

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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

Wellbeing Definition

“The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture”.

Inclusion vision

To create, nurture & sustain an inclusive culture where differences drive innovative solutions to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

Mission

Develop a culture of innovation, Inclusion, and creativity to support students of diverse needs. For a lifelong learning journey with a sense of understanding, compassion for others and the courage to act on their beliefs to become active members of society.

Introduction

The Indian Academy, Dubai (TIAD) promotes wellbeing in all learning experiences by providing an environment and curriculum that support students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills to manage their own health and wellbeing and to support that of others.

Our wellbeing team works to promote and protect the social and emotional wellbeing of all TIAD students, families, and staff. We aim to work proactively and reactively, to ensure sound emotional development, which in turn allows pupils to flourish within the classroom. The values we promote for all our community of students, staff and parents are based on the PERMA model of positive psychology applied to education

We are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all students, staff, and parents. This policy outlines the ways in which we, as a school, care for and nurture the emotional wellbeing of our students and staff.

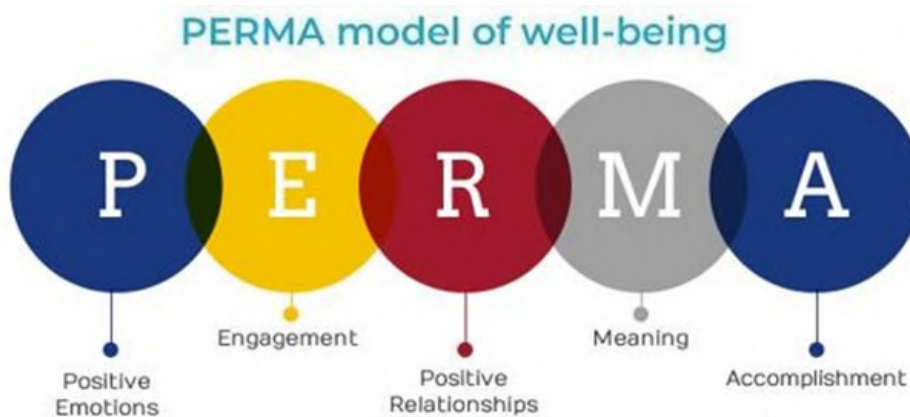
Our well-being policy is:

- **Child-centered:** The wellbeing needs and the best interests of our children are a central focus of this policy. This requires us to respect and value the voice of children and young people and foster their belonging and connectedness to our school community.
- **Fair and inclusive:** All children receive fair and inclusive opportunities to develop their well-being in ways that are responsive and suitable to their particular needs and contexts. Practices are tailored and relevant, building on the existing strengths of children, school staff, families, and school communities.
- **Evidence-informed:** This policy promotes the use of evidence-informed practice, which brings together local experience and expertise with the best available evidence from research.
- **Outcomes focused:** This policy promote continuous improvement practices and the use of data relating to outcomes to guide practice in our school about the promotion of well-being for all children.
- **Partnership/Collaboration:** The well-being of our children is a shared responsibility. Working in partnership with parents, guardians, school staff and external agencies key to ensuring this policy is implemented.

Objectives

The science of well-being is studied as Positive Psychology.

TIAD's Positive psychology is taken from Professor Martin Seligman's PERMA Theory of Wellbeing (2011). PERMA Theory outlines 5 core elements of wellbeing.



- To focus on building the 5 elements of well-being.
- To provide an integrated and comprehensive curriculum approach that develops knowledge, and incorporates equitable opportunities for all students, and staff to enhance their own and others' wellbeing through their daily learning experiences
- To identify areas where focused support or intervention is required to improve each child's learning and development
- To support the emotional, physical, and social well-being of every student and staff
- Promoting and supporting inclusion
- Fostering positive relationships
- Celebrating success

Wellbeing Rationale of TIAD (adapted from CASEL'S SEL Framework).

A systemic approach that emphasizes the importance of establishing equitable learning environments and coordinating practices across key settings to enhance all students' social, emotional, and academic learning. We believe it is most beneficial to integrate SEL throughout the school's academic curricula and culture, across the broader contexts of schoolwide practices and policies, and through ongoing collaboration with families and community organizations.

These coordinated efforts should foster youth voice, agency, and engagement; establish supportive classroom and school climates and approaches to discipline; enhance adult SEL competence; and establish authentic family and community partnerships.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish, and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions



The CASEL 5 addresses five broad, interrelated areas of competence and examples for each:

self-awareness,
self-management
social awareness
relationship skills
responsible decision-making.

The CASEL 5 can be taught and applied at various developmental stages from childhood to adulthood and across diverse cultural contexts to articulate what students should know and be able to do for academic success, school and civic engagement, health and wellness, and fulfilling careers.

The School Approaches to Mental Health and Wellbeing

We support all students, parents, and staff through a systemic whole school approach to wellbeing, with tiers of support that emphasize appropriate early intervention. Our leadership, inclusive learning environment, support, student voices, and excellent partnerships with other stakeholders all contribute to our effective practices.

