



Victory Heights Primary School City
of Arabia

**Student Mental Health and
Wellbeing Policy**

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Responsible SLT: Principal

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School Wellbeing Statement

We believe that each member of our school community has a responsibility to prioritise their own well-being and contribute to the well-being of others. We promote self-care and offer resources to support physical, emotional, and mental health. We acknowledge that there may be times of challenge and adversity, and we are committed to supporting each other with empathy and compassion.

We strive to maintain a positive and healthy environment that nurtures growth, learning, and personal fulfilment for all members of our community. Together, we are dedicated to creating a school culture that celebrates diversity, promotes inclusivity, and empowers individuals to solve problems and reach their full potential.

(See Appendix 2, VHPS-COA Wellbeing Definition)

Equal Opportunities Statement

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of all students, ensuring that the principles of excellent pastoral care are applied fairly and equitably. Regardless of race, gender, disability, religion, or belief, every student's individual needs will be recognised and supported. We strive to create a positive school culture built on tolerance, equality, mutual respect, and inclusivity, where every student feels safe, valued, and empowered to thrive.

Introduction

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is dedicated to encouraging all students to be self-aware, confident and resilient, experiencing a positive approach to wellbeing and mental health. Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia offers a well thought out, nurturing and personalised approach to mental health and wellbeing, ensuring that students feel valued, cared for and know that they can access support should they need.

Aims

Our aim is to promote the wellbeing of all students and ensure individuals are appropriately supported, by acting in the following ways:-

- To review and to promote best practice within the school.
- To ensure all students feel valued and cared for.
- To foster nurturing relationships between staff and students
- Promote wellbeing throughout the school and our community
- Promote the school's mission, vision and values, of which developing happy pupils is one, and promote the idea that 'All you need is love'.
- Celebrate the individuality of each pupil, staff member and parent and recognise that mental wellbeing is different for each person.
- Adopt a whole school approach to mental health and provide targeted support where necessary to students, staff and where needed parents/families, including coaching and mentoring.
- Raise awareness around mental health for the community of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia in order to reduce the stigma around mental health and promote wellbeing.
- Empower staff with the necessary training in order to respond appropriately to early warning signs displayed by students, parents and colleagues.

Policy Scope

This policy is to guide and support all staff, to make them aware of what Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia's approach is to promoting mental health and wellbeing in our school.

It should be read and understood in conjunction with other important policy documents including but not limited to;

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Staff handbook

Whole School Approach

It is important that we also work with parents, carers, and other agencies and partners when necessary.

We aim to support parents as much as possible, to do this we will;

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing that we have in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia.
- Ensure parents are aware of who to talk to and how to get in touch with them.
- Give parents support and guidance on how to support their child.
- Ensure this policy is also available to parents.
- Promote that staff have mental health training and that it is something that Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia takes seriously.
- Working with other agencies

As part of our whole school approach, other agencies may work with students both in school and outside of school. This might include;

- The school nurses.
- The school doctor.
- Other counselling/ therapy services.
- Behavioural therapists.
- Occupational therapists.
- Speech and language therapists.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies and Frameworks

National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031

As an international leader in wellbeing promotion, the United Arab Emirates holds its National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031 as a key driver of public policy and a significant enabler of the Centennial 2071 Vision. The strategy aims to build a flourishing nation; connected communities and thriving citizens, prioritising education as the key instrument for accelerating high-quality implementation and impact.

Wellbeing Matters

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia's approach to Student Mental Health and Wellbeing is guided by the principles contained within 'Wellbeing Matters' in addition to other sources of international best practice, including "Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing" (HM Government, Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, 2015)

Wellbeing Matters builds on the legacy of the Dubai Student Wellbeing Census, providing a refreshed approach to wellbeing promotion and acting as a catalyst for wellbeing advancement across Dubai's private school sector.

As wellbeing becomes an essential part of school culture and pedagogy, this framework provides school leaders and educators with a common point of reference.

Further reading

<https://web.khda.gov.ae/en/Resources/Publications/School-Inspection/Wellbeing-Matters-A-guiding-framework-for-the-monitoring-of-student-wellbeing>

<https://www.oecd.org/pisa/Well-being-Infographics.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/a-whole-school-approach-to-wellbeing/>

<https://neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

Responsibilities Concerning Students Wellbeing

School's Obligation

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia holds a steadfast duty of care towards its students, ensuring their wellbeing within the educational environment. The school will continually ensure its policies and practices reflect this commitment and will routinely reassess these documents for their efficacy and relevance.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment that prioritises students' mental, emotional, and physical health. This includes implementing and overseeing robust wellbeing programs, coordinating with staff to identify and address students' individual needs, ensuring that safety and pastoral care standards are upheld, and collaborating with external agencies or counsellors as necessary. Additionally, the principal takes the lead in promoting a culture of empathy, respect, and resilience, empowering students to thrive academically, socially, and personally.

Wellbeing Team

Head of Inclusion: Michelle Choytooa

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Sasha Crabb, Ben Rothwell,

Pastoral and Student Well-being Lead: Hayley Stewart

The Wellbeing Team plays a crucial role in fostering and maintaining the overall health and wellness of the school community. Their specific responsibilities include:

Assessment: They evaluate the mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing of students, identifying those who may be at risk or in need of additional support.

