

SCHOOL WELL-BEING POLICY

Introduction

At IIS, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our students 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.

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Positive wellbeing affects schools culture. It is expected that all staff and students are able to contribute to own their own wellbeing as well as contribute to the wellbeing of others.

Policy Statement

“Mental health is 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.” (World Health Organization)

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognize and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health. We also recognize the link between physical activity and positive mental health and wellbeing, and we encourage our school to be ‘an active school’.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with school clinic policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the inclusion policy where a student has an identified special educational need. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Code of Conduct.

The Policy Aims to:

- Establish an environment where each individual feels safe, respected and valued.
- To provide appropriate professional learning for all staff so that they are skilled and proactive in the management of student wellbeing issues.
- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increasing understanding and awareness of common mental health difficulties.
- Enable our children, staff, parents, and all stakeholders to develop the

knowledge and understanding, the skills, capabilities and attributes necessary for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, now and in the future.

- Provide a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for children, staff and parents/carers.

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.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school 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 meets their needs

Well-being through Curriculum organization

Our school is proactive in its approach and welcomes opportunities to promote emotional health and well-being through the formal and informal curriculum. Staff use a variety of methods for ensuring sound emotional health and well-being for children. These complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school. Our approach includes:

The school places emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection, quality feedback and encouragement to participate in school and community events.

The delivery of personal, social and health education is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum, opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the varying needs of the children in their care. We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-being. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents too

Roles and Responsibilities

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health and/ or wellbeing of a student should speak to the student in the same way they would support students with any kind of concern. If they are willing to share information: it is important to notify the student that this information may need to be passed on to their senior leaders/a mental health professional at school. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated school staff/wellness team

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behavior
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Signposting

The school will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community like what support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Confidentiality

Disclosures by students and confidentiality

We recognize how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff should listen rather than advise. Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the well-being team to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

Parents / carers are always informed if it is deemed necessary and appropriate by the Principal or safeguarding team and students may choose to tell their parents / carers themselves. Of course, we need to consider the level of urgency and if the child is at immediate risk of significant harm.

Working with Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have

concerns about their own child or a friend of their child

- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through planned meetings/sessions.
- Always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information.

Supporting Peers

When a student is experiencing mental health difficulties, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how and can take on more of a supportive role than is appropriate. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student experiencing difficulties and their parents.

We will consider:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can offer support
- Boundaries between support from friends and support from adults
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

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

Review of policy

Our policy reflects the shared values of our school community and ensures its own efficacy by an on-going process of review. Our policy provides us with guiding principles. Our programs and practices are dynamic and therefore responsive to the ways that needs and demand can change in the pursuit of excellence.

Prepared on : 12 April 2020

Dr. Manju Reji
Principal



