

Wellbeing Policy

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1. RATIONALE

Individuals are better prepared for learning when they are healthy, safe and happy; therefore Wellbeing is the responsibility of the whole school community. At Amity Private School, Sharjah we are committed to promoting and supporting the Wellbeing of every individual through creating a whole school ethos of I CARE in which the whole community (children, staff and parents) feel secure, know that they are valued and are encouraged in their learning, growth and social development . At Amity We provide a safe, secure, supportive and stimulating environment that is responsive to the personal, social and emotional needs of all members of the school community.

2. AIMS

This policy aims 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. The Wellbeing Policy also aims to develop the underpinning skills of Emotional Intelligence such as self-awareness, motivation, empathy and social skills to maximize opportunities for individuals to succeed in today's curriculum and beyond.

At APS our role is to ensure that students and staff:

- Are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. Being resilient allow them to grow in all the situations
- Learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.
- Empathize, respect and cooperate with all
- Get an environment to develop independent thinking that promotes self-esteem and confidence.
- Are provided opportunities to develop professionally and personally.
- Follow zero tolerance on bullying in any form.
- Are encouraged to pursue a healthy life style.
- Balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities

3. 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".

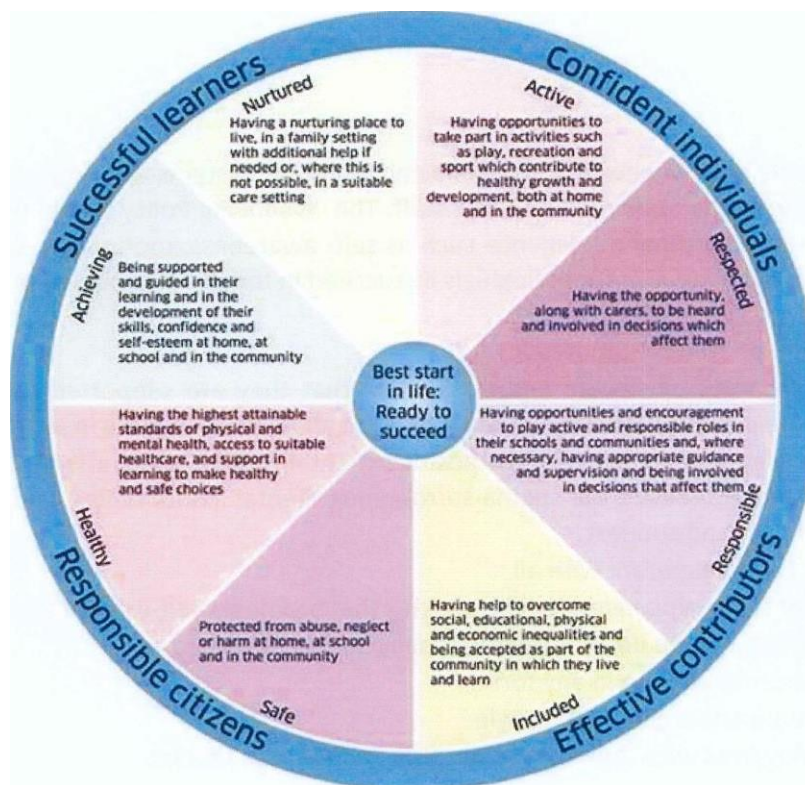
At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for each child, parent and staff. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialized, targeted approaches aimed at identified vulnerable pupils and families.

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all our children and staff to:

- Feel confident in themselves.
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognize and respond to challenges in mental health. We recognize as a school that, by developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health challenges. This policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all stakeholders. It should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, the Inclusion policy where a student has an identified special educational need and the safeguarding and child protection policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability

4. WELLBEING KEY INDICATORS



5. IDENTIFYING, REFERRING AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Wellbeing measures include Student surveys/staff observations focusing on any changes in behavior, attention and presentation that will feed into the identification process as well as any communication from the pupils regarding their emotions and feelings. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child can reach out to the Senior Leadership Team or any member of the Wellbeing Team.

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 primary care givers 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 primary care givers updated.

5.1. Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with wellbeing and mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Happiness survey to judge the happiness quotient of our children.
- Analyzing behavior, exclusions, visits to the medical room/school nurse and attendance. Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- Parental meetings in EYFS.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff through I Care desk.
- Enabling parents to raise concerns to any member of staff.

5.2. Staff Identification

It is recognized at Amity Private School, Sharjah that promoting staff health and emotional well-being should be an integral part of the whole school's approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, training /resources /sessions by the wellbeing team wellbeing will be made available for all staff. An open door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff is in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern

5.3. Confidentiality

The well-being Team maintains complete confidentiality of all the clients as per the code of counseling ethics. Sometimes the necessary information is shared with the Principal/Heads of School if the sharing of information is deemed necessary & is in the best interest of students. Honesty with regard to the issue of confidentiality has to be

maintained. If it is necessary for the school to convey the concerns about a pupil, it should be discussed with the child.

