



Reference Material for Schools for Foreign Students : School Health Activities




Schools in Japan have been working on various school health activities to maintain and enhance the health condition of students, under laws and regulations.

This document summarizes and introduces some of the activities as reference, for schools for foreign students in Japan.

What is school health?

As features of school health in Japan, schools have been engaged in both health management, such as health checks, health counseling and guidance, and health education through related subjects including the Health and Physical Education period; and also have used achievements of health education for health management.

Health education	Health management	
Teaching of each subject (e.g., the Health and Physical Education period, Special Activities, etc.) 	For people	For object
	First aid, health checks, health observation, infection prevention, health counseling and guidance, etc. 	Environmental hygiene management etc. 

Individuals involved in school health

Various individuals such as teachers and those belonging to local related associations and organizations are involved in school health activities. This section indicates parties involved in such activities in public elementary and junior high schools and their specific roles.

Within school

Yogo teacher



A yogo teacher is a teaching staff, who plays a pivotal role to promote school health activities. Yogo teacher's function is first aid, health checks, health observation, infection prevention, environmental hygiene management, health counseling and guidance, school health room management, health organizational activities, and teaching in each subject.

Health chief



A health chief is a teaching staff, who manages issues related to school health, such as coordinating school health activities and whole school activities, developing a school health plan, and promoting health organizational activities.

Class teacher



As a class teacher always takes care of students in proximity, the teacher observes their daily health condition, provides health counseling and guidance to them, and checks environmental hygiene daily. For promoting school health activities, it is important for all teachers such as class teachers to work on activity together with a yogo teacher and a health chief as one team.

Principal, and vice-principal



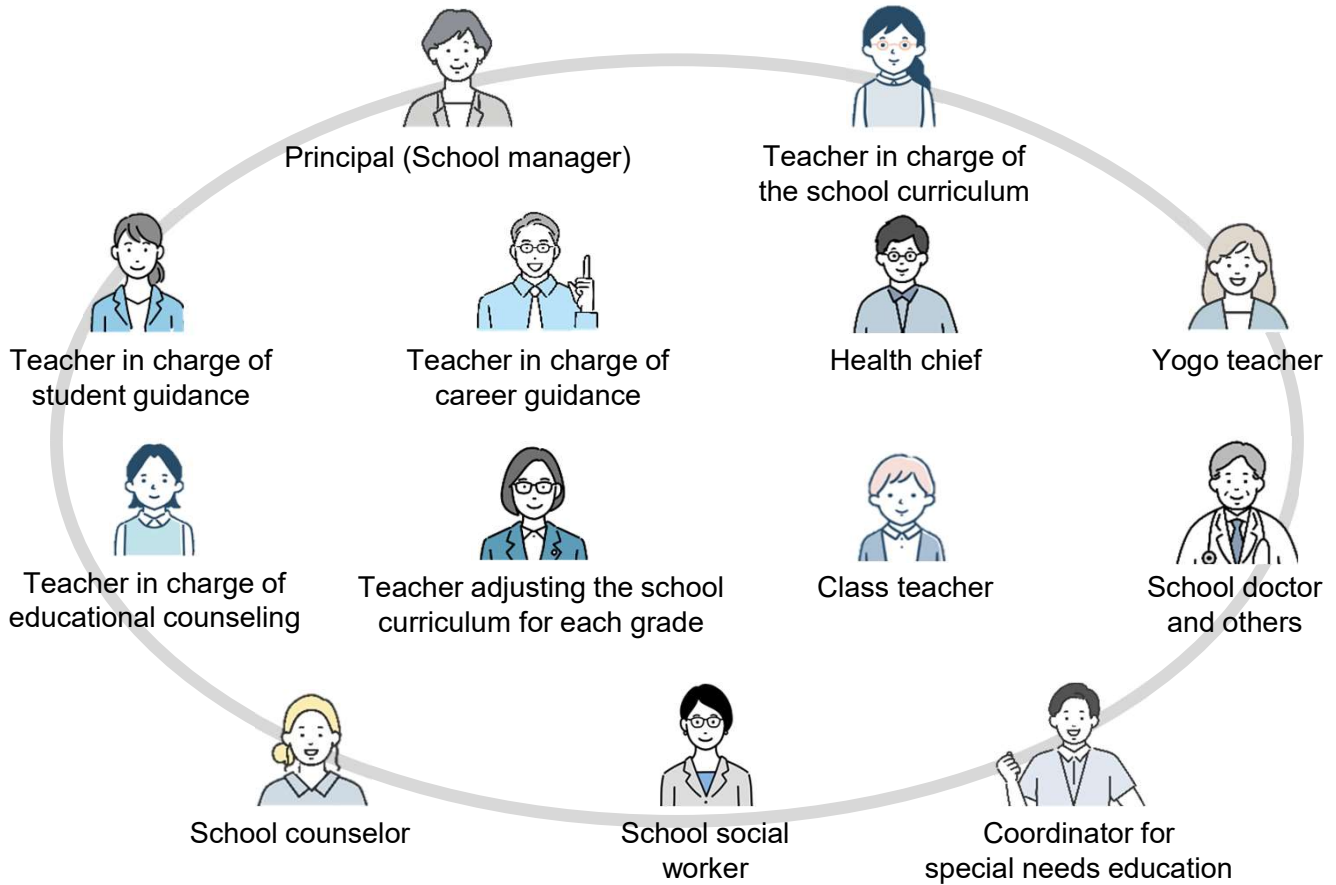
School managers, such as the principal and the vice-principal, are responsible for organizing a school system through an organization management bringing out the strengths of various specialties of school staff to promote school health activities.

