

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

Policy Reviewed - March 2024
Date of Next Review- March 2025

Vision:

At The Indian Academy Dubai, we are committed to promoting the overall well-being and health of our students, employees, stakeholders, and community members. Our wellness policy outlines our dedication to creating a supportive environment that encourages and enables individuals to make positive lifestyle choices. This policy encompasses physical, mental, and emotional well-being, recognizing that a holistic approach to wellness leads to improved quality of life and enhanced productivity.

Objective:

Our school wellness policy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- **Promote Physical Health:** Provide opportunities for regular physical activity through physical education classes, extracurricular sports, and fitness programs. Offer nutritious meal options in the school cafeteria, focusing on balance and wholesome food choices.
- **Support Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing:** Integrate mental health education into the curriculum to raise awareness and reduce stigma. Establish a counseling support system that offers confidential guidance and resources to address students' emotional needs.
- **Create a Safe and Inclusive Environment:** Implement anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies to ensure a respectful and inclusive school atmosphere. Provide resources for conflict resolution and peer mediation to promote positive relationships among students.
- **Encourage Healthy Habits:** Educate students about the importance of proper hygiene, sleep, and self-care practices. Promote mindfulness and stress-reduction techniques through workshops and mindfulness sessions.
- **Foster Social Connections:** Organize social and cultural events, clubs, and activities that encourage students to connect with peers and build meaningful relationships.
- **Parent and Community Engagement:** Involve parents, guardians, and community members in wellness initiatives through workshops, seminars, and collaborative projects.

Curriculum:

We tailor the curriculum to the needs and interests of your students, considering their age, developmental stage, and cultural background. Incorporate real-life scenarios and examples that students can relate to, making the content more relevant and relatable. Engage students in hands-on activities, simulations, and interactive exercises that allow them to practice wellness skills in a real-world context.

We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue, and we ensure that opportunities to teach the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Healthy eating education is an important part of our school's curriculum, and the importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices are taught throughout the school. Students are encouraged to participate in school games clubs, and sports, so they learn the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Organize school visits to outdoor pursuit centers and provide opportunities for students to explore the natural world. Our school site is fully utilized in the interest of the students' physical and emotional development through playground activities.

Utilize art, music, drama, and creative writing to explore and express emotions, thoughts, and feelings related to wellness.

The School Environment

We ensure that our school environment promotes healthy eating.

Students are encouraged to eat fruit as part of their daily break time. Primary Teachers conduct healthy lunch box checks and send home communication to parents in regard to any unhealthy items found within a student's lunchbox.

All students are encouraged to bring in a water bottle so they can have access to water throughout the day.

Water dispensers are also provided in the school for additional access to drinking water.

Chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not permitted on the school premises or while the students are representing the school.

The school is aware of the possibility of food allergies within the school population, particularly nut allergies.

Parents of students who are on special diets for medical or religious reasons, or who have allergies, are asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable or foods which must be avoided.

School Canteen:

We only serve healthy food and drink for our school lunches.

The lunches are prepared by caterers who have committed to providing healthy food. They provide a vegetarian option each day, they always serve vegetables and fruit, and all lunches have a balanced nutritional value.

Parents of students who bring packed lunches will be made aware of our healthy eating policy and given clear guidance about what should be included in a healthy packed lunch. Students are taught not to share packed lunches and parents are reminded about the need to avoid sending in packed lunches containing nuts.

Our School Clinic

A dedicated space designed to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our students. Our clinic is not just a place for medical care; it's a sanctuary where students can find support, guidance, and resources to lead healthy lives.

