



نظام الشارقة للسلامة والصحة المهنية
Occupational Safety & Health Sharjah

حكومة الشارقة
هيئة الوقاية والسلامة

Government of Sharjah
Prevention And Safety Authority



Guideline

Safety in Education Facilities

OSHJ-GL-22

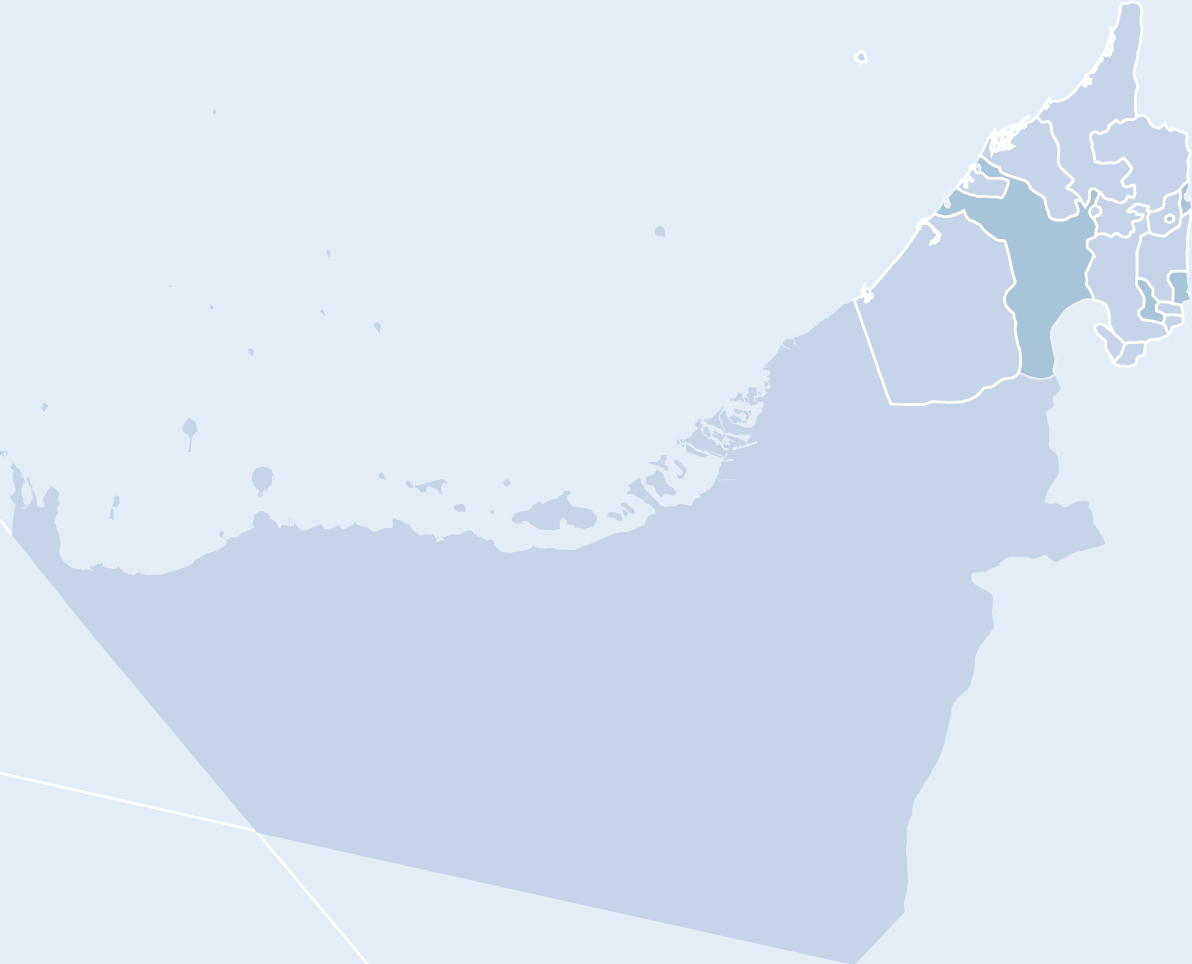


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1 Introduction

Safety and health plays an important part in an educational entity who has a duty of care to ensure Employees, students, contractors, visitors and others are safe and healthy in an educational environment.

