



ABUDHABI INDIAN SCHOOL, BRANCH 1

STAFF AND STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

Name of Policy : **Students Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy**

Approval for this Policy given by : **Principal**

Responsibility for its update : **Principal**

Policy applies to : **To all the staff and students of Abu Dhabi Indian School, Branch 1**

Date of Approval : **10-01-2021**

Proposed Date of Review : **06-01-2025**

Principal's Signature :





ABUDHABI INDIAN SCHOOL, BRANCH 1

STAFF AND STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

Introduction:

At ADIS Al Wathba School, we are committed to promoting and supporting the mental health and Wellbeing of every individual through creating a whole school ethos in which the whole community (children, staff, parents) feel secure, know that they are valued and are encouraged in their learning, growth and social development and recognize how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is in our lives.

Individuals are better prepared for learning when they are healthy, safe and happy; therefore Wellbeing is the responsibility of the whole school community. The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview of what Wellbeing is and the systems and procedures in place to support the Wellbeing needs of our children and staff.

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health and wellbeing is promoted and valued.
- To ensure ADIS Al Wathba School provides a safe, secure, supportive and stimulating environment that is responsive to the personal, social and emotional needs of all members of the school community.
- To encourage co-operation, respect and consideration for and between all members of the school community.
- To promote warm and positive relationships between children, staff and parents.
- To build an atmosphere of trust.
- To help children and staff grow in self-esteem, confidence and independence of thought.
- To provide children and staff with opportunities to develop their resilience and coping strategies.

- To encourage the children and staff to value one another and to respect the views of other members of their community.
- To prepare the children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- To provide staff for the opportunities to develop professionally and personally.
- Bullying is not tolerated at any levels.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognize the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing:

We use the World Health Organization's definition of mental health and wellbeing "a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- To feel confident in themselves.
- To be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- To be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- To cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- To manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- To learn and achieve.

Warning Signs:

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the school counsellor and the relevant safeguarding/pastoral staff.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn

- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Confidentiality:

We must be honest with regards to confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We would never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent/carer, such as students who we believe to be in danger of harm. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Safeguarding Lead/ Counsellor as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support.

Approach to Wellbeing:

Wellbeing is also referred to as Emotional Literacy, Emotional Intelligence or Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). Research indicates that Emotional Intelligence predicts approximately 80% of lifelong achievement in comparison to conventional IQ, which predicts between 4% and 20% (Gross, 2000). Therefore, the Wellbeing program at ADIS Al Wathba School aims to develop the following

underpinning skills of Emotional Intelligence to maximize opportunities for individuals to succeed in today's curriculum and beyond:

- self-awareness
- managing feelings
- motivation
- empathy
- social skills

As a school it is essential to develop these aspects of learning within the school as:

- They underlie almost every aspect of our lives
- They enable us to be effective learners
- They enable us to get on with other people
- They enable us to be responsible citizens

Equal Opportunities to all students:

The school recognizes the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse school community which includes people from differing backgrounds, with different skills and abilities.

The school will take positive steps to create school culture through its governing body, supervisors and other employees, in which students can feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance, irrespective of their individual differences.

This commitment extends to the whole school community and others connected with it. The school is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

Parental involvement:

Parents are responsible for sharing with the school any changes in circumstances within the home that may affect the wellbeing of their children. If children require additional support for their social and emotional wellbeing, this will be discussed with parents through each step so that the school and home are working together to support the needs of the children.

The Role of the Counsellor:

Counsellors, wellbeing staff members and the student wellness ambassadors (elected by the school) will have appropriate knowledge of how to communicate with and support all members of the school community and demonstrate an understanding of their circumstances.

The Wellbeing team will support students who are emotionally vulnerable including those who have been affected as a result of the COVID 19. Any incident that has had a negative impact upon a students' emotional health and wellbeing will be supported by the team.

Identifying, referring and supporting children with Wellbeing and mental health needs:

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

All students have the opportunity to visit the counsellor's office to speak to her in confidentiality. Regular student council meets are held to understand if there are any concerns from the students.

Monitoring and review:

The School Principal, Vice Principal, Grade Supervisors are committed to view the impact of the Mental Health and emotional wellbeing as part of the school's strategy and improvement plans.

Reporting Procedures

The Teacher/Student if identify an issue related to the wellbeing of a student will inform the school counsellor who will have a discussion with the affected student and with the permission of the student, the counsellor will speak to the parents and teachers to bring a difference in the student's environment.

Also the same will be discussed with the school authorities – Principal/Vice Principal to support the student.