



GEMS

مدرسة جيمس البرشاء الوطنية
Al Barsha National School

*Nurturing our community,
empowering through excellence*

Wellbeing Policy

Version:	1
Effective Date:	Sep 2022
Scheduled Review Date:	July 2023
Supersedes:	NA
Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team
Owned By:	Vice Principal
Reviewed By:	Senior Leadership Team

Our Vision:

A British curriculum school, rooted in the values of the UAE, creating the leaders of tomorrow. A premium community school, empowering learners to achieve excellence and make a difference.

Our Mission: *Nurturing our Community, Empowering through Excellence*

Nurturing by including all learners, prioritising their safety and happiness and promoting their character development rooted in the national values of the UAE. Empowering by providing an exciting, enriching and ambitious learning experience where students excel by fulfilling and exceeding their academic potential.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Wellbeing and Mental health are an integral and essential component of health.
- 1.2 The World Health Organisation March 2018 constitution states: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and can contribute to his or her community.
- 1.3 GEMS Al Barsha National School's Vision and Mission statements reflect the school's commitment to wellbeing.
- 1.4 We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our life's physical health.

- 1.5 The school endeavors to create an environment that is committed to nurturing our Community.
- 1.6 GNS is committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (students, staff, parents and carers).
- 1.7 The safety and welfare of our students are of the utmost importance, and therefore part of this commitment is taking steps to proactively safeguard the mental and physical wellbeing of every member of the GNS community.
- 1.8 Our approach has been developed in line with the KHDA's Guiding Principles:
 - **Student and family-focused:** understand the uniqueness of each student and their wellbeing journey, considering their personality, character, and context – including their broader experience of family and community.
 - **Strengths-based:** focus on the individual's personal strengths alongside their existing social and community assets, rather than on their deficits.
 - **Equitable:** develop a thriving, inclusive learning culture, demonstrating a commitment to achieving equity for all.
 - **Diverse:** value and create a diverse school community, recognising it as an important enabler of student wellbeing.
 - **Collectivist:** recognise that every member of the school community is a facilitator and beneficiary of the wellbeing development process.
- 1.9 Our approach also takes in to account the following key concepts related to safeguarding mental health:
 - **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively
 - **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible
 - **Early support:** helping pupils to access evidence-based early support and interventions; and
 - **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

2 Policy Purpose and Aims

- 2.1 We are committed to providing clear, consistent and accessible communication across different channels to support our students, staff and families with their health and wellbeing.
- 2.2 Our Wellbeing Policy aims to:
 - Continue to make health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, students and families our top priority.
 - Create an approach which is based on KHDA's Wellbeing agenda for schools.
 - Create an enthusiastic and engaged learning community.
 - Design teaching and learning that is personalised, creative, challenging and fun.
 - Develop skills to enable students to make the right choices.
 - Create a sense of mutual respect, care and responsibilities shown for everyone in school.
 - Ensure that the GNS community is supported through existing policies, procedures, initiatives as well as through individual pastoral care and advice.

2.3 GNS School Leaders work to secure continuous improvements in standards of wellbeing by focusing on the KHDA Evaluation Focus areas:

Leading and pursuing wellbeing:

- GNS has a direction for wellbeing that forms part of our whole school vision. The National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031 framework is used to support this vision.
- Nurturing: GNS ensures all community members are safe, healthy physically and emotionally.
- Community: GNS provides a sense of belonging for all community members, promoting a culture of inclusivity, care and guidance.
- Empowering: GNS encourage all stakeholders to proactively influence, wellbeing and mental health through working together
- Excellence: GNS provide supporting environments, encourage responsible attitudes and behaviours, which are visible within our school routines.
- The GNS leaders update internal practices based on feedback from all stakeholders.
- GNS leaders monitor and evaluate a number of indicators for wellbeing through internal surveys such as, PASS Data and interventions which inform policy, practice and provision and decision making.

Sustaining and Embedding Improvement:

- GNS Leaders across the school systematically review wellbeing using effective monitoring, evaluation and review processes. This process informs the ongoing improvement of wellbeing provision.
- The Governing Board (LAB) is updated on well-being challenges during their quarterly meetings and contribute to suggesting changes and recommendations that will impact the wellbeing experience of students and staff.
- Leaders at GNS hold each other to account for their practice in school: ensuring that wellbeing and pastoral systems are continuously improving.
- Our student leaders have a voice in supporting and embedding the improvement of wellbeing, with students initiating projects and decision-making being shared between student leaders and the wider community
- The school's evaluation, monitoring, and review systems inform the ongoing improvement of wellbeing provision

Listening to and supporting stakeholders:

- There is a close connection between GNS and our families.
- As a school, GNS is successful in engaging students, parents and stakeholders through Surveys, parent, staff and student voice to address and acknowledge wellbeing matters.
- Parent voice is also represented by the GNS Parent Focus Groups who meet with school leaders to discuss Curriculum, Student Experience, Assessment and Teaching and Learning.
- We also ensure that families are supported on a personal and individual basis, this can include new joining families, inclusion, intervention and our Foundation stage families.
- Our 'Friends of the school' meet and organise key events alongside the academic team to promote a sense of community and bring all stakeholders together.

