

# **THE INDIAN HIGH SCHOOL, DUBAI**

## **STUDENT WELLBEING POLICY**

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## 1. RATIONALE

Student wellbeing is an integral aspect of learning, individual development and participation in whole school life. At school everyone should be treated respectfully, every person needs to feel safe and secure and students need an environment that supports their learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem. Successful learning is, to a large extent, dependent on the quality of the learning environment and it is the human relationships in the school that most impact on the quality of this environment. Teaching and learning occur in environments that celebrate difference and diversity and respond to identity and cultural background.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Maintain in our school positive, tolerant and respectful relationships where students take responsibility for their behavior and where, in partnership the school and parents support student learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem.
- Focus on attributes and strengths that teach and support students to grow and learn from challenges and complexities.
- Create a culture where mutual responsibility taken by students, staff and parents for achieving a high standard of student wellbeing.
- Use co-operative and restorative approaches to resolving conflict.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

The student wellbeing policy aims to achieve the school vision of '*creating proactive global citizens*' through comprehensive and integrated strategies that support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of students. The policy takes into consideration, '**Wellbeing Matters**' the guiding framework for monitoring and improvement of wellbeing in Dubai private schools, in addition to UAE government's emphasis on promoting the **National Agenda for Wellbeing** and its effort to provide a better quality of life – while enhancing wellbeing in learning environments.

## 3. SCOPE

The Indian High Group of Schools is committed to excellence in education and student wellbeing is the responsibility of all members of staff and people working at the school. A mutually supportive approach between home and school is essential to each student's wellbeing.

## 4. OVERVIEW

In education, wellbeing is important for two reasons. The first is the recognition that schooling should not just be about academic outcomes but that it is about wellbeing of the 'whole child'; the second is that students who have higher levels of wellbeing tend to have better cognitive outcomes at school.

The student wellbeing procedure identifies a number of elements that affect student wellbeing. These can broadly be grouped into the following: creating a safe environment; ensuring connectedness; engaging students in learning; promoting social and emotional learning; and a whole school approach.

## 5. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

### Rights and Responsibilities of Students

- Treat others with respect and kindness.
- Express your ideas and feelings in a responsible manner.
- Tell your side of the story if you are accused of rule-breaking.
- Allow others to express their opinions, to show tolerance and respect.
- Complete work and to allow others to work without interference.
- Learn and obey all school rules.
- Be honest and truthful about your own behavior.
- Take care of your own and other people's property.

### Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/care givers

- Encourage their child to obey school rules and have a positive attitude toward school.
- Have access to the Principal, Section Supervisor and Class Teachers to discuss matters concerning their child's progress at school.
- Expect that their child receives a "fair go" in relation to discipline and educational programs.
- Ensure their child's regular attendance.
- Respect teacher's timetables by avoiding unnecessary interruptions.
- Encourage their child to respect the "rights" of others and have tolerance of different values and beliefs.

### Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

- Teach and meet the learning needs of all learners.
- Be free from disruption while teaching.
- Monitor acceptable student behavior.
- Draw on their expertise and professional judgement.
- Acknowledge positive behavior and deal assertively and effectively with challenges.
- Abide by the MOE *Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education* and the School policy on *Teacher Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*.

### Shared expectations

- School has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for.
- School values are based on Care and Compassion for self and others and act with integrity.

- Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- Doing Your Best - Seek to accomplish something worthy and pursue excellence
- Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view.
- Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life and take care of the environment
- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion - Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within the society, being included and including others
- Honesty and Trustworthiness - Be honest, sincere and seek the truth
- School expectations include: inclusive teaching practices, accessible educational provision for all students, parent/care giver partnerships and liaison, community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support, development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.
- School aims to address diversity by maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce with increased capacity to solve problems.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behavior is supported through fair and democratic classrooms and school environments, ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations, providing personalized learning programs where appropriate for individual students, empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.

## **6. WELLBEING FOR STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION**

School provides all students with the opportunity to achieve their best academically, emotionally and socially through:

- Providing high quality learning to enable the acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future
- Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued and success celebrated
- Enabling students to become active, responsible and caring members of the school and wider international community
- Monitoring the achievement and well-being of all our students and the quality/nature of the learning opportunities they are offered
- Tracking each student's academic, social and emotional progress and using the resulting knowledge to plan provision for the individual or groups of students.
- Correctly identifying and then seeking to overcome potential barriers to students' learning or their full participation in school life.
- Developing and deploying our resources to best reflect the various levels of need experienced by students.

