

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Star International School



Approved by: Ms.Dolly Goriawala **Date:** 01 September 2022

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by: February 2023

Policy Statement:

At Star International School Al Twar and Al Qusais, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and well-being of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play. At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- Support each other throughout the Star family.

Promoting a healthy lifestyle is integral to our curriculum, we recognise our role in ensuring students not only are physically fit and make healthy eating choices but they also take steps that enable them to experience mental well-being as well.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school vision and values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meet their needs
- Celebrating Mental Health Day annually
- Universal, whole school approaches.
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex long-term difficulties.

Scope:

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where students mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff:

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Dolly Goriawala (Principal) - Whole School's Well-being Lead,
- Agata Hartley - (Primary), Sean Lewis - (Secondary) - Designated Child Protection/Safeguarding and Pastoral Leads,
- Laura Dodds - (Primary), Emma O'Brian - (Secondary) - Deputy Designated Child Protection/Safeguarding Leads,
- Konnie Simms - (Primary) Staff Well-being Lead - Sabiha Shaikh (Secondary) Staff Well-being Lead,
- Agata Hartley, Sean Lewis, Rebecca Egan, Ashley Clark, Sol Wheatley - Student Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Team.
- Hima Mammen - Whole School Student Counsellor.

Signposting:

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs:

The school Principal will complete termly wellbeing trackers on specific and identified pupils, aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should

always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and the safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate. Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Talking about self-harm – including online self-harm in comments
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope

The Leuven Scales for Wellbeing and Involvement FS and Y1 Student Well-being:

- Level 1 - The child clearly shows signs of discomfort such as crying or screaming. They may look dejected, sad, frightened or angry. The child does not respond to the environment, avoids contact and is withdrawn. The child may behave aggressively, hurting him/herself or others.
- Level 2 - The posture, facial expression and actions indicate that the child does not feel at ease. However, the signals are less explicit than under level 1 or the sense of discomfort is not expressed the whole time.
- Level 3 - The child has a neutral posture. Facial expression and posture show little or no emotion. There are no signs indicating sadness or pleasure, comfort or discomfort.
- Level 4 - The child shows obvious signs of satisfaction (as listed under level 5). However, these signals are not constantly present with the same intensity.
- Level 5 - The child looks happy and cheerful, smiles, cries out with pleasure. They may be lively and full of energy. Actions can be spontaneous and expressive. The child may talk to him/ herself, play with sounds, hum, sing. The child appears relaxed and does not show any signs of stress or tension. He /she is open and accessible to the environment. The child expresses self-confidence and self-assurance.

Training:

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Working with Parents:

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

School Counselor Roles and Responsibilities:

- Open and maintain a file for any student referred to her
- Conduct observations
- Write up observation reports
- Maintain a case log detailing the reason for referral and details of each counselling session with the next steps noted
- Document and report child protection cases to the DSL and DDSL and to maintain records of all child protection cases
- Refer cases if needed to the Inclusion department to determine if there are concerns about specific barriers to learning
- Providing crisis management services
- Provide counselling for SEND students to develop their social and emotional skills.
- Attend meetings of the Student Behavior Management Committee
- Identify trends in the behavior that are a concern within the school
- Raise awareness of the role of the school counselor within the school
- Advocating for student services and students' best interests
- Providing case management services including, but not limited to, referrals to community resources, and collaboration with other professionals
- Run the anti-bullying campaign within the school
- Devise programs, policies, etc., to curb negative behavior and promote positive behavior
- Place students on a behavioral report and conduct follow up with teachers to determine if a student has met his/her targets
- Raise awareness of mental wellness among students and parents
- Create student leadership opportunities in the form of training students to be mentors, playground buddies or helping students to take on a school community project or external volunteering project

Monitoring and Review:

The SLT in liaison with the School Counsellor, Doctor and Nurse will monitor this policy to ensure that our students are taught the importance of living and maintain a healthy lifestyle. It will be reviewed on a regular basis, and at least once every year.