



مدرسة جيمس ميلينيوم الخاصة
GEMS Millennium School
Sharjah

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Reviewed By: Counselling Team

April 2025

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POLICY ON WELLBEING

Philosophy of Wellbeing

Mental health is a basic aspect of wellbeing and is as critical as physical health. When we feel well, we are able to work well, appreciate our free time and contribute effectively to our communities. Developing, nurturing and sustaining wellbeing is a lifelong process.

The school, situated within the community, is a powerful context for a healthy development of knowledge and growth and plays a key role in developing and enhancing young people's wellbeing, as a large proportion of time is spent in school during their formative years.

At GEMS Millennium School, we firmly believe in upholding the wellbeing of our students and faculty to ensure a happy learning and teaching environment. A robust framework of Wellbeing is embedded in the school's Mission statement through the acronym '**ACCEPT**'

- Appreciate and respect the culture and traditions of the United Arab Emirates
- Cultivate important values like tolerance, integrity, and benevolence
- Create opportunities to instill a responsible global outlook
- Educate and foster each child's wellbeing
- Pique students' interests and expand their potential to the fullest by means of varying challenges
- Train future leaders through innovation in education and treasuring of cultural heritage.

Vision statement:

We at GMS, are committed to nurturing positive mental health and emotional wellbeing of every student, staff, and members of our community by providing support, knowledge, and skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. We strive to create a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment where each one can flourish physically, emotionally and socially. We strongly believe that positive mental health and emotional wellbeing is the foundation to live a harmonious and successful life.

Statement of commitment

We at Gems Millennium School, Sharjah, are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and volunteers. Our bottom up- approach and inclusive culture allows all voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all.

We recognize that mental health and emotional wellbeing are fundamental to ensuring members of GMS can participate fully in school, be that as a recipient or provider of education. We also recognize that positive mental health and emotional wellbeing of those around us at home contributes to our ability to engage at school.

Our aim is to,

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues and the elements of wellbeing.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of need for emotional support to all students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with students of special needs and determination.
- Provide the right support to students and know where to sign post them and their parents/care givers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from senior leaders that staff may need emotional support in relevance to addressing their wellbeing needs.
- Instill a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behavior and welfare around school.

The promotion of mental health and emotional wellbeing is embedded in our day-to-day work with our students. Guidance about identifying mental ill health and procedures for supporting students and staff with emotional wellbeing issues are provided in several of our policies. these include:

- Child Protection and safe guarding – the key policy enshrining our commitment and procedures aimed at preventing ‘impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development’ – in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Health and Safety Policy – ensures that everyone is enjoying a state of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Wellbeing Policy – emphasized that mental health is as critical as physical health thus upholding happy learning and teaching environment.
- Anti-bullying – providing guidelines on how staff can support those experiencing bullying and recognizing its potential impact on mental health.
- Student e-safety – consider how behavior online can impact on wellbeing and what is in place to protect our students

We recognize that promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing for staff is core to ensuring successful outcomes for our students as well as benefiting staff themselves. We maintain a focus on the wellbeing of our staff on a day-to-day basis through building an institutional culture, along with supportive line management.

Comprehensively GMS adopts the Mental Health and Wellbeing Bloom as its overall strategy:



In line with the school's vision & mission statement, of nurturing a happy and inspiring learning environment, GEMS Millennium School strives to offer opportunities that facilitate the holistic development of its students. We **strive to mold** our students to be versatile, adaptable and empowered to exceed expectations at any given situation.

~~The school plays a crucial role in supporting the academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of all its students. The school community engages in a collaborative process of change throughout the year to improve specific areas of school life & beyond that impact and improve the wellbeing of students.~~

~~Systems and procedures are well established to enable the school community of staff, students, parents & all stakeholders to feel valued and heard. Thus, they work together to promote an ethos that enables all children to feel, safe, secure and happy which in turn prepares them to learn effectively and equips them with the skills to cope in life.~~

Our Mental Health and wellbeing policy is:

- Child-centered.
- Fair and inclusive.
- Strong partnerships with parents and the wider community.