School doctor, school dentist, and school pharmacist



Schools are required to have a school doctor, a school dentist, and a school pharmacist. A school doctor and a school dentist are engaged in health checks and infection prevention measures. A school pharmacist works on inspections for environmental hygiene. They provide advice and suggestion from their professional viewpoints.

Development of school organizational framework



- Understanding and leadership of school managers are essential for operating school systems.
- Related school staff should be encouraged to have common understanding among each other and share the roles.

Beyond school premises



Student's family

It is important for schools to build relationship with students' families daily since schools need to obtain their understanding and cooperation to support students in terms of their health issues.



Locally related institutions

Schools need to tackle with students' health issues in cooperation with their families and locally related institutions. Primary locally related institutions include a child guidance center, a support center for persons with developmental disorders, a public health center, a mental health and welfare center, medical institutions, the police, and a juvenile support center.

What is a school health room?

Each school in Japan has a school health room for health checks, health counseling and guidance, and first aid; it is accordingly equipped with necessary instruments and materials to assist such functions.

All students can use this room at any time, and it also provides a safety place for them.



What is health management?

Schools in Japan provide health managements including first aid, health checks, health observation, infection prevention, health counseling and guidance, and environmental hygiene management.

Introduction of health management activities

First aid

First aid in school is subject to all illness and injuries occurring under a school management, such as students' sudden disease events and injuries. However, a school is not a medical institution but educational one, and thereby, first aid in school is a temporary measure until a student can receive medical treatment in a clinic/hospital. Schools should establish a first aid system to properly cope with a case in an emergency. Moreover, it is important for schools to establish a relationship to cooperate with local medical institutions to act quickly when any of incidents/accidents or a disaster occurs.



Health checks

Schools provide health checks in every school year and also on ad hoc basis as need-basis on laws. The types of tests for health checks are specified in applicable laws. (Please refer to Fig. 1)

Figure1 【The types of tests for health checks】



Height



Weight



Hearing acuity



Visual acuity



Nutritional status, skin, spine, thorax, extremities, tuberculosis



Dental



Ears and nose, pharynx



Heart



Urine

etc.

School health checks have mainly two roles.

1. Check whether or not students have any problems to spend their school lives by screening for any diseases and confirming the health condition of students.
2. Identify health issues in school and use these in health education.

Schools announce the results to students and may offer recommendation to seek medical examinations at medical institutions or give consideration to their daily activities in school.

Health observation

All teachers, especially class teachers and yogo teachers conduct health observation through whole education activities. A class teacher, especially, has important activities to check a latecomer and an absentee to confirm the reason in every morning as well as to check students' physical and mental health conditions. Health observation plays an important role in detecting and addressing student's physical and mental health issues early, preventing infection from expanding, and executing infection prevention controls.

Infection prevention

When a student is infected with an infectious disease, other students may be infected with the disease. It is likely to affect educational activities, and a school will suspend the student attendance. In addition, if an inflectional outbreak occurs, the school will, after receiving opinions of a school doctor, take measures such as suspension of attendance, temporary school closure, disinfection, and other measures as well as will contact local public health centers.

To prevent infectious diseases, teachers strive to detect an infection onset and a transmission trend in an early phase through daily health observation and use of a school health room.



Health counseling and guidance

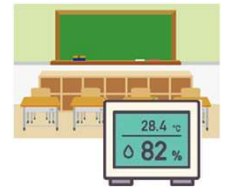
Health counseling and guidance cannot be separated specifically, rather they should be linked and developed mutually. Through counseling requests from students or their guardians, health observation and health checks, responses in school health room, schools determine the necessities of health counseling and guidance and screen target students. At health counseling, schools recognize the backgrounds of physical and mental health issues of target students and support them via the counseling. Health guidance aims to make target students identify their own health issues, to deepen their understanding and attentions to them, and to execute voluntary and practical actions to solve such issues proactively on their own. It is also important for schools to cope with health counseling and guidance organizationally as a whole in cooperation with not only school staff such as yogo teachers, class teachers, school managers, school doctors, school dentists, and school pharmacists but also local related associations and organizations.



Environmental hygiene management

In Japan, there are recommended standards related to environmental hygiene in schools (e.g., ventilation, temperature, lighting, and noise level for classroom environment and water quality for drinking water, maintenance and control status of facilities, and equipment, etc.) to maintain good health of teachers and students.

Schools regularly inspect them every school year based on the standards and also on ad hoc basis as needed as well as a daily inspection. These inspections, thereby, achieve maintaining and improving environmental hygiene in schools.



What is health education?

Objectives of health education in schools are as follows: students foster Competencies for enhancing their own mental and physical health in response to new health issues associated with any changes in their life situation; and they will develop the foundation necessary to live safely, healthily, and actively throughout their entire lives. Elementary, junior high, and high schools provide health education through related subjects such as the Health and Physical Education period as well as Special Activities by taking into account the developmental stages.

The Health and Physical Education period in elementary, junior high, and high schools

Elementary school

- Healthy daily lives
- Physical growth and development
- Mental health
- Injury prevention
- Disease prevention



Junior high school

- Healthy daily lives and disease prevention
- Development of mental and physical functions and mental health
- Injury prevention
- Health and environment



High school

- Current society and health
- Safe social life
- Life-long health
- Establishing an environment for a healthy life



■ Issued on 2024 / 03 / 22

■ Issued by the Office for a Professional Platform of Health and Hygiene Environment in Schools for Foreign Students provided by MEXT (mediPhone Inc.)

■ Collaborators

• ASANO Akemi : Adviser, National Liaison Committee of Yogo Teacher

• KAMEI Megumi : School Nurse, Tokyo International School

• KURAHASHI Tomu : Vice president, Association of Brazilian Schools in Japan

• TAKEHANA Yukari : Professor, School Health Care and Health Education, Arts and Sports Sciences Division, Tokyo Gakugei University