2 Purpose and Scope

This guideline document has been developed to provide information to entities to assist them in Complying with the requirements of the occupational safety and health system in Sharjah.

To achieve compliance in the emirate of Sharjah, all entities are required to demonstrate a standard of compliance which is equal to or higher than the minimum acceptable requirements outlined in this guideline document.

Safety in education facilities guideline document covers all forms of education. From pre-school to university and includes all training institutes.

3 Definitions and Abbreviations

Entities:	Government entities: government departments, authorities or establishments And the like in the Emirate. Private entities: establishments, companies, enterprises and economic activities operating in the Emirate in general.
Risk:	Is the combination of likelihood of the hazard causing the loss and the severity of that loss (consequences).
Risk Assessment:	The systematic identification of workplace hazards and evaluation of the risks associated. This process takes existing control measures into account and identifies and recommends further control measures where required.
Hazard:	Anything that has the potential to cause harm or loss (injury , disease, ill-health, property damage etc).
Education:	The process of teaching or learning in a school, college or university, or the

knowledge that a person receives from this process.

Employee: Every male or female who works in return for a wage of whatever type in the service of the entity and under its management or supervision even if he/she is out of its sight. This term shall include any employee and worker who works in The service of the entity.

OSH: Occupational safety and health

Field Trips: Any work carried out by employees or students for the purposes of teaching, research or other activities while representing the entity away from their premises.

Safety and Health Specialist: A person who implements, manages, evaluates and monitors the OSH system policies and procedures.

OSH Committee: A group represented by management, OSH specialist and employees within a workplace who meet regularly to deal with OSH issues.

Laboratory Safety Plan: A documented system which includes risk assessment, safe systems of work and procedures to manage safety and health risks in laboratories.

Manufacturer's Manual: The instructions, procedures and recommendations provided by the manufacturer to ensure the safe operation, maintenance and repair of the equipment.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Entity Responsibilities

- Undertake risk assessments, identify hazards and implement arrangements that manage risks to employees, students, contractors, visitors and others who may be affected by their work activities.

- Provide information about hazards in the workplace and the control measures to manage risks.
- Ensure employees have the relevant information and training to manage risks on a day to day basis, including access to competent safety and health advice if required.
- Maintain effective communication with employees and give clear information to students, contractors, visitors and others regarding the significant risks on site.
- Check that safety and health control measures have been implemented and remain appropriate and effective.
- Ensure employees understand their safety and health responsibilities and know how to access support and advice to help them manage risks.
- Ensure compliance with UAE Ministry of Education: education sector environment, occupational health & safety management system general framework.
- Ensure compliance with administrative decision no.17 Of 2019 on the regulation of school transport activity in the emirate of Sharjah.
- Provide a safety and health professional to ensure the entity implements and maintains their OSH system.
- Establish and maintain an OSH committee.
- Provide adequate resources to manage safety and health.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Not endanger themselves or others.
- Follow precautionary control measures to ensure work activities are performed safely and without risk to health.
- Cooperate with the entity and receive safety information, instruction, supervision and training.
- Report any hazard, incident, activity or defect which they know is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or that of any other person.

4.3 Safety and Health Professional Responsibilities

- Ensure the implementation of OSH system standards, policies and procedures.
- Ensure adequate risk assessments are undertaken for operations, activities and equipment.
- Undertake periodic OSH inspections and issue reports.

- Attend OSH committee meetings to discuss reports findings and results for monitoring, incidents investigation and performance indicators.
- Report any hazards, risks or incidents and issue necessary reports.
- Participate in incidents investigations and issue reports to reveal their root causes and identify corrective and preventive actions, measures and procedures necessary to prevent reoccurrence.

