WELLBEING POLICY

Approved by: School Governing Board	Date: June 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**.**

Applies to all staff (teaching and administration) working in the school.

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.

Introduction

The International School of Choueifat Khalifa City (ISCKC), part of the SABIS® School Network, recognizes that the health, safety, and overall wellbeing of the school community are essential to fostering an effective, positive, and supportive learning environment. The school acknowledges the importance of mental wellbeing, especially in light of the ongoing impacts from recent global disruptions, and therefore regularly updates procedures to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

Purpose

This document outlines ISCKC's policies and procedures supporting mental wellbeing, clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Aims and Objectives

- Cultivate a resilient, inclusive, and supportive environment.
- Create a school culture where wellbeing is actively promoted and concerns are proactively addressed.
- Ensure annual monitoring and evaluation of wellbeing practices.
- Clearly communicate wellbeing strategies, protocols, and support structures to students, parents, and staff.

Common Mental Health Concerns and Protective Factors

ISCKC proactively addresses mental health concerns such as anxiety, eating disorders, sleep issues, and feelings of isolation or hopelessness. The school prioritizes the development of protective factors by:

- Creating clear and consistent routines.
- Providing clear discipline policies addressing bullying.
- Encouraging open expression of feelings and emotions.
- Fostering positive relationships among students and between students and staff.
- Utilizing proprietary Integrated Learning Systems (ILS) to encourage independent learning and confidence.
- Enhancing family engagement through regular communication, social media presence, and parental involvement.

Signs of Mental Health and Wellbeing Concerns

Staff are trained to recognize signs such as inconsistent academic performance,

increased absenteeism, physical complaints without evident cause, changes in social interactions, and uncharacteristic displays of emotion among students and colleagues.

Wellbeing Support Structures

ISCKC supports students through:

- Clear communication of academic and behavioral expectations.
- Structured support provided by the school's SENCO and student support groups.
- Encouraging students to express emotions openly and safely.
- Anti-bullying strategies and positive discipline practices.
- Regular engagement with parents regarding Individual Education Plans (IEPs), student behavior, and academic performance.

Parents receive regular updates, tutorials, guides, and opportunities for feedback through meetings and informal communications.

Monitoring and Evaluation

ISCKC annually conducts comprehensive wellbeing surveys covering psychological, physical, social, intellectual, digital, and environmental aspects, in compliance with ADEK's requirements. Survey data is anonymized and analyzed securely, and insights directly inform annual action plans and strategic adjustments to wellbeing policies. The school provides ADEK with detailed reports annually.

Communication Protocols and Key Personnel

ISCKC Wellbeing Committee, consisting of senior and middle management, oversees policy implementation and addresses wellbeing concerns from parents, students, and staff. Students may seek immediate assistance from teachers, supervisors, peers, or the SABIS® Student Life Organization (SLO®). Staff are encouraged to approach the management team or committee directly.

Inclusion

The Head of Inclusion coordinates closely with the Wellbeing Committee, ensuring that strategies accommodate and proactively support students with additional learning needs, aligned fully with the ADEK School Inclusion Policy.

Compliance

Compliance with this policy is effective from AY 2024/25, with mandatory full compliance by AY 2025/26. Non-compliance will be addressed as stipulated by ADEK regulations.

This enhanced policy framework integrates ISCKC's existing wellbeing practices with ADEK's standards, ensuring effective, comprehensive, and proactive wellbeing support across the school community.

Appendix A

Common Mental Health and Wellbeing Concerns in a School Setting

- **Anxiety**
    - This also includes phobias, panic attacks, obsession, compulsions, and stress. Low level anxiety is common to everyone as part of regular daily life; however, feelings of anxiety sometimes persist for extended periods of time especially children and young people.
- **Depression**
    - Depressed people experience extreme ups and downs. They frequently feel sad, hopeless, and numb for extended durations (weeks or months at a time). At times of depression, some young people may develop suicidal feelings.
- **Eating and sleeping disorders**
    - Sometimes children convey messages about feelings they cannot express by using their weight and shape. Some people develop eating disorders while others may exhibit odd or problematic behavior around food.
    - Sleep and mental wellbeing are linked. Mental wellbeing and sleep deprivation often go hand in hand and affect one another in a vicious circle. People with mental health concerns experience sleep deprivation while insomnia contribute to mental health problems.
- **Self-harm**
    - This may also include substance misuse. Any behavior where students deliberately cause harm to themselves (typically cutting or burning) to manage with thoughts, feelings, experiences.

Appendix B

Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Research indicates that protective factors promote positive outcomes for the school community even when exposed to risk factors. The school believes that developing a whole school focus on strengthening the school based protective factors is important towards building a positive and open learning environment.

School specific risk/protective factors	
Risk Factors	**Protective Factors**
Disengagement, absenteeism, isolation	Developing positive teacher-student and teacher-management relationships
Violence/Aggression/Bullying/Relationship Difficulties	Developing a positive culture and climate to promote a sense of belonging to the school
Low Achievement/ Learning Difficulties/ SEN/ Social-emotional needs	Developing appropriate expectations and validating contributions
Cultural Differences/ School Transitions	Clear protocols to support students, staff, and families at home
Poor communication between family and school	Securing the availability of professional development and clear communication channels and procedures
Harsh Inconsistent Discipline	Providing opportunities to develop skills and responsible decision making by creating a culture of positive reinforcement.
No opportunities to develop social emotional learning	Developing a praise culture as opposed to a blame culture

Appendix C

Signs of Mental Health and Wellbeing Concerns for Students

- Isolation and becoming withdrawn from friends and family
- Changes in mood, eating/sleeping habits, or activity Inconsistent or regressing academic performance
- Writing or talking about self-harm (even as a joke)
- Feelings of failure/uselessness and hopelessness
- Increased absence and lateness
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE/
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause