



The School of St Jude

History and procedures of Health Checks at The School of St Jude:

The Health Checks at The School of St Jude have been occurring on an annual basis for over 10 years. Initially commenced because the Tanzanian Government requires the height and weight of all students, the school has sought to have a volunteer Health Check Team to assist with the process and to check on the overall health of the students. What the checks entail has evolved over the years based on feedback from the school, the Health Check Team volunteers and knowledge of available health services in the region.

Guided by the shared understanding that healthy students learn more effectively, the focus of the health checks is to identify any student with health and wellbeing issues that may affect their ability learn – both as individuals and also as a collective group. To this end, the Health Check Team provide advice to parents for specific students but also general advice on the patterns of issues seen by the team that can be addressed by the school for their student population as a whole.

The international team members are only present for 2 weeks of the year and not registered to practice in Tanzania, so no treatment is provided. For sustainability and continuity of care, advice is provided to assist parents and the school to link with the most relevant local health service providers.

In the early days of the school all students had a relatively comprehensive health check but growth to more than 1800 students has now exceeded the capacity of the volunteer team. Now the approach is slightly different – not every student is seen every year. Students at key stages of their school life and development have a full check which has enabled the team to spend more time with specific students such as those that are new to the school, those that require follow up from previous years and those that teachers and boarding staff are concerned about.

At the School of St Jude, we maintain that parents/guardians are responsible for their child regarding any medical issues that may occur. If the school does all the work regarding a medical issue, it leaves our parents disempowered and inactive in the future which will cause a big problem for the school.

It is therefore very important for you to know that the school has a specific set of procedures on how to respond to issues identified during the health checks. These procedures need to be followed in order for the school to continue to maintain support for the students' physical and emotional wellbeing whilst empowering the parents/guardians in their role. We understand that as a health professional who identifies a problem it is your duty to act on it, but please be aware that it can take time here in Africa so if it doesn't get done while you are here, then be assured that it will be followed up after the health checks finish.





The School of St Jude

Campuses and Health Check Teams:

From 2008, there have been 3 campuses at The School of St Jude – two Primary campuses and one Secondary Campus. The two Primary campuses are based at Moshono (Arusha) whereas our Secondary campus is based in Usa River which is around 30 kilometers out of Arusha. In July 2016, the two Primary campuses were merged into one big primary campus with one headmaster and one welfare deputy only. For the purpose of the health checks, we still refer Lower Primary, Upper Primary and Secondary.

Over the last few years we have aimed to have 3 teams to do the medical checks – one for each campus – this is likely to be maintained in 2020. Each team has been made up of 2 doctors, a health professional experienced in eye checks and 2 helpers. The hearing team may work with these teams or separately depending on the timetable and requirements. Having allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and orthoptists has been highly valued, particularly for providing input and advice for students with specific health issues such as vision impairment and cerebral palsy. Nurses, particularly those experienced in child health, provide valuable input including supporting the school nurses in their professional development.

The Community Relations Team, including the school nurses and Community Service Interns, will also provide assistance, particularly for interpreting, if they have free time from their other obligations.

A normal medical check day:

Moshono team generally starts at 8.30 am while the Smith Campus team usually go on an early morning bus to see the students at Usa River.

The health checks usually end at about 3.15 pm and then there is paperwork and computer work to complete. Generally the work day finishes around 5 pm, but often the documentation and preparations for the next day need to be done in the evening. We usually have a briefing just after dinner every night.

A timetable is supplied when you arrive and meet the other team members. Teams are usually allocated at this stage but will change over the fortnight.

In the past, records of students' heights, weights and health issues have been recorded in a variety of ways so the school has ongoing access after the team leaves. This enables the school to create reports, follow up those students with issues during the year, and collate information for the health check team to follow up on the next year. We are now using an online database called REDCap (a mature, secure web application for building and managing online surveys and databases). The team plays an important role assisting with data entry throughout the two weeks. An introduction to REDCap will be given to those who have never used it. The time needed for this data entry will be scheduled in your timetables for the two weeks you are here.