Our two-tiered support to School Wellbeing is as follows:

1. Whole school approach
2. Targeted support

Whole school Approach: Four keys of wellbeing promotion

Our whole school approach involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life which impact on wellbeing. By adopting a whole school approach, we aim to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for our students, including improved behavior, increased inclusion, improved learning, greater social cohesion, increased social capital and improvements to mental health and wellbeing.



- 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.

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.

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.

Targeted support

Targeted interventions for students whose progress is severely impeded by their social, emotional, academic, or behavioral concerns. Support takes place in one-to-one, small groups, class groups and year groups. Individual interventions are designed for students who are identified as requiring intensive tailored support to engage positively in the learning environment. Depending on the level and nature of need the student will be moved to specialist interventions.

Students of Determination and other vulnerable groups will be taken care of by the appropriate specialists in line with their level of need/s.

TIAD Targeted Support Model



All staff have a responsibility to facilitate and support positive mental health. We aim to spot the early warning signs of mental health issues and to identify appropriate support for the children, staff and parents based on their needs. We involve parents wherever possible and the children themselves in the care and support they need in School.

Our staff recognizes the importance of remaining calm, supportive, and non-judgmental with someone who discloses a concern. Staff always make it clear that the concern will be shared with the school counsellor to help them and get the support they need. Staff understand they need to listen, not advise, and to treat everyone equally and with mutual respect.

Staff Wellbeing

At TIAD we respect and aim to maintain good mental health and a positive outlook at work for our staff. We are committed to looking after our staff and to ensuring a healthy and supportive workplace. The school provides various activities, administrative support, workshops, and seminars to support the personal, social, and financial concerns of our employees. Staff are getting tips and strategies to manage their wellbeing in the following areas.

- Self-regulation: Train to set goals and stick to them, or to re-evaluate, and keep an eye on those goals.
- Self-awareness: to understand what the stress points are, and what energizes and keeps going.
- Good boundaries: Understanding what the role is and developing the skills to work within that role.
- Good help-seeking skills: knowing how to seek help when moving outside the boundaries of the role.
- Good work/life balance: To know that work has a place in life, and to also engage in other meaningful activities.

- Healthy Lifestyles: How to follow a healthy lifestyle
- Resilience: the ability to keep going and bounce back. This will grow out of self-regulation, self-awareness, knowing the boundaries, and keeping yourself motivated.
- Personal support: The school counsellor is providing individual support to the staff who require it.

CARE- Emirati Staff Wellbeing

The Emirati Wellbeing Program is a specialized initiative designed to support the holistic development and well-being of our Emirati staff. Grounded in the rich cultural context of the UAE, this program aims to provide personalized guidance to staff, tailored specifically for Emirati educators in schools, fostering a positive work environment, promoting physical and mental health, and enhancing overall job satisfaction.

- Addressing work-related stressors
- Professional Development and Retention
- Work-Life Balance
- Celebration and Recognition

Staff CPD

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. School leadership and School counsellors provide continuous professional development training to all staff to ensure all staff can identify early symptoms of mental health and wellbeing issues and to know what to do and where to get help.

Enhancing Student Mental Health and Wellbeing through Teaching and Learning

Foster students' autonomous MOTIVATION, and sense of meaning and purpose

- Highlight the social value of discipline practitioners' knowledge and skills
- Support students to develop learning goals in line with their intrinsic values and emerging interests and capabilities
- Demonstrate that you value students' learning and understand their perspectives

Promote inclusion and BELONGING

- Know your students needs and interests
- Value diversity and practice social inclusion
- Induct students into your discipline's values and professional standards

Promote inclusion and RELATIONSHIPS

- Facilitate student-faculty and peer social interactions
- Foster collaborative (not competitive) learning
- Express interest in and care and concern for others

Enable AUTONOMY

- Justify required tasks and knowledge, and teaching and assessment methods
- Within the constraints of the curriculum, give students choice and ensure variety in of learning activities and assessment tasks
- Support students to make informed decisions aligned with their interests, values or goals

Scaffold COMPETENCE

- Use informational (rather than controlling) language
- Ensure an appropriate level of challenge and support at each program level
- Provide meaningful feedback on student learning performance

DESIGNING CURRICULUM to support student wellbeing

- Strongly supports the social and emotional well-being of our students, by emphasizing children’s social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviour therefore learning performance.
- Streamlining the traditional curriculum content and reducing contact hours to increase space for personal time and other commitments
- Equipping students with skills to manage stress, uncertainty, unknowns, and conflicts
- Supporting students to find meaning and positivity in the tasks they are required to perform.
- Providing competency assessments and feedback on student work, rather than normative grading.
- Allowing students greater flexibility in how they approach tasks or the topics they study



The Graduated Approach to Enhance Student's Mental Health and Wellbeing

The following services are available at TIAD for different needs to develop a more graduated and effective response to meet needs.