6. STRATEGIES

6.1. The Curriculum

We include awareness of healthy lifestyle throughout the curriculum. We encourage students to participate in school games, clubs and sports, to learn the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. We organize school visits to provide opportunities for students to explore the natural world.

Our school has introduced **Taqadam** — an hour long activity programme at the end of the school day where students get to do an activity of their choice. This promotes happiness-and wellbeing of our students as well as skill enhancement

6.2. Our School Clinic

Our team of School Doctor and Nurse Work to produce educational campaigns on a range of health related topics. These include campaigns on personal hygiene, germs, healthy eating, obesity, breast cancer awareness, etc.

Our clinic staff conduct checks of eyes, weight and height and monitor the obesity percentages in each phase. Checks are also conducted for lice. In addition, our clinic staff ensure all students are up to date on the required vaccinations.

6.3. Equal Opportunities

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, managers and other employees, in which people 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.

6.4. The School Environment

We ensure that our school environment promotes health and wellbeing. Students are encouraged to eat fruit as part of their daily snack. Primary Teachers conduct healthy lunch box checks and send home communication to parents in regards to any unhealthy items found within a student's lunchbox.

We do NOT encourage distribution of sweets on birthdays of students to avoid health complications for students with food allergies.

6.5. Parental responsibility

Parents must share 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. Parents are also involved in the group sessions and individual counseling sessions as and when required to support the student's well-being

6.6. I-Care

In an attempt to foster a supportive school environment for students Amity Private School, Sharjah has introduced the "I Care" initiative. It is a support system which gives the students a sense of safety and belonging so that they can thrive in school. The idea is to help students reach out to any school faculty to seek guidance in an informal setup for any issues they might be facing.

"I Care" desks have been placed in several easily accessible and visible areas of the school. Each case received at I-care will be documented and forwarded to the Counselling department and will be followed by the school counsellors.

7. MANAGING WELLBEING ISSUE

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

We recognize that many behaviors and emotional problems can be supported within the School environment, or with advice from.

8. WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Wellbeing Committee		
Chair	Principal	Ms. Archana Sagar
Deputy	Vice Principal	Mr. Himanshu Yadav
Members	Head of Primary	Ms. Suja Udaikumar
	Head of Middle School	Ms. Mridula Pande
	Inclusion Champion	Ms Nudrat Azam
	Counsellor	Ms. Chithu Elsa Thomas Ms. Karen Cabantug
	Head Operations	Mr. Anish Jose
	School Nurse	Ms. Jinu Isaac
	Head Of Physical Education	Ms. Reena Choudhary
	Head Boy	Eshaan Faisal Mansuri
	Head Girl	Amal Fatima Jabir

9. STAFF WELLBEING

Where possible, support is given by Senior Leaders or line managers to the staff.. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to priorities
- Allowing staff to meet and talk to their leaders as and when they need
- Supporting staff by giving them facility to keep their children in school under supervision of a staff nanny, whenever they have stay back
- Organizing staff recreational activities

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff is maintained.

9.1. Role of all staff in wellbeing

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Follow the school's policy on out-of-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices.
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

9.2. Role of Line Managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgmental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

9.3. Role of SLT

Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgmental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through surveys and structured conversations

- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the Amity Sharjah teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.

Appendix A

Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues.

Below, is the information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school aged children.

The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website. Some pages are aimed primarily at parents and they are listed here because we think they are useful for school staff too.

Self-harm

Self-harm describes any behavior where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online support: www.selfharm.co.uk

Books

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2012) *A Short Introduction to Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People Who Self-Harm*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Depression

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all , but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online support

Depression Alliance: www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

Books

Christopher Dowrick and Susan Martin (2015) Can I Tell you about Depression?: A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online support:

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Books

Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) Can I Tell you about Anxiety?: A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Obsessions and compulsions

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviors we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms - it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online support

www.ocduk.org/ocd

Books

Arnita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) Can I Tell you about OCD?: A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Susan Connors (2011) The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Suicidal feelings

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

Online support:

Prevention of young suicide UK - POPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

On the edge: Child Line spotlight report on suicide:

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventingabuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childlinespotlight/

Books

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Selfharm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Terri A.Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) *Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Post intervention*. New York: Routledge

Eating problems

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviour that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviour around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

Online support:

www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders

Eating Difficulties in Younger Children and when to worry:

www.inourhands.com/eatingdifficulties-in-younger-children

Books:

Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) *Can I tell you about Eating Disorders? A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2012) *Eating Disorders Pocketbook*. Teachers' Pocketbooks