Job descriptions for the Health checkers:

Doctors:

- The doctors are expected to undertake a basic check only e.g. ears, ask about hearing, eyes, nose, mouth, throat, heart and respiratory system, and the skin. Keep an eye on rashes, fungus, wounds on the rest of the body, especially the feet.
- Issues identified are to be written down in the student record and recall forms so that we have the information for further follow up. The student record includes notes from previous years so you can check progress and see if further follow up is required. The Team Leader will give you instructions on how to fill out the student record and recall forms. The terminology and follow up recommended should follow the standardized policies and procedures as much as possible.
- It is very important that the information you have on the forms **IS NOT** visible to the students. We have students with HIV here at school who at this point know they have HIV and are getting support and counseling, but it is not something the other students know about and therefore we need to ensure that this information is not visible to the other students.
- If you identify a student with a special problem that you want to look into further sooner rather than later – write down the student’s name and class, and a member of the Community Relations Team or our nurses will find the student during break or lunch so you can do a further check on them.
- It is also expected of the doctors to look at our special cases (a brief history will be provided) as we would value a second opinion.
- If there are any emergency cases, these need to be notified directly to a member in the Community Relations Team so we can arrange the relevant follow up with the school leaders and nurses.
- Doctors need to bring their own stethoscopes and auroscopes.

Apart from doctors we need the following per team:

- One person to do eye sight check. It is best that the volunteers undertaking eye checks bring their own specialized equipment. More information will be given regarding this closer to the time.
- Two people to weigh and measure the height of the students. They also need to make sure that the students take off their shoes, socks and sweaters before entering the room to have their eye and doctor check. To increase local capacity and plan for future sustainability, School of St Jude’s graduates are now able to assist so the number of helpers required may be less.





The School of St Jude

As you can imagine it can get noisy and a bit chaotic, so the Team Leader can help explain systems that have worked in past years that have helped.

Over the last few years we have kindly been donated basic eye charts, stadiometers (to measure height) and scales.

Hearing team

The hearing check team will usually work independently of the other three teams due to the time it takes to undertake a hearing check and environmental conditions required. There is some equipment available at the school that has previously been donated. More information on this will be given closer to the time and discussions regarding people bringing their own equipment and recording methods can be had.

Heath Checks FAQ:

What are the main health conditions the students have?

The more common things the students have problems with are:

Ear wax build up, eye allergies, refractive errors with eyesight, rashes, fungal infection, tooth decay, URI (Upper respiratory infection), sores, wounds, abdominal pain, malaria.

Our more special cases include: club feet, muscular dystrophy, polio, asthma, hearing problems, anemia, cerebral palsy, albinism with vision impairment.

Do the students undergo routine immunizations?

Not through the school. Accessing vaccination via the country immunization program is the parents' responsibility. Starting in 2017, all new students in Primary will be required to provide a copy of their immunization cards to be put in their medical files.

Is there a program for treating intestinal worms?

As of 2011, the students at St Jude's and our cooks and cleaners are provided a deworming regimen of Albendazole 400 mg. This is currently provided twice a year.

Is there a standard school health screening program run in other government schools? If so, do you have any information on what is done there?

The only standard health check at local schools involves checking weight and height which is required by the government. Other health checks are not done.

Are students being taught about dental hygiene?

In previous years visiting dental students and other organisations (such as toothbrush and toothpaste companies) have given the students education about teeth and dental hygiene. Generous donations of toothbrushes and toothpaste to the primary school has provided us with the opportunity to organize workshops and demonstrations with the younger students, and





The School of St Jude

distribution of toothbrushes and toothpaste to primary school students. Boarding students are required to have toothbrushes and toothpaste

The Standard 1 curriculum includes lessons about personal hygiene for students during their first year at St Jude's. This includes tooth brushing; how to do it and how often it needs to be done.

It is important to realise that it is not common for people to go to a dentist in Tanzania. They would generally only go if they have tooth ache and still they often go to a GP instead to get antibiotics and painkillers. It is only when the GP tells them to go see a dentist that people here will go to the dentist.

Of note, many Tanzanians have weak teeth and stained teeth from the fluoride in the water and a high intake of sugar in their food and drinks.

All students from St Jude who are found with caries from the health checks are given a letter from the school with the explanation of the problem, how to care for their teeth and suggestion to go to the dentist for a check-up and treatment, then report back to the school. All students are followed up afterwards, however it is still the parents' responsibility to care for their child's dental hygiene.

Does the health check team do any psychological screening?

Because of the way the health checks run, it has not been possible to do formal psychological assessments. However, the health check team members remain alert for signs of problems and speak with the welfare staff of any concerns.

