Principal is responsible for drawing up a School Emergency Plan setting out the circumstances defining an emergency and the resulting safeguarding and evacuation procedures to be followed.

SJS conducts emergency drills Termly (3 times annually) (as per civil defense requirements) to maintain preparedness for emergencies and identify potential weaknesses or gaps in the execution. SJS documents and maintains a log of observations from such emergency drills.

SJS has a notification system in place to quickly communicate information to parents (e.g., text message system, public address system) in the event of an emergency.

Health and Safety-Related Mental Health Support: SJS provides students and staff with mental health support following any serious whole-school emergency situations, in line with the ADEK Student Mental Health Policy and the ADEK Staff Wellbeing Policy.

9. Health System

Provision of Medical Services:

School Clinics: SJS establishes and manage a clinic on the school's premises to provide healthcare services to students, in line with DoH requirements and standards. School has obtained and maintain a DoH healthcare facility license in order to operate clinic.

School Nurse: SJS has employed a full-time school nurse with a valid DoH healthcare professional license, in line with DoH requirements and the ADEK Coeducation Policy. SJS ensures that the school nurse meets the professional qualifications requirements and performance criteria set by DoH, and fully understands and strictly adheres to all DoH standards regulating the administering of medication in school.

Administering of Medication: SJS ensures that medication is administered including the handling of accidents and medical emergencies (such as anaphylaxis and seizures), as per DoH requirements and a completed parental consent form that is renewed each term or whenever there is a change in student's medication.

Inclusion: SJS provides individual healthcare plans for students with additional learning needs, where appropriate, in line with the ADEK Inclusion Policy.

Health Screening: SJS ensures that regular basic and comprehensive health screening is conducted in compliance with the DoH requirements.

Immunization: SJS allows access to DoH-appointed health providers and facilitate their task of conducting the school-based annually immunization program for students as per DoH's guidelines.

Student Records: SJS ensures that all medical care provided at school, including any medication administered, health screening, immunization, and the outcomes of any medical interventions, are recorded in the student's medical record while maintaining confidentiality in line with the ADEK Records Policy.

Prestina Rocha
Principal
St. Joseph's School



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Next review Date: 30 March 2025