Enabling Wellbeing Experience and Outcomes:

- At GNS we plan purposefully and implement a range of balanced curriculum approaches to develop the wellbeing of our students.
- There is an emphasis on house spirit during our Sports Days. The student council alongside wellbeing prefects contribute to student voice and the organising of special events to promote wellbeing.
- Our Form Time sessions and year groups assemblies are planned to support collective communication around wellbeing that is personalized to the given year group.
- Our school counsellors deliver programmes that support students with negotiating relationships and conflict resolution. Students are taught strategies to manage emotions and resolve challenges with friendships.
- Our Extra Curricular Activity programme is delivered to students based on their interests, following student surveys. This encourages students to thrive outside of the academic curriculum in areas that personally interest them.

3 Promoting Emotional Health & Wellbeing

3.1 GNS promotes and strengthens student voice through:

- Election of student council representatives, student wellbeing leadership team.
- Regular team meetings with the student leadership team.
- Student Mentorship Programme - Senior students mentoring junior students.
- School based programmes which are linked to the curriculum to promote student voice by developing independence and choice-making.
- Participation in Dubai school wellbeing census.

3.2 GNS promotes Parent Engagement through:

- Parent meetings
- Having an 'Open Door Policy'
- Regular consultation about change and development through surveys and meetings.
- Subject focus meetings – Coffee mornings and Parent Teacher Meetings.
- Involvement in extracurricular activities.
- Regular communication and involvement regarding student progress, behaviour and pastoral issues.
- Parent workshops

3.3 At GNS we facilitate an enhanced environment for learning through:

- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about expected behaviour for learning and around school.
- Counsellor guidance lessons and Moral Education to create a physically, emotionally and socially rich environment where key relationships can thrive and the students feel secure in their learning.
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and SOD from the inclusion team, teaching assistants, subject teachers, and external agencies where appropriate.

- Celebrating successes and achievements in the classroom and assemblies through points and certificates.
- An exciting and varied range of extra-curricular events/competitions.
- Encouraging independence in learning using differentiation appropriate to students' age and ability.

4 Roles and Responsibilities (Students and Parents)

- 4.1 Every member of the GNS community is entitled to feel and be supported in relation to their wellbeing.
- 4.2 All students are expected to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect; engage in mental health and wellbeing curriculum-related topics and initiatives and raise any wellbeing concerns with staff.
- 4.3 All parents are encouraged to engage in parent voice activities to ensure that school leaders understand their views on wellbeing matters; attend Parent Focus Groups and other parent engagement sessions and remain updated on information provided about their child's wellbeing through our school reports and Parent Teacher Consultations.

5 Roles and Responsibilities (Staff Members)

- 5.1 Every staff member of the GNS community is entitled to feel and be supported in relation to their wellbeing.
- 5.2 All staff members are expected to adhere to this policy and any related policies and procedures.
- 5.3 All staff members are expected to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect; engage in mental health and wellbeing curriculum-related topics and initiatives and raise any wellbeing concerns with relevant members of the school's senior leadership team.
- 5.4 It is mandatory upon all staff members to recognise the boundary between support and professional health care. Only suitably trained healthcare professionals are qualified to diagnose and treat health conditions, whether mental or physical.
- 5.5 As a community of educators, it is our responsibility to safeguard our students, staff and parent's health and wellbeing through the appropriate channels e.g. in-house support and onward referral. In doing so, it is crucial to ensure that appropriate boundaries are set and adhered to at all times.

6 Roles and Responsibilities (School Senior Leadership Team):

- 6.1 Regularly review this policy and any attendant procedures.
- 6.2 Ensure that a suitable training programme is available to staff, drawing on the breadth of expertise across the GEMS Cluster to ensure that CPD is informed by best practice in both general and specific terms
- 6.3 Promote a culture of mutual respect, trust between pupils/students and staff and the fostering of a positive learning environment.

- 6.4 Ensure that staff can access relevant training and that it is regularly updated as appropriate e.g., Mental Health First Aid
- 6.5 Ensure that staff supporting students through challenging situations are well supported via appropriate channels e.g., immediate and follow-up debriefs with the relevant Teams; access to School Clinic

7 Roles and Responsibilities (The Designated Safeguarding Lead)

- 7.1 7.1 Provide regular supervision, training, advice and guidance with a focus on student mental health and wellbeing;
- 7.2 Regularly Convene at staff specialist networks to promote cross organizational working and share best practice.
- 7.3 Ensure that their training is regularly updated.
- 7.4 Regularly report to the GNS SLT on safeguarding matters including student mental health and wellbeing.
- 7.5 Termly report on student wellbeing to the School Senior Leadership Team and the Local Advisory board. - With the DSL, produce and maintain referral routes, partnerships with any external agencies such as clinical psychology services, staff training and responsibilities etc.