4.4 OSH Committee Members Responsibilities

- Attend OSH committee meetings to discuss OSH issues, monitoring and performance indicator reports and results and contribute to the implementation of approved corrective and preventive actions.
- Drive the implementation of system standards, policies and procedures and ensure its compliance.
- Provide information and procedures to students, employees, contractors and others.

5 Guidelines

Safety and health in education is about taking a sensible approach to ensure premises are safe and healthy for everyone who uses them. These guidelines are based on managing the risks to employees, students, contractors, visitors and others. Educational entities include: nurseries, schools, training centres/institutes, youth centres, practical training centres, colleges and universities.

This guideline document addresses certain work activities and risks, but not all of them, associated with educational entities. All COP and Guideline's documents are relevant to all entities, who should research these documents to ensure that all requirements are implemented that are relevant to the work activities of their entity.

5.1 Risk Assessment

The entity should identify hazards relating to work activities through use of risk assessment and introduce effective control measures to reduce the exposure of hazards to employees, students, contractors, visitors and others. The risk assessment shall take into consideration the following factors, including but is not limited:

- The size, distribution and location of premises.
- Access and egress to premises, including parental and student drop off and pick up outside premises.

- Provision of school transportation of students to and from educational premises.
- Provision of student accommodation.
- Off premises activities.
- Contractors conducting maintenance or construction activities.
- Electrical hazards.
- Recreational facilities.
- Slips and trips.
- Hazardous substances.
- Waste management.
- Training.
- Emergency planning and preparedness.
- Manual handling and ergonomics.
- New and expectant mothers.
- People of determination.

Further information on risk assessment can be found in OSHJ- COP-01 : risk management and control.

5.2 Safety in Educational Facilities

5.2.1 Access and Egress

Safe access to, and egress from educational facilities are fundamental to the provision of a safe place of work. The entity is responsible for the premises as a whole, this includes the common areas such as, car parking areas and other external areas, including: roads, paths, lighting, waste storage areas, entrance doors, reception areas, corridors, staircases and lifts. Egress routes also include the means of emergency exits from premises.

5.2.2 Slips and Trips

All areas identified in 5.2.1 Access and egress must be adequately maintained and not introduce risks that could affect employees, students, contractors, visitors and others safety and health. Staircases and other communal areas should be in good condition, well lit, free from obstruction and regularly checked to ensure they remain in good condition.

These areas must be free from slipping and tripping hazards, have arrangements in place to prevent falls and have sufficient lighting in normal conditions in addition to the provision of emergency lighting. Leaks or spillages must be immediately cleaned up and warning signs displayed until the area is dry and no longer a slipping hazard.

5.2.3 Transportation

With regards to the provision of student transportation, the entity should comply with administrative decision no.17 Of 2019 on the regulation of school transport activity in the emirate of Sharjah. The entity shall ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- The transportation service providers and means of transport used are certified by the competent authorities and adhere to the safety and health requirements of uae standard, vehicles - safety requirements for school buses', which carried no. UAE.S 5012:2020, to enhance the efficiency of school buses in the UAE.
- The safety of buses by undertaking visual and periodical checks prior to use, and subject to periodical examinations and maintenance according to manufacturer's manual.
- That bus drivers and supervisors are qualified and trained for their assigned duties and familiar with such duties through conducting periodical awareness and training programs.
- Drivers drive within the maximum allowed speed on the road and inside the institutions campus and follow safety driving instructions at all times.
- Supervisors are assigned to ensure:
 - that at the end of each trip all students have evacuated the buses.
 - buses are driven safely and report drivers who risk the safety of students.
 - students are supervised when getting on and off buses, assisting them when crossing streets and only allow students to get off in designated places.
 - students under 11 years of age are delivered in person to their parents or their official representatives.
- Buses are clean, air-conditioned and in good condition and have first aid kits and fire extinguishers that are maintained along with providing periodical trainings to drivers and supervisors on using such equipment safely.