- School premises and facilities are frequently monitored and modified in line with the need/s
- Individualized education and behavior plans
- In-school counselling for students, parents, and staff
- A specific room where the members can share their concerns.
- Case work/Group work
- Awareness days, weeks, campaigns, Celebrations, and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing
- Teacher/specialist leads group or class activities
- Students lead sessions
- Transition Support for students and parents and relevant staff
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school for both students and staff.
- Through Value Education we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand mental health help reduce the stigma of mental health problems through SEAL topics
- PE/Art/Music/Dance lessons enhance students overall well-being.
- School clinic supports healthy lifestyle and clinical support
- Healthy meals are provided by the school
- Administratives support for staff concerns.

Mental Health, Wellbeing and Counselling Procedure

Referral

Referral can be made by anyone who feels a student may benefit from help. This would include staff, parents, and students by themselves or a peer. The process of referral to the school counsellor is outlined with a clear referral procedure and through the referral form or can be done by posting an "I wish to Talk to the Counsellor" in the counsellor mailbox. Staff and parents can come by themselves or through referral.

Planned check-in

In certain exceptional cases, the staff and students will undergo a check-in procedure to find out whether there is a desire for counselling. Such situations will include

- Bereavement
- Parents' separation/divorce
- Dramatic changes in behaviour
- Multiple school moves/Frequent early exits, latecomers, class exits/history of previous counselling, mental health or safeguarding issues etc....

Assessment and identification

After receiving a referral, the counsellor will conduct primary-level interviews and observations with the student to identify the level of need/s. Also, the counsellor will contact the SLT, the teacher, the student, and the parents to move forward with a multidimensional assessment by the nature, seriousness and Level of the need. Also, the student will be directed to an outside service provider for an assessment if required.

Intervention

The school counsellor will keep a mutually agreed action plan in place to assist the client in finding solutions rather than providing advice. The provided interventions may include mainly cognitive, behavioural, family, motivational, and solution-focused approaches. In many cases, the given intervention will be a blend of approaches which focus on supportive, short-term, problem-centered outcomes.

In some cases, a need may be identified for a student to undergo external expert support and further interventions.

Interventions/support sessions take place in one-to-one, small groups, class groups or year groups according to the requirement.

Intervention sessions will generally take place during class time unless otherwise agreed with the counsellor. The duration of each session will generally be no longer than one lesson(40 minutes maximum).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The progress and review of the plan are done through multi-dimensional. Structured reviews and follow-up checklists are done by parents, teachers, and counsellors in line with the level of the need and nature of the concern. Structured reviews and follow-up checklists are in place for staff.

Relationships and Partnerships

We always develop strong partnerships with the wider community, which is a central part of the wellbeing process. We efficiently engage with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support, and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning. Additionally, we take part in a variety of community-based programs to improve our mental health and well-being.

Records / Access

All well-being records are stored both manually and electronically. Records are kept securely and confidentially accessible only by the school counsellor. Access to a student's counselling records by the particular student, his parents, or third parties will only be granted where legal and privacy obligations are met

Parent Wellbeing

The two primary educators students have in their lives are their parents and their school. Both are essential to a student's growth, and their combined effects have a stronger influence. The school's ethos must emphasize the value of a child's environment, family situation, and significant relationships. To promote students' development, we always provide parents with guidance and strategies. In addition, we welcome parents to school for celebrations of accomplishments, workshops, scheduled meetings, etc.

If the parents need, we are always willing to offer them administrative or psychological support

Parental involvement

Parents are responsible for sharing 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 well-being, 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.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Ensure the provision of a healthy working environment
- In collaboration with senior leaders by setting positive role models.
- Provide pastoral/welfare support for individual staff as required.
- Providing a safe environment through the training and implementation of safeguarding and anti-bullying policies.
- Ensure that all students and staff are treated in a fair, sensitive, and confidential manner.
- Facilitating training and workshops according to plan and need basis

The Role of the Wellbeing Head

Well-being heads should have appropriate knowledge of how to communicate with and support all members of the school community and demonstrate an understanding of their circumstances. The Wellbeing team will support emotionally vulnerable students, including those who have been affected as a result of COVID-19. Any incident that has hurt a student's emotional health and wellbeing will be supported. Schools shall develop a staff and student wellbeing plan based on their Risk Assessments in conjunction with the wellbeing head.

Class teachers are responsible for the social and emotional well-being of the children in their class and need to set up systems within their classes whereby emotional support is available to them. This may be through circle time, worry boxes or other 'talk-time systems. If class teachers feel children need further support, they are to discuss this with parents and the Inclusion team.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

The TIAD Wellbeing policy is available on the school website and hard copies for parents can be obtained from the school office. The wellbeing committee is controlled and monitored by the principal/ Senior leadership team by frequent meetings and reports.

Regards,

Shiny Davison

Principal