In 2016, a team member undertook a psychosocial needs analysis particularly focussing on the secondary school students and provided a report with recommendations to the school. In the years following this, team members (social workers & psychologists) have continued to work with students and staff regarding social and emotional wellbeing. Day long seminars have been provided to teachers by team members and welfare staff have had the opportunity to discuss common and complex situations with them. It is hoped that the health check team will continue to have members with expertise in this area to assist the school's development in this area.

What does the school do before the Health Checks start:

- Worm treatment twice a year
- HIV testing on all of our newly arrived students (Standard 1 and Secondary), students that have been recommended by our nurses and by doctors at health checks and, lastly, students who have lost a parent throughout the year. The new students also have a haemoglobin check.
- During our Student Selection Process, parents of successful students are asked if their child has any health issues and if yes, the history is written down for the Health Checks Team to review at the next visit.





The School of St Jude

- Prior to commencement of boarding, students are required to have a health check by a local doctor, including a haemoglobin check, and provide the report to the school.
- All homeroom teachers, boarding teachers and PE teachers are asked to list the names of students who they think may have problems for the doctors to check up on. This is explained at a staff meeting a month before the Health Checks so that the teachers can all take time to observe their students.
- All school nurses (day and boarding) are also asked to provide names of students they have noticed are often coming to the nurse's room with problems.
- Secondary students are receiving sex education once a year
- Our welfare students, who are looked after by our deputies, receive help from the school for their medical issues.
- All students with HIV receive multivitamins and special diet at school. If any students have severe anemia, malnutrition or other problems where a special diet is needed, this is provided as much as possible.

What does the school do after the Health Checks?

We have policies and procedures for many standard problems that are identified that we use to assist with follow up after the Health Check Team leaves. It is very important that the successful applicants in the Health Check Team make themselves completely familiar with these documents and use the same terminology. The staff involved at the school have minimal health backgrounds so we have found having standardised follow up as much as possible for common conditions assists them in communicating with the parents.

These policies and procedures also take in to account cultural aspects, as well as what health care is available and accessible in Arusha and surrounding regions.

In general, students with “everyday” illnesses are referred to the school nurse on the same day who either sends the student home for a check-up or takes the student to a health facility herself.

For students who have been identified with more complicated, serious problems, the Health Check Team Leader and relevant team members discuss options with the Community Relations Team and nurses. These are the school staff that will see that these students get the special care they need, taking in to account the family situation and available health care options.

Does the school have any contacts with doctors in Arusha?

Yes, The School of St Jude has a good contact with different hospitals around town plus specific doctors. Our best relationship is with an American pediatrician, Dr Matthews, at a hospital in Arusha town who we use for our students with asthma and our special cases.

Do all the students speak English?

No. In January every year, we have new Standard 1 classes with students who have never spoken any English before. When Health Checks take place there will always be a member of the Community Relations Team to help you with translation for these students together with the other students at Lower Primary as they might not always understand you correctly.





The School of St Jude

In some years, new students are accepted in to secondary school. Because their primary schooling was done in a government school where English is not spoken they will still be learning English and might not always understand you fully. Welfare staff will be around at Smith Campus to help you with translation for these students.

Are there any specific medical products that we can bring over to leave at the school?

In 2011, one of the teams brought over some antibacterial cream called Honey barrier. Our nurses here at school just loved it and has been asking if it is possible to brought over again.

Splints, such as SAM splints, are useful. Donations of spacers for students with asthma can also be used.

NOTE: Please do not bring any medication (e.g: antifungal cream, antibiotic or other prescription drugs) with you as we do not provide that for the students. We have a strict rule that says the parents are responsibility for their children and therefore they need to buy it themselves. These medicines are not that expensive and the parents will be able to provide it themselves.

You will be required to bring over equipment to help specifically with the Health Checks, particularly stationery and stickers.

A St Jude Wishlist can be provided for those who would like to bring other donations for the school.

Can I bring equipment that needs electricity or should it only be equipment using batteries?

Yes, you can easily bring your electrical equipment with you.

If you have any more questions regarding the Health checks, feel free to contact Jane Larkin through: janelarkin1@gmail.com or/and Charlotte (Manager of the Community Relations Team at the school) charlotte.p@schoolofstjude.co.tz

NB: Tanzania has strengthened their immigration law, therefore we will be in touch with the team after announcement to confirm which visa you will have to apply for. Please note that the cost may be up to 250 USD for the visa.

Applications close on 30th September 2019
Late applications may be considered.