Further information on transportation can be found in OSHJ-GL-06 :employer supplied transport.

5.2.4 Accommodation

Where the entity provides student accommodation they should ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- Accommodation identified as suitable for student accommodation should have a risk assessment conducted during the selection process and any control measures identified are implemented prior to student occupancy.
- Risk assessments are reviewed at a minimum annually and any improvements to control measures implemented to reduce risks to students.
- Ensuring that monthly inspections are conducted to ensure control measures are adequately maintained.
- Ensuring that monthly inspections are conducted to check the fire fighting system and equipment is adequately maintained.

Further information on accommodation can be found in OSHJ-GL-21 : managing buildings safety.

5.2.5 Field Trips

The entity should have procedures which assess the risks to employees and students. The risk assessment should be conducted and any improvements to control measures implemented prior to and for the duration of the field trip. The hazards and level of risk identified should be communicated to all teachers and employees supervising the field trip. The entity providing field trips should ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- Developing procedures to cover all off site activities.
- Developing clear approval processes, including processes for escalating high or unusual risks for entity approval.
- Developing an approval process for all travel, conducting risk assessment and establishing control measures for known hazards, including provision for emergencies and first aid.
- All teachers and employees are competent field trip leaders, and approval of the field trip granted if the entity is confident they can respond to and control all foreseeable risks. Re-assessment may be required if there are changes to the field trip leader or team.
- Linking approvals to a review of the risk assessment where risks are likely to change in the period between approval and departure, approval may be withdrawn if the risk status changes.

5.2.6 Managing Contractors

The engagement of contractors is common where routine and non-routine work activities are required. This can involve high risk activities, when carried out on critical equipment or carrying out non-routine activities where there is a greater potential for harm if their work is not effectively managed.

An entity has specific OSH requirements when engaging contractors which includes managing risks to their employees, students, contractors, visitors and anyone else affected by the work activities.

The entity should have a process of managing contractors, including but not limited to:

- Identifying OSH tender requirements.
- Selecting the contractor.
- Risk assessment.
- Contract award and mobilisation.
- Contractor management.
- Contract close out.

Once the contractor has finished, there are benefits in reviewing and learning from any lessons to see if safety and health performance can be improved in the future.

Further information on managing contractors can be found in OSHJ-COP-03 :OSH control of contractors.

5.2.7 Electrical Safety

The main hazards related to electricity in educational facilities are:

- Electric shock and burns from contact with live parts.
- Injury from exposure from arcing, fire from faulty electrical equipment or installations.
- Explosion caused by unsuitable electrical apparatus or static electricity igniting flammable vapours or dusts.

The entity must ensure that electrical equipment and installations are adequately maintained to prevent risks. Users of electrical equipment, including portable appliances, should conduct visual checks and remove equipment immediately if:

- The plug or connector is damaged.

- The cable has been repaired with tape, is not secure, or internal wires are visible.
- Burn marks or stains are present, suggesting overheating.

The entity shall ensure that repairs to damage are carried out by a competent person only.

The entity should ensure regular inspection and maintenance of electrical equipment and installation to reduce electrical risks and these should only be carried out by a competent person.

The entity shall record and retain electrical maintenance records.

Further information on electricity can be found in OSHJ-COP-05: electrical safety at work.

5.2.8 Sports Facilities

The entity should ensure that all sports facilities, including but not limited to. Gymnasiums, swimming pools, football pitches, basketball courts are safe, hygienic, regularly inspected, repaired and maintained and students are supervised by a competent teacher or coach when using the facility and/or equipment.

5.2.8.1 Gymnasiums

Gymnasiums, sports appliances, equipment and tools should be safe for students to use, and include the provision of safety signage and instructions on use of sports appliances, equipment and tools, in addition to students being supervised when using the gymnasium.

