

Safa Vision

At SCS we aim to enable our learners to have success for today and to be prepared for tomorrow.

نحن في مدرسة الصفا كوميونيتي نسعى الى تأهيل طلابنا للنجاح اليوم وتحضيرهم لمواجهة المستقبل

COVID19 Prevention and Control Policy 2021 - 2022

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Safa Community School

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1.0 Introduction

In order to maximize the educational and health benefit for students, teachers, staff, and the wider community, and help prevent a new outbreak of COVID-19 in the community, SCS will take precautions that are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 within the school settings.

SCS will continue to be welcoming, respectful, inclusive, and supportive environments to all. Measures taken by schools can prevent the entry and spread of COVID-19 by students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus while minimizing disruption and protecting students and staff from discrimination.

1.1 What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'

The COVID-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.

1.2 How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing). Individuals can also be infected from and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and touching their face (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth). The COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but simple disinfectants can kill it.

1.3 Who is most at risk?

We are learning more about how COVID-19 affects people every day. Older people, and people with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, appear to be more at risk of developing severe symptoms. As this is a new virus, we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus, but so far there are relatively few cases of COVID-19 reported among children. This is a new virus and we need to learn more about how it affects children. The virus can be fatal in rare cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

1.4 How can the spread of COVID-19 be slowed down or prevented?

As with other respiratory infections like the flu or the common cold, public health measures are critical to slow the spread of illnesses. Public health measures are everyday preventive actions that include:

- ✓ staying home when sick;

- ✓ covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of used tissue immediately;
 - ✓ washing hands often with soap and water; and
 - ✓ cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- As we learn more about COVID-19 public health officials may recommend additional actions.

2.0 Responsibilities

- The school has appointed an appropriate Health and Safety Leader who is capably supported by a dedicated Emergency Response Team to oversee all policies, systems and procedures to ensure a safe return to reopening the school.
- All staff and community members will be trained on all policy requirements prior to the reopening of the school.
- The school's belief is that we all have a social responsibility to combat COVID19 and ensure a safe return to the school site.
- The school has appointed dedicated Health and Safety coordinators on individual floors for all 4 buildings across the school site.

3.0 Basic principles

Following basic principles can help keep students, teachers, and staff safe at school and help stop the spread of this disease. Recommendations for healthy schools are:

- Sick students, teachers and other staff should not come to school
- SCS should enforce regular hand washing with safe water and soap, alcohol rub/hand sanitizer or chlorine solution and, at a minimum, daily disinfection and cleaning of school surfaces
- SCS should provide water, sanitation and waste management facilities and follow environmental cleaning and decontamination procedures
- SCS should promote social distancing (a term applied to certain actions that are taken to slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease, including limiting large groups of people coming together)

3.1 Know the latest facts

Understand basic information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as UNICEF, WHO and national health ministry advisories. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online.

3.2 Ensure safe school operations

The school will ensure the following:

- To update and develop school emergency and contingency plans aligning to all government guidelines and protocols.
- Postpone all events/meetings/sports and swimming that usually takes place on school premises, based on risk.
- Reinforce frequent handwashing and sanitation and procure needed supplies.
- Prepare and maintain handwashing stations with soap and water, and place alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizers) in each classroom, at entrances and exits, and near lunchrooms and toilets.
- Regularly clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities particularly surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc.)

The school will implement social distancing practices that include:

- Staggering the beginning and end of the school day
- Cancelling assemblies, sports games and other events that create crowded conditions
- When possible, create space for children's desks to be at least 1 metres apart in the classrooms and 2 metres in the shared areas.
- Teach and model creating space and avoiding unnecessary touching

3.3 What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. These symptoms are similar to the flu (influenza) or the common cold, which are a lot more common than COVID-19. This is why testing is required to confirm if someone has COVID-19.

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization.

Most common symptoms:

Fever
Dry cough
Tiredness

Less common symptoms:

Aches and pains
Sore throat
Diarrhoea
Conjunctivitis
Headache
Loss of taste or smell
A rash on the skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes

Serious symptoms:

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Chest pain or pressure

Loss of speech or movement

4.0 Protocol

- In cases of emergencies, such as having unstable cases amongst staff, students or visitors, the school should immediately contact 999 or 997.
- A health and safety designated staff will be identified and assigned to handle any emergency situation, follow up and monitor the implementation of health and safety procedures, and conduct all necessary training for students and staff.
- The School doctor will be responsible for the designated isolation room within the school premises.
- All relevant staff, including school nursing staff, should have full awareness of the needs of Students of Determination. These include any communication, sensory, physical, emotional or behavioural needs. These needs should also be clearly communicated through a Student Profile to health professionals involved in an emergency.

