

Mission Statement:
Creating tomorrow's successful and caring citizens today.

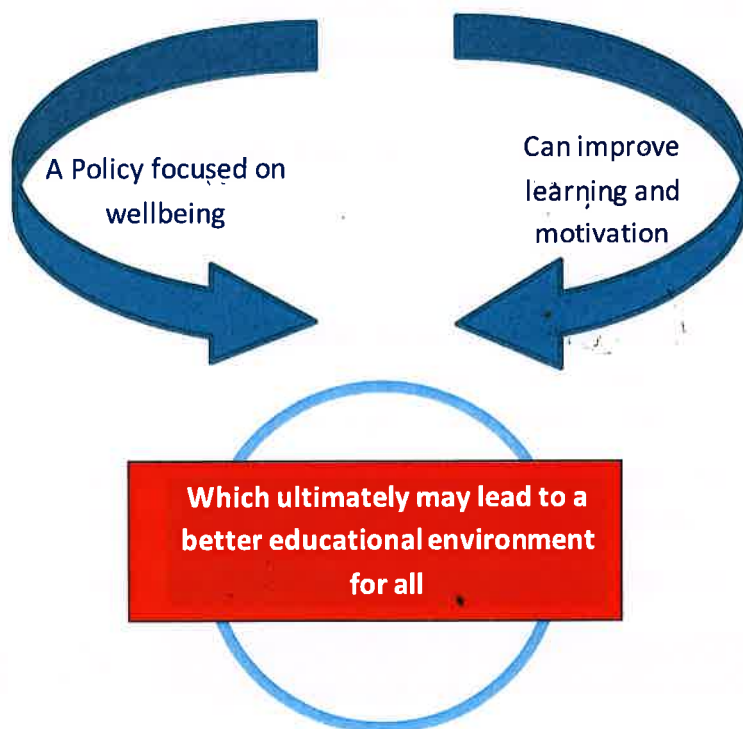


GFM Well Being Policy

Schedule for Development / Monitoring / Review

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on:	February 2022
The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the:	Principal and Senior Leadership Team
The Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:	February 2023
Should serious incidents take place, the following external persons/agencies should be informed:	Akram Tarik (Principal) and in his absence Jeremy Hallum (Vice Principal)

This policy is applied at GFM alongside our school's vision, mission and values. Interwoven with the principles of High Performance Learning; values, attitudes, attributes and A.C.P. Characteristics.



Vision

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GFM Well Being Policy

Introduction

Wellbeing is now focused on and more important to the UAE than ever. This policy is reflective of the UAE leadership and their objective of a happy and positive country.

It is important that we mirror these objectives to support productivity, morale, engagement and trust within GFM and most of all, a positive institution for our children.

Dr. Abdulla Al Karam, Director General, KHDA, Dubai during the World Educational Summit recently highlighted the importance of wellbeing in relation to the national growth of the UAE. ⁽¹⁾

Schools are the place for children to experience support and nourishment in addition to being given the encouragement to overcome adversity, build resilience and experience motivational education and therefore happiness and positive wellbeing.

Dr. Abdulla commented on students being adaptive to their changing environment and how children have changed their perception of school, realising themselves how much they are impacted socially by their education and the impact of their wellbeing falls on the responsibility of educators to maintain.

GFM strive to ensure children are able to manage such changes, maintain positive mental health and be a school where;

- All students are given a voice ⁽²⁾
- All students feel a sense of belonging
- All students feel safe to speak openly about their feelings
- All students' mental health is promoted
- Bullying is not tolerated and e-safety is a top priority

(1) The Impact on Wellbeing in Dubai Over the Last 12 Months, World Educational Summit, 2021, Dr Abdulla Al Karam, Chairman of the board of directors and Director General, KHDA, Dubai

(2) More of the student rights can be found within the GFMRS which has been cited in the appendix

1. Why mental health and wellbeing is important

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1.1 It is vital to ensure that our schools are mentally healthy. As a mentally healthy school, we promote positive mental health and fully integrate **wellbeing** into our GFM values and mission.

1.2 We are a pastoral school and are committed to supporting the wellbeing of both students and staff.

1.3 This policy was written respective of all staff, students and our community with consultation from our senior school professionals.

2. Purpose of the policy

2.1 This policy sets out:

- How GFM strives to promote wellbeing
- How GFM prevent wellbeing concerns
- How GFM identify those who need additional wellbeing support
- How GFM staff are trained and addresses about wellbeing and support
- Key information about wellbeing within GFM
- Parent relations information for seeking additional wellbeing support

3. Definitions of Wellbeing

3.1 The UAE Guide to Happiness and Wellbeing in the workplace ⁽³⁾ defines **Wellbeing** as “two aspects... *Happiness and Wellbeing*” and describes how “*Wellbeing is concerned not just with how people feel, but also how they function.*”

3.2 At GFM we want to ensure that happiness and wellbeing coincide and that every student:

- Can cope with the normal stresses of everyday life
- Can work productively because their mind is happy
- Can express their emotions
- Can learn and achieve

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- Can feel confident in the above

(3) <https://www.hw.gov.ae/en/download/a-guide-to-happiness-and-wellbeing-program-in-the-workplace-1>

4. A whole school approach to promoting Wellbeing

4.1 GFM take a whole school approach to promoting wellbeing that aims to ensure our students become more resilient and therefore happier, ultimately leading to academic success and to prevent or address problems before they arise.

4.2 GFM pride ourselves in projecting High Performance Learning to enable students to reach their full potential, inclusive of encompassing wellbeing. The 7 pillars of HPL are;

- Mindset Shift
- Enquiry Based Learning
- Expertise Development
- Practice and Training
- Feedback
- Engagement of Parents
- With students not to them

4.3 GFM recognise how the stigmas of wellbeing can often prevent understanding and awareness of the importance of embedding it into schools. We therefore want to create an open environment and a positive culture which encourages discussion between students and staff and amongst staff themselves to better understand wellbeing issues.

5.1 At GFM, **all staff** have the responsibility to promote positive wellbeing of both the students and for themselves and to understand about both risk factors and protective factors within their

5. Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

environment.

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5.2 Some students may require additional support for their wellbeing. All staff should look out for signs of when a student may be lacking in happy behaviour to ensure that they get the additional support they need if necessary.

5.3 All staff understand about possible risk factors through training ⁽⁴⁾ Staff are made aware how some children may be more likely to experience low wellbeing and possible mental health problems due to experiences such as; physical long term illness, having a parent who has physical or mental illness, bereavement, adversity factors, lack of communication at home, low level social skills or low self-esteem and a lack of belonging and or emotional literacy problems.

(4) GFM Staff Induction Training, 'GFM Inclusivity: Wellbeing' (2021-2022)

5.4 GFM Student Counsellor

- Provides advice and support to staff
- Provides 8-week session plans for students whose wellbeing is at a low level
- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate activities to benefit both staff and students wellbeing
- Leads training on wellbeing
- Is the first point of contact for referrals from both parents and staff for students or staff themselves who may need additional wellbeing support

5.5 GFM recognise that many emotional issues and behaviours can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. We implement external resources to add to our internal wellbeing resources.

5.6 Sources of internal support include:

- GFM Counsellor
- GFM Designated Safeguarding Lead
- GFM Middle and Senior Leadership Team
- Staff Wellbeing Team
- Student Wellbeing Team
- Student Council

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- School Doctor/Nurse

6. Supporting STUDENT wellbeing

6.1 GFM and GEMS schools alike, share a key role in promoting the Happiness and Wellbeing initiatives of the UAE.

6.2 GFM approaches to this including:

- Wellbeing Webinars
- Friendship benches (*TBC Post Covid Restrictions*)
- Affirmation Walls
- Online Safety Monitors
- Counselling Clubs
- Ability Awareness Programmes
- Awards Ceremonies
- Class Quizzes
- Art therapies
- Weekly Wellbeing Podcasts and Announcements

6.3 Initiatives are proposed by the students, for their peers. The students want their peers to recognize the importance of wellbeing, increase friendships and ensure that particularly due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, that no student feels low in confidence, self-esteem, morale or belonging as part of GFM.

6.4 Senior Leaders and Staff at GFM have full responsibility in ensuring the support of these ideas and feelings of the student.

6.5 The GFM approach will be:

- To provide students a safe and free environment to express feelings and be listened to
- Ensure the welfare of the student is paramount

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- Identify if a student needs specific support based on their needs
- Ensure community awareness of the wellbeing initiatives at GFM
- Analyse behavior and identify early
- Structured referral systems should problems occur

7. Supporting STAFF wellbeing

7.1 Employee feelings are considered to be amongst the forefront of better performance. There is no doubt that low level of happiness and wellbeing correlates towards how employees feel and behave in work.

Additionally, research has suggested that staff performance can directly affect student performance.

7.2 The staff at GFM are the integral part of organisation and they embody our ethos which is why it is important as a school that to maintain high levels of performance we address issues of wellbeing before they occur, protecting the feelings and behaviours of our staff.

7.3 GFM aim to acknowledge and address;

- Stresses of staff
- Workload and caseloads
- Emotional demands on staff
- Classroom Environment
- Accountability
- Challenges presented due to COVID-19

7.4 The multi-disciplinary support team within GFM is composed of;

- School Principal/CEO
- School Vice Principal
- Designated Safeguarding and Inclusion Lead
- School Counsellor

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- School Doctor
- Head of Year member
- Middle Leader member
- Technical Support member

7.5 This team (7.4) will ensure programmes, interventions and additional support is given to any member of staff who seeks it and that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure the wellbeing of staff is monitored and upheld.

7.6 Safe Spaces

Anonymity is important when addressing staff wellbeing.