Our experienced and caring staff is here to:

- Provide first aid and address minor injuries and illnesses during school hours.
- Conduct regular health screenings to monitor students' growth, development, and overall health status
- Monitor and manage chronic health conditions for students as outlined in their health plans.
- Offer health education sessions on topics such as hygiene, nutrition, stress management, and preventive care.
- Collaborate with teachers and counsellors to integrate wellness themes into the curriculum.
- Raise awareness about health issues and encourage healthy lifestyle choices through workshops and campaigns on personal hygiene, germs, healthy eating, obesity, breast cancer awareness, etc.
- Regular health check-ups are conducted to monitor eyes, weight & height, monitor the obesity percentages in each phase, checks are also conducted for lice.
- Educate students about stress reduction techniques, emotional resilience, and coping strategies.
- Keeps track of immunizations and medical records to ensure a child's health history is up to date.
- Organize vaccination programs and keep track of immunization records to ensure the health and safety of all students.
- Our clinic ensures teachers are made aware of students with any medical conditions.
- Offer a safe space for students to discuss mental health concerns and provide appropriate referrals to school counsellors or external professionals
- The clinic is well-equipped to handle emergencies, and our staff is trained in emergency protocols.
- Communicate with parents and guardians regarding their child's health needs, medical concerns, and any required actions.
- Participate in school events, parent-teacher meetings, and wellness-focused workshops to promote a cohesive approach to student well-being.
- Safeguard medical records and information in accordance with privacy regulations.
- Ensure that all interactions and communications with students and parents are confidential.
- Collaborate with external health professionals and organizations to enhance the range of services available to students.
- Serve as a resource hub for students, parents, and staff seeking information about health and wellness
- Stay updated on current health and wellness trends, best practices, and evidence-based approaches to better serve the school community.

Role of Parents and Guardians

By involving parents in the wellness curriculum, we create a supportive partnership between home and school that reinforces healthy habits, positive attitudes, and holistic well-being in students' lives. Periodically gather parents, students, and teachers to reflect on the curriculum's progress and outcomes.

Discuss successes, challenges, and ways to further enhance the curriculum's impact. Arrange joint activities where parents and students can participate together, fostering shared experiences and discussions around wellness include family yoga sessions, nature walks, or art projects centered on wellness themes. Offer parental workshops throughout the school year that address not only academic subject areas but also our students' mental and emotional well-being. Topics are wide-ranging from sleep, to sustainability, university guidance, to raising awareness of the importance of volunteering etc.

Keep parents and guardians informed about the curriculum and involve them in workshops, activities, and discussions related to wellness. Encourage parents to reinforce wellness concepts at home. Acknowledge and celebrate students' achievements and progress in their wellness journey through recognition, awards, or special events.

Our doors are always open for conversations about wellness. Students, parents, and educators are encouraged to communicate openly about any concerns or ideas

Our Welfare Team

Our team is on hand to provide counselling and intervention. If and when there is a concern about a student, a parent or any member of staff may fill out a 'Cause for Concern' form and submit it to the School Counsellor, who will conduct an initial observation. After which, an observation report will be written up with recommendations for the next steps. They are able to work with teachers to address behavioural concerns and write up behavior reports for teachers and students to follow as well as developing action plans for students referred to the Student Behavior Management Committee.

School Counselor Roles & Responsibilities:

- Open and maintain a file for any student referred.
- Conduct observations.
- Maintain a case log detailing reason for referral and details of each counselling session with next steps noted.
- Document and report child protection cases to the DSP and DSL and to maintain records of all children protection cases.
- Provide counselling for SEND students to develop their social and emotional skills.
- 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, collaboration with other professionals.
- Run the anti-bullying campaign within the school.

- Devise programs, policies, etc., to curb negative behaviour and promote positive behavior.
- Place students on a behavioural 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.
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Review and Continuous Improvement:

The SLT in liaison with the SEN Department, School Doctor and Head of Physical Education will monitor this policy to ensure that our students are taught the importance of living and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It will be reviewed annually.

We will regularly assess the effectiveness of our student wellness initiatives through:

- Student surveys and feedback.
- Participation rates in wellness activities.
- Academic performance and attendance records.
- Observations from teachers, counselors, and parents.

Regards,

Shiny Davison

Principal