4.1 Screening and management of sick students, teachers and other school staff.

- If a child/staff begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at the classroom, he/she will immediately visit the isolation room.
- Instantly child/staff will be kept in the isolation room.
- The parent/ guardian of the child will be notified immediately and the child/staff will be referred to the hospital to take the necessary action.
- SCS will follow DHA emergency guidelines by the school's qualified nurse/ doctor while wearing adequate personal protection equipment. In addition, the child and parents/guardian will wear full PPE when transported to the hospital.
- Any member of the school community feeling unwell and/or exhibiting any COVID-19 associated symptoms should stay home. They will not be permitted to enter the school's premises or will be isolated according to the emergency management protocol if their illness should be evident during the day.
- Medical clearance is required to return to school premises following a period of physical absence.

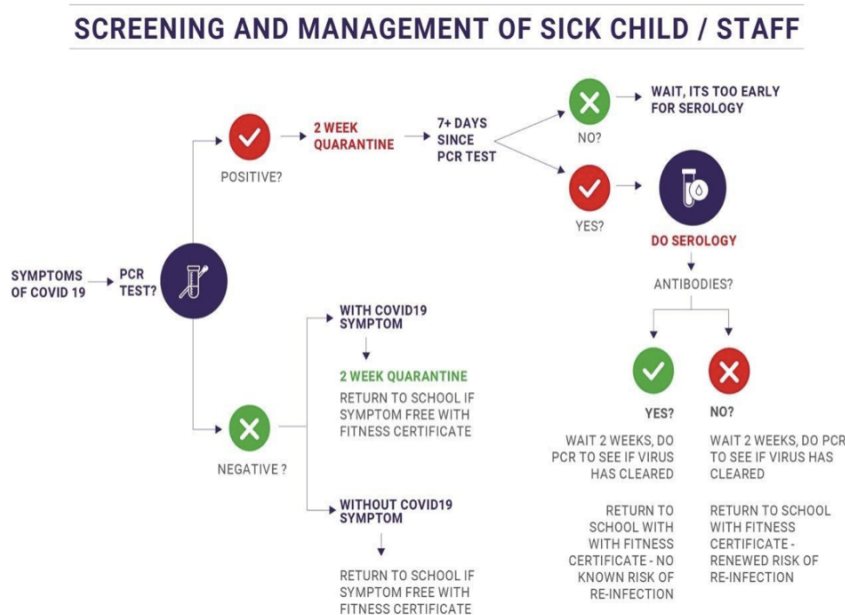
4.2 The child/staff should not return to school until the PCR test result is obtained.

Outcome and actions of Results:

- a) If the result is negative and there is a clinical assessment of a probable COVID-19 case, the patient should complete a 7 day quarantine and can return to school symptom-free with a Doctor's fitness certificate.

- b) If the result is negative and there is no clinical assessment for a probable case, the child can resume schooling so long as they are symptom-free and there is a Doctor's fitness certificate to attend the school.
- c) If the result is positive, the traced contacts of the patient, including teachers along with the classmates of a student, or colleagues are all considered close contacts (Anyone who spent more than 15 minutes in a proximity of 2 meters with the positive case, from the day of symptoms onset, or the day of the positive PCR test).
- d) They should all commence the 10 day quarantine counted PCR from the day of the positive test, or from the day of the onset of symptoms if ascertained by the clinician.
- e) If staff or students were confirmed positive according to a COVID-19 PCR test by an accredited facility, they are not to return unless they are granted a clearance certificate by DHA stating that they are discharged from isolation.

4.3 Screening and Management Flow Chart



5.0 Promote information sharing

The school will be open and transparent with it's school community members by completing the following:

- Coordinate and follow guidelines from the national health and education authorities.

- Share known information with staff, caregivers and students, providing updated information on the disease situation, including prevention and control efforts at school.
- Reinforce that caregivers should alert the school and health care authorities if someone in their home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and keep their child at home.
- Utilize parent-teacher committees and other mechanisms to promote information sharing.
- Also be sure to address children's questions and concerns, including through the development of child-friendly materials such as posters which can be placed on notice boards, in restrooms, and other central locations.

5.1 Adapt school policies where appropriate

The school will modify and adapt all school policies which are impacted by COVID19.

We will:

- Develop flexible attendance and sick leave policies that encourage students and staff to stay home when sick or when caring for sick family members.
- Discourage the use of perfect attendance awards and incentives. Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross- training staff.
- Plan for possible academic calendar changes, particularly in relation to breaks and exams.