5.2.8.2 Swimming Pools

Swimming pools shall have a dedicated licensed lifeguard on duty when the pool is in use. Safety instructions should be provided in english, arabic and any other relevant language visible to users. The swimming pool should be equipped with safety equipment. When not in use, the swimming pool should be secured and access restricted. Clean and hygienic toilets, changing rooms and shower facilities should be available to shower before and after using the swimming pool.

5.2.9 Laboratory Safety

Where educational facilities have laboratories that provide controlled conditions in which scientific or technological research, experiments and measurement may be performed using hazardous substances

or equipment. A laboratory safety plan (LSP) should be developed by the entity, including but not limited to:

Identifying legal requirements.

- Delegate roles and responsibilities, identifying competent persons to maintain and monitor implementation of the LSP and the person(s) in charge of each laboratory.
- Conduct risk assessments, documenting all chemical, biological, physical and other hazards present in laboratories, assessing the associated risks and implementing adequate control measures.
- Develop safe systems of work, which include general and laboratory specific procedures for working with hazardous substances or equipment.
- Provide information and training on hazards present within the laboratory to all laboratory users, this can be initial and refresher training, use of safety data sheets and any other information users need to know when using carcinogens, reproductive toxins and substances which have acute toxicity.
- Conducting routine testing, inspection, calibration, maintenance and repair of laboratory safety equipment as recommended by the manufacturer's manual.
- Provision of PPE relevant to laboratory activities and operations.
- Establish an emergency plan and communicate to all laboratory users on what to do in an emergency.
- Instructions on the management of hazardous waste.

5.2.10 Hazardous Substances

The entity should ensure that risks from hazardous substances are managed to reduce risks to the safety and health of employees, students, contractors, visitors and others. The entity should identify, including but not limited to:

- Which substances are harmful and why they are harmful.
- What are the substances used for.
- How would people be exposed via:
 - Inhalation of gases, fumes, mist or dust.
 - Absorption via contact with the skin.
 - Ingestion.

- Contact with the eyes.
- Skin puncture.

Further information on hazardous substances can be found in OSHJ-COP-11 :management of hazardous substances.

5.2.11 Pest Control

The entity should make provision for the control of pests and should appoint a licenced pest control entity to manage pest control on their behalf. The entity should supervise the pest control entity to ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- The application of any chemicals are controlled.
- Pest control is applied when students are not present.
- The treated areas are isolated to prevent access.
- The treated areas are adequately ventilated, where required.
- A competent person assesses that the premises are safe for occupants to re-enter after application of pest control chemicals.

Fumigation of pests is not a recommended method to eradicate pests in educational facilities.

The entity should record and retain pest control records.

5.2.12 Waste Management

The entity should have a process in place for waste management and the disposal of waste and should consider the requirements of the relevant authorities. In general, the entity should have processes on how waste is:

- Collected.
- Segregated.
- Stored.
- Transported.

Further information on waste management can be found in OSHJ-COP-19 :waste management.

5.3 Occupational Health in Educational Facilities

Occupational health can be more difficult to manage than safety, the causes and consequences of poor safety are normally immediately identifiable and can be dealt with relatively easily. Work related causes of ill-health can be more difficult to identify as it can take some time for symptoms to develop and therefore the connection between cause and effect is less obvious.

The entity should prevent work related ill-health and consider health hazards that may be active within the workplace, including but not limited to:

- Musculoskeletal disorders.
- Stress.
- Noise.
- Vibration.
- Asbestos.
- Infectious diseases.

Further information on occupational health can be found in OSHJ-COP-14 :management of OSH illness and disease.

Further information on asbestos can be found in OSHJ-COP-20 :management of asbestos.

5.3.1 Welfare Facilities

The entity shall provide good workplace welfare facilities for employees, students, contractors, visitors and others as part of a safe and healthy environment in educational facilities. Welfare facilities include the provision of washing facilities, toilets, rest areas, changing rooms and a place to eat and drink during breaks.

