



P.O. Box 3361,
17th Street, Al Mushrif Area
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.

St. Joseph's School

مدرسة القديس يوسف

Tel: +9712 4463646

Fax: +9712 4461772

E-mail: info@stjosephsschool.ae

Web: www.stjosephsschool.ae

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Policy Reference: SJS/SP/2025

Approved By: School Leadership Team

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Introduction

At St. Joseph's School, sustainability serves as a cornerstone of collective well-being, embodying the principle of "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, 1987). Implementing sustainable practices is essential in shaping a culture that prioritizes collective care for the well-being of our school's physical environment. This ethos extends to nurturing student competencies as global citizens who comprehend their impact on broader environmental issues and their pivotal role in contributing to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This policy outlines the requirements for St. Joseph's School to promote and foster an awareness and understanding of sustainability throughout our school communities.

Purpose

- To implement a focused strategy aimed at promoting sustainability.
- To raise awareness within the school community about their sustainability strategy and policies.
- To prepare students and staff with the knowledge and skills to manage their resources wisely and to recognize their role in tending to the planet's future.
- To monitor their own progress in implementing their sustainability strategy actively.
- To actively strive for continuous improvement in their sustainability and environmental wellbeing

Policy

1. Sustainability Strategy

1.1 As part of their overall wellbeing strategy, St. Joseph's School will implement a focused and results-driven sustainability strategy, which includes:

1. Our school's overall sustainability goals and vision include:
 - a. Detailing how we will contribute to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
 - b. To ensure alignment with the goals and policies of the Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) and other relevant entities.
 2. The sustainability policies that St. Joseph's school will develop and promote aim to successfully implement its sustainability strategy, aligning with ADEK wellbeing policies.
 3. Our school will outline key sustainability initiatives, interventions, and action plans, ensuring they accommodate the needs of students with additional learning needs, in accordance with the ADEK Inclusion Policy.
 4. Outlining how we will empower students as agents of change, with a focus on community service dedicated to sustainability and environmental wellbeing.
 5. St. Joseph's School demonstrates leadership commitment to ISO 14000 standards.
 6. Our school will establish mechanisms for measuring and monitoring the delivery of the sustainability strategy.
- 1.2** The school will engage local community members and partners to deliver the sustainability strategy.

Sustainability Governance:

The Sustainability team at the school will lead the oversight of the sustainability strategy and take responsibility for the following:

1. To oversee the development and implementation of the school's sustainability strategy and associated policies and initiatives.
2. Will conduct an annual review of the school sustainability strategy and its implementation:
 - a. To track the progress towards the goals outlined in the sustainability strategy, including the specified targets and expected milestones.
 - b. To supervise the creation, implementation, and analysis of sustainability monitoring and evaluation measures.
3. To create action plans based on the findings gathered from the monitoring and evaluation measures.

4. To revise the sustainability strategy and/or pertinent policies and initiatives as needed, in accordance with the insights obtained from the monitoring and evaluation measures.
5. The team will ensure that the sustainability strategy and related wellbeing policies and initiatives take into account the abilities, needs, and involvement of students with additional learning needs, aligning with the ADEK Inclusion Policy.
6. To ensure compliance with relevant ADEK wellbeing policies.

2. Integration of Sustainability and Environmental Wellbeing

2.1 Curriculum Integration:

St. Joseph's School will integrate sustainability principles into the curriculum across all grades through various subjects.

1. Our school will promote environmental awareness, conservation, and sustainable practices through educational programs, projects, and extracurricular activities, with the aim of minimizing the procurement and use of non-renewable and environmentally unfriendly resources.
2. St. Joseph's School will engage students in practical learning experiences, such as switching off lights, gardening, rainwater harvesting, waste management, recycling, and energy conservation initiatives. These activities will utilize the school grounds as sources of teaching and learning opportunities for students.

2.2 Psychological Environment:

St. Joseph's School will identify and establish wellness spaces within the school premises that promote wellness, calmness, and a connection to the natural environment. This will be achieved through design strategies that prioritize good air quality, provide access to outdoor spaces, and ensure access to natural light, in accordance with the ADEK Student Mental Health Policy.

2.3 Physical Space:

Our school will integrate sustainability principles into building design and construction phases for future construction projects.

2.4 Energy Efficiency:

Our school will comply with building design requirements for upcoming projects, which mandate effective energy-saving measures (Etidama), in accordance with the ADEK Buildings and Facilities Policy.

2.5 Lost and Found Items:

Our school will develop a plan for the sustainable disposal of lost and found items at the end of every academic year. This may involve donating items to charities, sanitizing and reusing items within the school for projects.

2.6 Responsible Food Consumption:

St. Joseph's School will promote sustainable eating practices, aligning with the ADEK Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy.

2.7 Sustainable Procurement:

The school will promote sustainable practices in its procurement and contract processes.

2.8 Safe Sustainable Transportation:

St. Joseph's School will raise awareness of the environmental impact of transportation and promote sustainable transportation options for the school community. This includes advocating for low-emissions vehicles (operated by gas rather than gasoline), carpooling, walking, and cycling, as appropriate and safe for the school's location and accessibility.

2.9 Advocacy for “zero waste” at school events:

St. Joseph's School will encourage the entire school community (students, parents, and staff) to contribute positively during school events. This includes monitoring food quantities at PTA meetings and other events at school, minimizing food waste, promoting the use of recyclable packaging, and exploring bulk purchases with compostable or recyclable wrapping for potential reuse.

2.10 Sustainable Technologies:

Our school will promote a green digital footprint by prioritizing digital resources over printed ones when suitable. We will also advocate for the purchase of refurbished electronic equipment (such as computers, printers, and laptops) using older parts to refurbish these devices, reducing the energy required to manufacture new ones and lowering their overall carbon footprint.

2.11 Environmental Wellbeing Policies:

The school will collaborate with the school community to develop additional policies tailored to its specific needs, aiming to promote environmental wellbeing in line with its sustainability strategy. These policies may include initiatives to minimize various types of waste, such as banning single-use plastics, promoting zero-waste lunches and snacks, and collecting recyclable materials for school projects.

3. Awareness of Sustainability Strategy and Policies

3.1 Awareness Promotion:

The school will promote awareness of its sustainability strategy, policies, and initiatives to students, staff, parents, and other relevant stakeholders as part of its broader wellbeing strategy, aligned with the ADEK Wellbeing Policy.

3.2 Reward and Recognition:

St. Joseph's School will establish a reward and recognition policy to encourage and appreciate the contributions of students, staff, parents, and the broader community towards achieving sustainability. This policy aims to serve as a powerful motivational tool in cultivating a culture of sustainability.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 Our school will regularly monitor its sustainability strategy and evaluate the effectiveness of any implemented policies and initiatives to foster continuous improvement.

4.2 St. Joseph's School will include a dedicated section on sustainability and environmental wellbeing in its annual wellbeing survey. This section aims to gauge the community's understanding of sustainable practices, satisfaction with the school's sustainability strategy (including associated policies and initiatives), and gather feedback on improvement opportunities.

4.3 Our school will regularly update its whole-school sustainability strategy based on community feedback, as well as alignment with best practices and evolving sustainability standards.

4.4 Additional Evaluation:

St. Joseph's School will administer any ADEK-mandated evaluation measures to assess its sustainability practices as required.

5. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with the ADEK's regulations, policies, and requirements, notwithstanding any other penalties imposed by Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law or any other relevant law. Concerning the Penal Code or any other relevant law. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the school is found to be in violation of its obligations.

Approved by:

Prestina Rocha
Principal