5.2 Monitor school attendance

- Implement school absenteeism monitoring systems to track student and staff absence and compare against usual absenteeism patterns at the school.
- Alert local health authorities about large increases in student and staff absenteeism due to respiratory illnesses.

5.3 Plan for continuity of learning

In the case of absenteeism/sick leave or temporary school closures, support continued access to quality education. This can include:

- Use of online/e-learning strategies
- Assigning reading and exercises for home study
- Radio, podcast or television broadcasts of academic content
- Assigning teachers to conduct remote daily or weekly follow up with students
- Review/develop accelerated education strategies

6.0 Implement targeted health education

Please refer to the appendix to see specific information regarding Health Education for Specific Year Groups.

We will:

- Integrate disease prevention and control in daily activities and lessons.
- Ensure content is age-, gender-, ethnicity-, and disability-responsive and activities are built into existing subjects. (See Section on Age-Appropriate Health Education)

6.1 Address Mental Health/Psychosocial support needs

- Encourage children to discuss their questions and concerns.
- Explain it is normal that they may experience different reactions and encourage them to talk to teachers if they have any questions or concerns.
- Provide information in an honest, age-appropriate manner.
- Guide students on how to support their peers and prevent exclusion and bullying. Ensure teachers are aware of local resources for their own well-being.
- Work with school health workers/social workers to identify and support students and staff who exhibit signs of distress.

7.0 Monitoring

The school will comply with the legal requirements and guidelines set by the KHDA, Ministry of Education and Dubai Health Authorities.

The school will undergo all appropriate documentation to ensure it is available should it be required for COVID tracking purposes.

Review Date: November 2022

Appendix

8.0 Checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and Staff.

CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STAFF

- 1. Promote and demonstrate regular hand washing and positive hygiene behaviors and monitor their uptake. Ensure adequate, clean and separate toilets for girls and boys
 - Ensure soap and safe water is available at age-appropriate hand washing stations
 - Encourage frequent and thorough washing (at least 20 seconds)
 - Place hand sanitizers in toilets, classrooms, halls, and near exits where possible
 - Ensure adequate, clean and separate toilets or latrines for girls and boys
- 2. Clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc.)
 - Use sodium hypochlorite at 0.5% (equivalent 5000ppm) for disinfecting surfaces and 70% ethyl alcohol for disinfection of small items, and ensure appropriate equipment for cleaning staff
- 3. Increase air flow and ventilation where climate allows (open windows, use air conditioning where available, etc.)
- 4. Post signs encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices
- 5. Ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely

8.1 Communication for Parents

Check List for Parents/Caregivers and community members

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- 1. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are ill
- 2. Teach and model good hygiene practices for your children
 - Wash your hands with soap and safe water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty
 - Ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets or latrines are clean and available at home
 - Ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed of
 - Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose
- 3. Encourage your children to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.
- 4. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding students to be considerate of one another
- 5. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts (through parent-teacher committees, etc.)

Additional Information useful for parents

COVID-19 is a new virus and we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus, but so far there have been relatively few cases of COVID-19 reported among children. The virus can be fatal in cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Know the latest facts

Understand basic information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as UNICEF and WHO and

national health ministry advisories. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online.

Recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 (coughing, fever, shortness of breath) in your child

Seek medical advice by first calling your health facility/provider and then take your child in, if advised. Remember that symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or fever can be similar to those of the flu, or the common cold, which are a lot more common. If your child is sick, keep them home from school and notify the school of your child's absence and symptoms. Request reading and assignments so that students can continue learning while at home. Explain to your child what is happening in simple words and reassure them that they are safe.

Keep children in school when healthy

If your child isn't displaying any symptoms such as a fever or cough it's best to keep them in school –unless a public health advisory or other relevant warning or official advice has been issued affecting your child's school.

Instead of keeping children out of school, teach them good hand and respiratory hygiene practices for school and elsewhere, like frequent handwashing (see below), covering a cough or sneeze with a flexed elbow or tissue, then throwing away the tissue into a closed bin, and not touching their eyes, mouths or noses if they haven't properly washed their hands.

Washing hands properly

- Step 1: Wet hands with safe running water
- Step 2: Apply enough soap to cover wet hands
- Step 3: Scrub all surfaces of the hands – including backs of hands, between fingers and under nails –for at least 20 seconds
- Step 4: Rinse thoroughly with running water
- Step 5: Dry hands with a clean, dry cloth, single-use towel or hand drier as available

Wash your hands often, especially before and after eating; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom/ toilets/latrines and whenever your hands are visibly dirty. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.

