

Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment in Facilities Aimed Exclusively at Educating Foreign Children (so-called “schools for foreign students”) Summary of Interim Report (Tentative Translation)

August, 2021

1. Background

It is important to ensure the health and hygiene at schools for foreign students to ensure the health of all children residing in Japan and to keep the people safe.

For this reason, the Advisory Committee including local governments, operators of schools for foreign students, supporters, health and hygiene specialists and other stakeholders gave consideration to efforts and improvement measures relating to the health and hygiene of schools for foreign students including countermeasures against COVID-19.

2. Current situation

Efforts for measures against COVID-19 in schools for foreign students

- Issuance of notifications regarding measures against COVID-19 similar to Article 1 schools to schools for foreign students that have been approved as a miscellaneous school; support for them to purchase health and hygiene products
- Distribution of e-newsletters; creation of multilingual versions of the ‘COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines for Schools’
- Notification of applications for workplace vaccinations for COVID-19 have started; distribution of the simple antigen kits

Survey on actual situations of the health and hygiene environment of schools for foreign students (from April to May, 2021)

- The number of survey targets is 161; the number of responses is 80 (rate 50%)
- Around 70% of the facilities set up infirmaries; around 80% provide health checks for students; around 90% entry accident insurance programs; around 40% assign a school doctor; around 30% assign a nursing teacher
- Schools for foreign students utilized support provided by the local governments rather than from the national government regarding measures against COVID-19

<Reference> Composition of schools for foreign students

Schools stipulated in Article 1 of the School Education Act (“Article 1 schools”); miscellaneous schools that have been approved by the prefectural governor; facilities that have not been approved (“non-approved facilities”)



3. Issues

(1) Issues related to monitoring schools for foreign students and the children attending schools for foreign students

- It is difficult to ascertain the administrative system and operation of schools for foreign students and the information of students who go to schools for foreign students.
- In order to monitor schools for foreign students, it is necessary to collaborate with schools, administration and support groups, and to provide information through foreign communities.

(2) Issues that arise when taking measures for the health and hygiene environment at schools for foreign students

Underlying principles of the health and hygiene environmental standards based on the situations of schools for foreign students

- Consideration of promoting the utilization of the ‘COVID-19 Infection Control Manuals and Guidelines’ and ways of standards following the characteristics and system of schools for foreign students

Obtaining appropriate information

- It is necessary to consider effective ways of providing information for ensuring that sufficient information is delivered to non-approved facilities.

Issues of mental care and others

- It is important to appropriately correspond to mental healthcare and defamation.

(3) Issues related to the support system when taking measures for the health and hygiene environmental at schools for foreign students

Relationships between local governments and schools for foreign students

- It is necessary to support schools for foreign students under cooperation between related departments of the local government.

Perspectives of wide range support for schools for foreign students

- It is necessary to consider perspectives over wide areas so as to support children who go to school across prefectures and municipalities.

4. Future direction

Items that should be responded immediately

- Survey on further monitoring the actual situations
- Implementation of local surveys to ascertain more detailed information on the actual situations and needs of health and hygiene environments
- Appropriate dissemination of information
- Management of websites and SNS accounts for schools for foreign students; dissemination of information through a variety of stakeholders
- Detailed and effective supports
- Building relationships between the local governments and schools for foreign students; development of systems for providing necessary support
- Establishment of a nationwide liaison system that function both to provide consultations on health and hygiene and to disseminate information, which will lead to the accumulation of necessary knowhow

Items to consider in the future

- Consideration of ways to develop standards for the health and hygiene environments of schools for foreign students following the differences in the establishment form of schools for foreign students, the scale of their facilities, and the cultures of foreign countries and Japan