This policy sets out the vision and ambition of the school to ensure that the experience of our children from the early years throughout their secondary education will be the one that enhances, promotes, values and nurtures their wellbeing.

Our Approach to Mental health and wellbeing is:

- All subject planning will include activity-based learning that is linked to an ethos and environment that promotes respect, and values diversity
- leadership and management that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing
- staff development to support their own wellbeing and that of pupils and learners
- curriculum teaching and learning to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning
- enabling student voice to influence decisions
- identifying the need for and monitoring the impact of interventions
- targeted support and appropriate referral
- working with parents and carers

Curricular Provision:

- Teachers embed strategies promoting wellbeing into their curriculum and ensure it is imbibed & implemented by students.
- Wellbeing will be further emphasized into the school curriculum through four key subject areas- Moral Education, Value Education, Physical Education and Performing Arts.
- Tap-A-Genius programme enables students to explore their innate talent and skills and provides opportunities to excel.

Inbuilt Structural support for students:

At GEMS Millennium School, we support the emotional needs of all our students. We are committed to providing clear, consistent and accessible communication across different channels to support our students with their health and wellbeing.

The school supports and strengthens the student voice through:

- Election of student wellbeing leadership team and student council representatives.
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning.
- Counsellor Session (Class Talks), Class Teachers period and Moral Instruction classes to create a physically, emotionally and socially rich environment where key relationships can thrive and the students feel secure in their learning.
- Identified students receive individual counselling sessions with the School Counsellor for their socio-emotional needs and development.
- SLT and the School Counsellors have developed strategies and awareness campaigns to teach students on how to identify cyberbullying (whether as a victim or perpetrator) and mechanisms to protect one's self from being bullied/bullying further).
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and TDO's from the inclusion team, teaching assistants, subject teachers, and external agencies in the form of LSA's where appropriate.
- Celebrating successes and achievements in the classroom through Dojo points and 'Star Student of The Month' certificates.

- An exciting and varied range of extra-curricular events/competitions.
- Opportunities for intellectual, physical and social development.
- Encouraging independence in learning using a range of teaching styles appropriate to students' age and ability.

Staff wellbeing:

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognize the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing. GEMS Millennium School provides a safe and supportive environment for teachers through the following measures:

- A safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.
- Providing growth opportunities such as subject webinars, workshops and training programmes.
- Ensuring motivation through appreciations and incentives, provided monthly.
- Conducting psychoeducational workshops.
- Having regular peer and management supervisions.
- Having staff picnics yearly to develop a healthy relationship between the teachers.

Parental Involvement:

The inclusion of parents or guardians in the education system is a crucial aspect in the lifelong development and learning of the student. This aspect is incorporated through:

- An open-door policy for parents.
- Regular parent meetings with teachers regarding the academics of the student.
- Parent Committee, members that raise suggestions, scheme proposals and concerns of the parent community and work on the same issues with the school management.
- Parent workshops.
- Engagement of parents in extracurricular activities and themed special occasions.
- Regular pulse calls to the parent to keep them updated with their child's development.

School Counsellor Roles & Responsibilities:

- Open and maintain a file for any student referred to the counsellor.
- Conduct observations and document these in reports.
- Provide counselling to vulnerable students to support the development of their social and emotional skills.
- Raise awareness of the role of the school counsellor within the school.
- Run the Anti-bullying campaign within the school.
- Devise programs and policies to curb negative behavior and promote positive behavior.
- Raise awareness of mental wellness among students and parents.
- Create student leadership opportunities in the form of training students to be mentors.
- Appointing a 'Buddy' for children who are still finding their ground in school who motivate and encourage them.

Monitoring & Review:

- Principal and the Wellbeing Team are committed to reviewing the impact of the Wellbeing policy as part of the school's strategic direction and improvement plans. This policy should be used in conjunction with other policies.
- Staff and students' questionnaires and surveys provide an opportunity throughout the year to improve practice and monitor outcomes.
- Feedback from the student wellbeing team and student council representatives.

Next Review Date: March 2026