Help children cope with the stress

Children may respond to stress in different ways. Common responses include having difficulties sleeping, bedwetting, having pain in the stomach or head, and being anxious, withdrawn, angry, clingy or afraid to be left alone. Respond to children's reactions in a

supportive way and explain to them that they are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Listen to their concerns and take time to comfort them and give them affection, reassure them they're safe and praise them frequently.

If possible, create opportunities for children to play and relax. Keep regular routines and schedules as much as possible, especially before they go to sleep, or help create new ones in a new environment. Provide age-appropriate facts about what has happened, explain what is going on and give them clear examples on what they can do to help protect themselves and others from infection. Share information about what could happen in a reassuring way.

For example, if your child is feeling sick and staying at home or the hospital, you could say, "You have to stay at home/at the hospital because it is safer for you and your friends. I know it is hard (maybe scary or even boring) at times, but we need to follow the rules to keep ourselves and others safe. Things will go back to normal soon."

8.2 Communication for Children

Children and young people should understand basic, age-appropriate information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources such as UNICEF, WHO and national health ministry advisories. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online.

8.3 Age-specific health education

Below are suggestions on how to engage students of different ages on preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses. Activities should be contextualized further based on the specific needs of children (language, ability, gender, etc.).

EYFS

- Focus on good health behaviors, such as covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow and washing hands frequently.
- Sing a song while washing hands to practice the recommended 20 second duration.
- Children can "practice" washing their hands with hand sanitizer.
- Develop a way to track hand washing and reward for frequent/timely hand washing.
- Use puppets or dolls to demonstrate symptoms (sneezing, coughing, fever) and what to do if they feel sick (i.e. their head hurts, their stomach hurts, they feel hot or extra tired) and how to comfort someone who is sick (cultivating empathy and safe caring behaviors)

- Have children sit further apart from one another, have them practice stretching their arms out or ‘flap their wings’, they should keep enough space to not touch their friends.

Primary School

- Make sure to listen to children’s concerns and answer their questions in an age-appropriate manner; don’t overwhelm them with too much information. Encourage them to express and communicate their feelings. Discuss the different reactions they may experience and explain that these are normal reactions to an abnormal situation.
- Emphasize that children can do a lot to keep themselves and others safe.
- Introduce the concept of social distancing (standing further away from friends, avoiding large crowds, not touching people if you don’t need to, etc.)
- Focus on good health behaviors, such as covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow and washing hands.
- Help children understand the basic concepts of disease prevention and control. Use exercises that demonstrate how germs can spread. For example, by putting colored water in a spray bottle and spraying over a piece of white paper. Observe how far the droplets travel.
- Demonstrate why it is important to wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Put a small amount of glitter in students’ hands and have them wash them with just water, notice how much glitter remains, then have them wash for 20 seconds with soap and water
- Have students analyze texts to identify high risk behaviors and suggest modifying behaviors. For example, a teacher comes to school with a cold. He sneezes and covers it with his hand. He shakes hands with a colleague. He wipes his hands after with a handkerchief then goes to class to teach. What did the teacher do that was risky? What should he have done instead?

Lower Secondary School

- Make sure to listen to students’ concerns and answer their questions.
- Emphasize that students can do a lot to keep themselves and others safe.
- Introduce the concept of social distancing.
- Focus on good health behaviors, such as covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow and washing hands.
- Remind students that they can model healthy behaviors for their families.
- Encourage students to prevent and address stigma.
- Discuss the different reactions they may experience and explain these are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Encourage them to express and communicate their feelings.
- Build students’ agency and have them promote facts about public health.
- Have students make their own Public Service Announcements through school announcements and posters.

- Incorporate relevant health education into other subjects
 - Science can cover the study of viruses, disease transmission and the importance of vaccinations
 - Social studies can focus on the history of pandemics and evolution of policies on public health and safety
 - Media literacy lessons can empower students to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens

Upper Secondary School

- Make sure to listen to students' concerns and answer their questions.
- Emphasize that students can do a lot to keep themselves and others safe.
 - Introduce the concept of social distancing
 - Focus on good health behaviors, such as covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow and washing hands. Encourage students to prevent and address stigma.
 - Discuss the different reactions they may experience and explain these are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Encourage them to express and communicate their feelings.

Incorporate relevant health education into other subjects

- Science courses can cover the study of viruses, disease transmission and the importance of vaccinations
- Social studies can focus on the history of pandemics and their secondary effects and
 - investigate how public policies can promote tolerance and social cohesion. Have students make their own Public Service Announcements via social media, radio or even local tv broadcasting
- Media literacy lessons can empower students to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens.