STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Approved by: Governing Board	Date: August 2024
Last reviewed on:	Date: August 2026
Next review:	Date: August 2027

All employees will read, and understand, this policy in conjunction with the Employee Handbook**.**

This policy applies to all staff (teaching and administration) working in the school and should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding-Child Protection Policy, Inclusion Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, and Behaviour Management Policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the School Management, who will undertake a complete annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy, which will be made available to them electronically, or by hard copy on request.

PURPOSE

THE SCHOOL recognizes that student well-being is fundamental to academic progression and success. This policy establishes our approach to student mental health in compliance with ADEK's Student Mental Health Policy requirements.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Student Education About Mental Health

THE SCHOOL promotes mental health awareness through:

- School-wide initiatives and advisory sessions covering mindfulness, emotional regulation, social and emotional learning, stress management, and time management
- For Cycles 2 and 3, additional sessions addressing mental health conditions (e.g., depression, anxiety), substance use prevention, eating disorders, digital gaming addiction, suicide prevention, and strategies for seeking help
- Health education in accordance with Ministry of Health and Prevention guidelines

Mental Health Screening

THE SCHOOL conducts mental health screening in accordance with the National School Health Screening Guideline (MoHAP, 2024) and DoH School Screening Standards (2023):

ADHD Screening

- Grade 1 students showing symptoms of ADHD are referred to the school nurse for screening using the SNAP-IV 18 questionnaire
- Questionnaires are completed by both the class teacher and parent/guardian
- Positive findings result in referral letters for formal assessment by certified centers

Depression Screening

- Grade 9 students are screened for depression using the PHQ-9 questionnaire when depression
- Positive findings are discussed with parents/guardians with referral provided for further assessment

Parental Awareness

THE SCHOOL informs parents of mental health policy and initiatives.

COUNSELING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

THE SCHOOL recommends students in need access to counseling services through outsourced Department of Health (DoH)-licensed centers when required.

Social Worker

THE SCHOOL employs a Social Worker who serves as the Mental Health Lead and is responsible for:

- Assessing students' social and emotional needs and providing support
- Working with students, parents, teachers, and the wider community to support personal, social, mental, and emotional health needs
- Promoting mental health awareness and coordinating social-emotional learning initiatives
- Coordinating with external counseling services when specialized support is needed

Confidentiality

All services comply with Federal Decree Law No. 45 (2021) on Data Protection and the DCD Social Care Professionals Code of Conduct & Ethics. Information may be shared with parents and/or school leadership when in the student's best interest or legally required.

Parental Consent

Parental consent is sought for regular or structured counseling services. Consent is not required for unstructured interactions or when deemed in the student's best interest.

REFERRAL PATHWAYS

THE SCHOOL maintains clear referral pathways communicated via the Parent Handbook:

- Concerns can be reported to relevant AQC or the Social Worker
- Students can independently seek support through designated staff members
- Specialized support beyond school capacity results in referral to ADEK-approved external professionals
- Young caregivers are identified and offered appropriate support

SUPPORT DURING VULNERABLE PHASES

THE SCHOOL provides structured support during high-stress academic periods:

- Study Leave: May be granted to students in Grades 10-12 during external exam periods
- Stress Management Initiative: Conducted via the SLO's wellness department
- Office Hours: Academic Quality Controllers remain accessible to parents and students at all times

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

In accordance with THE SCHOOL Inclusion Policy and ADEK School Inclusion Policy, the Head of Inclusion collaborates with teachers, specialists, and the Social Worker to safeguard mental well-being of students with additional learning needs.

Support measures include:

- Mental health considerations incorporated into Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
- Anti-bullying monitoring for at-risk students
- Targeted social-emotional interventions
- Referrals to external counseling services when appropriate
- Reasonable accommodations

COMPLIANCE

This policy aligns with:

- ADEK Student Mental Health Policy requirements
- National School Health Screening Guideline (MoHAP, 2024)
- DoH School Screening Standards (2023)
- Federal Decree Law No. 45 (2021) on Data Protection
- DCD Social Care Professionals Code of Conduct & Ethics

THE SCHOOL remains committed to fostering a safe, supportive approach to student mental health, ensuring all students receive appropriate care and guidance to thrive academically and personally.