- Taking care to ensure that vulnerable students, including those with identified additional or Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Disabilities are appropriately supported.
- Sharing any concern, we may have regarding a student with their parents and then seeking to work together with them, for the good of the student.
- Liaising closely with professionals from other student services or external agencies involved in the care and support of students.
- Ensuring that schools have access to appropriately qualified and experienced staff.
- Providing teaching and non-teaching staff with the support and training they need in order that their work promotes the best outcomes for each student.

## 7. WELLBEING INITIATIVES

Happiness and Wellbeing Centre at school has as its objective the empowerment of students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, address behavioral issues, develop coping strategies, and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing. Our mission is a comprehensive and whole-school approach to promote positive mental health/wellbeing and not just for individuals with identified need.

**1. Student Wellbeing Request Form for Counselling Support** – Self-advocacy is an important skill and the circle of happiness, inclusion and wellbeing initiated this process for students who wish to speak with the school counsellor. The student self-referral for counselling serves as a simple, recognizable way for students to communicate their requests to see the school counsellor. Counselling and Wellbeing Circle deals with all information provided in a sensitive and confidential manner.

**2. Parent Online Referral for Counselling Support** – We upgraded the confidential and secure service to support parents who have concern in regards to their child's behavioral, academic, or social issues through an online parent referral form. Once completed, the referral form is sent to the Leader for Provision who determines where the referral should go from that point. After discussing the case with the parent, the referral form and supporting documents are either forwarded to a teacher, school counsellor or supervisor depending on the issue or the type of need.

**3. We strengthen ways to boost student wellbeing through resources powered by PEEC, Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum.** The introduction of each lesson provides necessary context for students so that they can understand the real-world applications of the core wellbeing concepts and practices. Moral education teachers use this value-add resource during the last 15 minutes of the period and encourage students to engage with it during the week and share reflections.

**4. Project Evexia** (Greek for Wellbeing) IHS has developed its own, unique wellness program – Project Evexia. The program is truly by, for and of the students. Its motto is the commitment that “...we'll keep each other well”. Project Evexia is led by the ‘Wellbeing Champions’ of the student's councils of grades

5 to 12 and supported by the teachers. Every division has its own “Wellness Managers” to take care of the smallest unit – the classroom.

5. Circle of Happiness, Inclusion and Wellbeing implemented **‘Thrive Program’** where counsellors teach students the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for academic, career and social/emotional development. This Character Education Program uniquely termed as ‘Thrive Program’ is executed during counsellor’s productive proxy classes with students. The topics for the different grades have been identified based on the gap analysis from the ‘Dubai Student Wellbeing Census’ and common concerns that surface through student wellbeing requests.

6. School implemented **SC(A)RF** Initiative with the Vision: Create ardent individuals ready for college admissions and Mission: Enable the students to reach up to the full potential which will guide them in becoming independent and responsible individuals. Purpose: develop soft skills essential for high school students, empower students with skills for college readiness, instill qualities of being independent and equip students to prepare a winning college application. Why SC(A)RF? The acronym stands for: S - Social media C -Character building A -Academics R -Responsibility F -Financial literacy

We have integrated counselling with co-scholastic subjects: Dance, Art and Physical Education. DMT, ABC and Art Therapy interventions influence quality of life on various dimensions, for example, movement has improved vitality and fitness, dance has fostered joyful experiences, and interpersonal experiences has a positive influence on social integration.

7. **Dance Movement Therapy (DMT)** is the psychotherapeutic use of movement, based on the assumption of the interconnection of body and mind, and the healing power of dance.

8. **Activity Based Counselling (ABC)** is an innovative approach to group counselling where the group members actively participate in challenges that are designed to stimulate immediate feelings that are similar to those experienced in real life situations. Collaboration between school counsellors and physical education teachers resolves interrupting academic instruction to address personal/social concerns.

9. Integrating the **Expressive Arts into Counselling Practice** is used as a part of the strategy for a wide variety of behavioral, emotional, and mental health concerns. The focus of expressive arts therapy is on the therapeutic effect of the creative experience, and it highlights the human capacity to transform thoughts, emotions, and experiences into tangible shapes and forms.

10. School Counsellors offer tips and support parents to make good decisions through fortnightly infographic titled **‘IHS Wellness Program.’** Tips on motivation, dealing with behavioral concerns, positive attitude, overcoming stress etc. helps parents with proactive ways to support young learners.