Further information on welfare requirements can be found in oshj-cop-15: employee welfare and wellbeing.

5.3.2 Manual handling and Ergonomics

The entity should protect employees from the risk of manual handling. They should follow the hierarchy of control measures to prevent and manage the risks for manual handling:

- Avoid manual handling operations, so far as reasonably practicable.
- Assess the risk of injury to employees from any manual handling which cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury to employees from manual handling to as low as reasonably practicable.

Ergonomics is the study of people at work that aims to reduce the physical stress and resulting injuries associated with working, poor posture and more serious musculoskeletal disorders. The entity should manage ergonomic risks by implementing good ergonomic solutions to the following areas, including but not limited to:

- Manual handling.
- The design of tasks.
- Workstation layout.
- Managing the working day.

Further information on manual handling and ergonomics can be found in OSHJ-COP-12 :manual handling and ergonomics.

5.3.3 New and Expectant Mothers

The entity should assess the safety and health of employees and students who are new and expectant mothers. New and expectant mothers should inform the entity as early as possible during pregnancy. Further information on new and expectant mothers can be found in OSHJ-GL-27 :new and expectant mothers.

5.3.4 People of Determination

The entity should make provision for persons of determination, which may affect the way they do their job. The entity should also consider students who are persons of determination.

The entity should conduct a risk assessment, considering the needs of employee and student persons of determination as part of the assessment. Any changes required should then be implemented as soon as possible.

Further information on persons of determination can be found in COP-OSHJ-15 :employee welfare and wellbeing.

6 Training

Employees should be aware of the hazards present in the workplace, the emergency plan and their roles when responding to an incident. Providing information and training to employees allows them to know how to respond to emergencies and discuss any concerns they may have.

The entity must ensure that employees receive training in languages and in a format that employees understand about safety and health, including but not limited to:

- How to assess risks specific to their work.
- How to meet their safety and health roles and responsibilities.
- How to respond to emergencies.
- How to report safety and health issues.
- How to conduct regular evacuation drills.

Periodic refresher training should be conducted to ensure employees competency is maintained, including but not limited to:

- Where training certification has expired.
- Where identified as part of a training needs analysis.
- Where risk assessment findings identify training as a measure to control risks.
- Where there is a change in legal requirements.
- Where incident investigation findings recommend refresher training.

The entity must record and maintain accurate training records of OSH training provided to employees.

Students should receive adequate OSH information, instruction and training where required.

First aiders and fire wardens should have a valid certificate of training issued from a recognised training provider.

Further information on training can be found in OSHJ-GL-26 :training and competence.

7 Emergency Preparedness and Response

Planning for emergencies can save lives and can prevent an incident getting worse. Emergency plans which deal with the consequences of larger scale emergencies can also assist employees to deal with smaller incidents that can be experienced on a regular basis.

A detailed emergency plan by the entity for responding to an emergency, includes but not limited to:

- A list of persons responsible for coordinating and implementing the emergency plan and details of their specific duties.
- A list of the actions to be taken to deal with a variety of emergency situations including but not limited to.
 - Fire.
 - Serious injury or illness of students or employees.
 - Severe weather.
 - Terrorism.
 - The effects of an incident disaster from other entities nearby.
 - Other serious incidents that require an emergency response.
- Having procedures in place to inform families of those students or employees affected by an incident.
- Having the contact details of emergency services.

Further information on emergency planning can be found in OSHJ-COP-18 :emergency preparedness and response.

7.1 Fire Safety

The entity shall ensure that the requirements of uae fire and life safety code of practice are implemented and maintained. This part of the emergency plan should include procedures for managing fire safety. The fire safety part of the plan shall cover the following, including but not limited to:

- Fire risk assessment conducted and reviewed at a minimum annually and any control measures identified are implemented to reduce risk.
- Conducting monthly inspections ensuring the fire fighting system and equipment is adequately maintained.
- Ensuring employees who organise and conduct fire drills understand their responsibilities and duties.
- Details of the timing and frequency of fire drills.
- Detailed evacuation plans.
- Procedures for the evacuation of persons of determination.
- Details of the fire assembly points and how they are identified.