7.6.1 Staff at GFM can refer themselves to the School Counsellor and receive confidential advice.

7.6.2 Staff have access to anonymous drop boxes for suggestions, concerns or queries.

7.7 Proactive approaches

Online forms are sent to staff for whole school receptive wellbeing data.

7.7.1 External support is outsourced by the wellbeing team to offer additional pathways for more concerning wellbeing problems.

7.7.2 Inclusive of team responsibilities will be bi-weekly wellbeing meetings, monthly overviews of outcomes and annual overviews of wellbeing procedures and developments.

Promoting Happiness and Wellbeing at GFM

8. Involving Parents and Carers

8.1 GFM recognise that the role of promoting and ensuring the happiness and wellbeing of a student is the responsibility of the student but extends to how we reach out with our community; our parents and carers and in addition, supporting those parents and carers who may themselves have detrimental wellbeing.

8.2 GFM parents and carers are always informed if there is a concern regarding the wellbeing of their child. Alternatively, parents and carers can directly refer their child to the School Counsellor should they have a concern for their child's emotional health.

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8.3 GFM parents and carers are kept up to date with regular wellbeing initiatives for students through our social portals and are welcomed to offer suggestions and give feedback.

8.4 When a concern for a student has been made internally:

- Teacher will refer the student to the School Counsellor directly
- Teacher will make a note of the referral on the Go4 Schools.
- If the concern is recurring or is a wellbeing but also a safety concern, it will be logged onto our HSE portal
- Before a counselling session occurs, Parent/Carer is informed first
- A meeting is offered to the Parent/Carer to discuss the issue and identify a consistent and appropriate intervention
- Parents are supported in how to assist at home
- If regular sessions with the School Counsellor are agreed upon, Parents/Carers are informed of progress regularly

8.5 We *do* give students the option to tell their parent/carers themselves if they have a wellbeing issue and supporting them if they choose to do so.

8.6 GFM make every effort to support parent/carers to access services both internal and external. We will offer to support with trusted external providers connected to the school if necessary.

9. Involving Students

9.1 GFM have a Student Council in which Health and Wellbeing representatives are chosen and rotated annually.

9.2 The Health and Wellbeing reps are to be chosen by way of self-application at the start of each academic year.

9.3 In addition to the Health and Wellbeing representatives, students are also selected to be part of the Wellbeing Committee. These students are to be both Primary and Secondary Leaders and work together to collaborate wellbeing initiatives for their peers.

10. Wellbeing Protective and Risk factors

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10.1 **In School** Risk Factors are inclusive of but not restricted to;

- Bullying
- Cyber Bullying
- Discrimination
- Breakdowns of friendships
- Negative peer influences
- Peer pressure
- Poor pupil to teacher relationships

10.2 **In the Community** Risk Factors are inclusive of but not restricted to;

- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Discrimination
- Significant Life Events
- COVID-19 Pandemic

10.3 Wellbeing detriments to students as a result of the above can be inclusive of but not restricted to;

- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Eating Disorders
- Self-Harm

10.4 The Protective factors we must ensure are stable within GFM and our Wider Community therefore are as follows;

- GFM must ensure there are clear anti-bullying policies in place and adhered to
- GFM must abide by the 'Open Door' Policy for students to raise problems
- GFM must ensure a whole-school approach is concrete in promoting Happiness and Wellbeing in line with the UAE government initiatives
- GFM must ensure there is positive classroom management
- GFM must ensure students feel a sense of belonging to GFM

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- GFM must ensure that positive peer influences are enhanced and monitored
- GFM must provide a wider supportive network for families
- GFM must ensure all students are safeguarding as extensive as possible
- GFM must sustain a high level of morale within the school inclusive of a range of leisure and activities for students
- GFM must ensure valued opportunities exist for student both internally and externally

This WELLBEING POLICY is agreed to and supported by;


ARKAM TARIK *Principal and CEO, GEMS Founders School Al Mizhar*

JEREMY HALLUM *Vice Principal and E-Safety Governor, GEMS Founders Al Mizhar*

BIANCA LOUISE NELSON *School Counsellor and E-Safety Coordinator*

Signed...  Date... 14/2/2022

School Counsellor and E-Safety Coordinator

Signed...  Date... 14/2/2022

Vice Principal

Signed...  Date... 14/2/2022

Principal/CEO

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Policy review date: February 2023

Please read this policy alongside:

Anti-Bullying Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Zero Tolerance Policy
E-Safety Policy
Parent & Student Cybersecurity Guide
Filtering Policy
Acceptable Use Policy,
Bring Your Own Device Policy
Data Protection Guidance,
Audio Video Conferencing Security Guide for Teachers
Remote Learning & Safeguarding Policy
IT Online Security Guidance for Parents
Safeguarding and Inclusion Guidance during Remote Learning
Mobile Phone Policy
Social Media Policy

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