### **Student leadership**

- Student Leadership is promoted at all levels in the school through explicit extra-curricular programs and curriculum
- Student Council Members undergo leadership training that fosters positive interpersonal skills among students and staff while executing various responsibilities.
- Student Wellbeing Managers develop and sustain a motivated learning community where students experience wellbeing and progress on a regular basis.

### **Co-curricular Activities**

- Physical Education is a vital component to our students' physical development and wellbeing. Our PE curriculum is both broad and balanced providing access to team and individual sports.
- Activities such as music and dance, allow students to develop both mental and physical wellbeing.

## **8. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM**

Schoolwide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) integrates academic, social, and emotional learning across all school contexts. Effective social and emotional learning program at school involves coordinated classroom practices that help students develop the following five key skills: Self-awareness, Self-management, Social-awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making. Promoting social and emotional development for all students in classrooms involves teaching and modeling social and emotional skills, providing opportunities for students to practice and hone those skills, and giving students an opportunity to apply these skills in various situations.

## **9. PROCEDURE DETAILS**

### **Teaching and learning**

- School takes into consideration aspects of and factors contributing to wellbeing in the delivery of teaching and learning.
- Students are provided with opportunities to connect, succeed and thrive that are relevant to their stages of learning and development.
- It is a priority that the learning programs in the school include enjoyable and valuable learning experiences for all students.

### **Learning and support**

- Students with identified learning needs benefit from personalized learning and support.

- Processes are developed within the school for the Early Intervention of students in need and at risk.
- Students with identified medical needs have an individualized health care plan explained in the health and safety policy.
- Parents are consulted and contribute to the planning to support their child's individual learning.
- Adjustments to the learning environment are made and documented as required.
- Enrichment classes are implemented and monitored for high achievers in the board classes (Grades 10 &12)
- Remedial program to address learners' need are implemented and monitored.
- Assessment of student achievement informs individual learning.

### **Behavior, discipline and character education**

- School implements a comprehensive and inclusive strategy to create an environment with clearly defined behavioral expectations as stated in the Student Code of Conduct policy.
- Child Protection Policy ensures that all students feel safe in the school campus.
- All members of the school community consistently implement the agreed strategy to create a positive teaching and learning environment.
- The school recognizes the importance of developing and shaping the character of the individual and maximizes opportunities for personal growth.
- Teaching and learning is not disrupted by unacceptable behavior in the classroom, on the playground and in activities for which the school is responsible.
- Whole school approaches to physical health and fitness, social skills and friendship, empathy and resilience, peer support and mentoring, student leadership, citizenship and community engagement contribute to the growth of individual and collective wellbeing.
- Student Code of Conduct policy is designed to provide an explicit definition of the minimal standards of personal conduct that the school expects of all its students.

### **Additional School Programs that promote Student Wellbeing**

- Regular student surveys to identify gaps and plan strategies that promote wellbeing.
- Friday WHEN program
- S.O.U.L program for board year students
- Student Self Reflection Form
- Student Feedback Survey through AGREE form
- Innovative projects and activities included in the Moral Education Program (Grade 5-12)
- Annual Picnic and Field Trips
- Yoga and meditation
- Pastoral care
- Pet Therapy to de-stress students
- Camps and visits



- Educational tours
- Talent's day and House Day programs
- Buddy system for learners to cope with academic challenges
- Celebrations of local, national and inter-national festivals
- Student Wellbeing Champion to plan strategies aiming at creating a positive and happy environment.

## **9. EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The school will review this policy annually and update accordingly to include changes in the law and guidance on good practice. The policy will be promoted throughout the school community.

## **10. DEFINITIONS**

- The PERMA Model represents the five core elements of happiness and well-being. PERMA basically stands for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishments.
- A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is used as a proactive action plan to address behavior(s) that are impeding learning of the student or others.

## **11. REFERENCES**

Student Wellbeing Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on:

- Wellbeing Matters, a guiding framework (KHDA)
- Assessment policy and procedure
- KHDA parent-school contract
- Attendance and punctuality endorsed by KHDA
- DSIB Inspection Handbook
- Inclusion policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Homework Policy
- Behavioral policy
- Child Protection policy
- I H S Cyber Security policy

## **12. EFFECTIVE AND REVISED DATES**

This policy has been in effect since 2017. The policy is reviewed annually and was last revised in September 2023.