- The location of directional fire signs.
- Evacuation layout of the premises showing the location of evacuation routes, fire fighting equipment, first aid equipment, electricity, gas and water service lines.
- Maintaining records of fire drills conducted with outcomes reviewed and corrective actions taken, if required.
- How the evacuation procedures will be communicated to all relevant persons.

Employees with specific fire safety responsibilities, should receive detailed instructions of their duties and necessary training.

Further information on fire safety can be found in OSHJ-COP-18 :emergency preparedness and response.

7.2 First Aid

The emergency plan should clearly outline how first aid is provided, the maintenance of first aid equipment and supplies and how employees are trained in the use of these, including but not limited to:

- The locations of first aid equipment and supplies.
- Procedures for ensuring that the contents of first aid boxes are compliant with regulations.
- Procedures for when first aid may be administered and who by.
- Identify who is responsible for the regular maintenance of first aid boxes.
- The names and duties of first aiders.
- Procedures for ensuring that an appropriate number of trained first-aiders are available during each working shift.

Further information on first aid can be found in OSHJ-COP-16 :first aid at work.

7.3 Clinics

A full time nurse approved by the Ministry of Health and medical institutions shall be present in the education facilities, and if absent, a substitution shall be provided. Clinics shall include all supplies, equipment and tools as stipulated by the Ministry of Health and medical institutions, including but not limited to:

- Clinic shall include a first aid kit.

- Clinics are equipped with required personal protective equipment.
- Medication and medical tools are kept in a locked and secure place away from students.
- Record all incidents, wounds and diseases occurring during the school day in a separate record.
- Ensure that clinics and aisles are clear from obstructions to avoid the risks of tripping and falling.
- Keep the clinic clean and hygienic and provide suitable types and adequate numbers of medical waste bins with suitable labels indicating its contents and to be cleaned daily by approved and certified service providers in accordance with the laws and regulations set by the competent authorities in the UAE.
- Undertake periodical examination and maintenance to ensure that all medical equipment, tools, and materials are safe.

For further information on education facilities and their requirements, please refer to UAE Ministry of Education: education sector environment, occupational health & safety management system general framework, version 2.0 2020

7.4 Incidents

The emergency plan should clearly set out how to respond, investigate and report on incidents arising from educational work activities, including but not limited to:

- A procedure to follow in the event of an incident, including the administration of first aid, calling for emergency services and contacting families of injured persons.
- A procedure for recording and retaining information on all incidents.
- A procedure for the reporting of incidents internally.
- A procedure for reporting of incidents externally to spsa and other relevant authorities.

Further information on incident reporting can be found in OSHJ-COP-17 :incident reporting and investigation.

8 References

OSHJ-COP-01: risk management and control

OSHJ-COP-03: OSH control of contractors

OSHJ-COP-05: electrical safety at work

OSHJ-COP-11: management of hazardous substances

OSHJ-COP-12: manual handling and ergonomics

OSHJ-COP-14: management of OSH illness and disease

OSHJ-COP-15: employee welfare and wellbeing

OSHJ-COP-16: first aid at work

OSHJ-COP-17: incident reporting and investigation

OSHJ-COP-18: emergency preparedness and response

OSHJ-COP-18: waste management

OSHJ-COP-20: management of asbestos

OSHJ-GL-06: employer supplied transport

OSHJ-GL-21: managing buildings safety

OSHJ-GL-26: training and competence

OSHJ-GL-27: new and expectant mothers

UAE Ministry of Education: education sector environment, occupational health & safety management system general framework, version 2.0 2020

Administrative decision no.17 Of 2019 on the regulation of school transport activity in the emirate of Sharjah