Curriculum Development: The team designs, implements, and reviews programs and initiatives that promote positive mental health, resilience, and overall wellness.

Intervention: They provide direct support and interventions to students facing challenges, which might include counselling sessions, group therapy, or referrals to external specialists.

Continuous Professional Development: The team facilitates training sessions for staff, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to identify and support students' wellbeing needs.

Collaboration: They work closely with teachers, parents, and external agencies to create a cohesive approach to student wellbeing, ensuring that every student receives consistent support.

Awareness and Advocacy: The Wellbeing Team leads campaigns and initiatives to raise awareness about mental health and wellness, reducing stigma and fostering a culture of understanding and acceptance.

Monitoring & Feedback: They continuously monitor the effectiveness of wellbeing programs, collecting feedback and making necessary adjustments to ensure the ongoing needs of students are met.

Resource Allocation: The team ensures that sufficient resources—whether it be time, materials, or funding—are allocated to wellbeing initiatives, ensuring their effectiveness and reach.

If a staff member or member of the community is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, they can discuss it with one of the above members of staff. During school holidays, DSLs are encouraged to put an automated reply to emails signposting senders to still email in the event they have a concern. This is monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Student Wellbeing Curriculum

At VHPS-COA, our comprehensive approach to nurturing positive mental health and wellbeing involves fostering resilience, happiness, and success in our children, while proactively preventing potential challenges. We achieve this through the following means:

- Fostering positive relationships with every student and actively promoting self-esteem through daily interactions.
- Cultivating a consistent ethos, implementing policies, and fostering behaviours that prioritise mental health and overall well-being.
- Upholding a positive, restorative and reflective approach to managing behaviours.
- Facilitating social development, enabling children to build and sustain relationships.
- Encouraging an environment of trust where children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or challenges.
- Educating children about emotional intelligence and mental health awareness to enhance their understanding of their own emotions and feelings.
- Emphasising positive praise and feedback, regularly celebrating students' strengths and achievements
- Boosting self-esteem and instilling a sense of significance within the world.
- Equipping children with the tools to be resilient learners and adept at handling setbacks.
- Identifying children facing mental health challenges and devising tailored support strategies, including collaboration with specialist services, parents, and caregivers.
- Providing support and training for staff, empowering them to enhance their skills and resilience.
- Cultivating an inclusive culture that normalises open conversations about mental health.
- Promoting positive education in the form of our ELLI (Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory) animals.

Wellbeing is embedded into our formal curriculum and the 'hidden curriculum' with all pupils having the opportunity to learn about mental health and wellbeing through different classes such as Moral, Social Cultural education alongside various awareness days throughout the year such as World Mental Health Day as well as the variety of Extracurricular activities that are offered. Our staff encourage independence and risk-taking, fostering confidence throughout all aspects of school. Teachers actively promote student innovation across the curriculum, valuing students' contributions and creative ideas. They explore diverse strategies to motivate students, taking into account their interests and preferred learning styles. The importance of resilience is emphasised throughout all subjects and in assemblies.

Our school wellbeing team is frequently introduced in significant school events and assemblies, creating awareness of their role. They also organise events for parents to

destigmatize crucial mental health issues and enhance parental awareness. We incorporate mental health days into the school calendar, raising awareness of psychological well-being among students, staff, parents, and the broader community. Celebrating cultural diversity is a significant part of our year, where we respect and honour each student's cultural background and heritage.

Above all, every staff member is prepared and eager to provide care, guidance, and support as students' progress, learn, and navigate their educational journey within the school.

Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory

ELLI is about helping children develop their strength or power as learners so that they can achieve their best throughout life. Researchers have identified teaching seven Learning Dimensions or Powers that are key to becoming highly successful lifelong learners. The children at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia are getting to know these powers using animal metaphors, which are as follows:

- The OWL is planning and strategic awareness,
- The CHAMELEON is the ability to keep changing and learning,
- The TORTOISE is resilience,
- The UNICORN is creativity,
- The BEES are the ability to work alone and in a team,
- The CAT is about developing the attitude of curiosity,
- And the SPIDER helps us to make connections and 'webs' of meaning.

Each dimension is a continuum, we are all on there somewhere. Ideally a balance of strength in all areas is needed to become effective lifelong learners.

Five Ways to Wellbeing

The "Five Ways to Wellbeing" is a set of evidence-based actions which promote individual well-being. Developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) in the UK, these actions are grounded in extensive research and are designed to improve personal well-being. The five ways are:

Connect

Building connections with people around you – family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours – contributes to your well-being. Engaging in social interactions and forming strong relationships can create a sense of belonging and foster community spirit.

Be Active

Regular physical activity is associated with better mental well-being and reduced risk of various health issues. This doesn't necessarily mean going to the gym; activities like walking, dancing, gardening, or playing a sport can all be beneficial.

Take Notice

Being present and aware, often referred to as mindfulness, helps people appreciate their surroundings and the world at large. Noticing the beauty in the world and being present in the moment can ground an individual and promote a sense of calm.

Keep Learning

Lifelong learning can boost self-esteem and encourage social interaction. This doesn't only refer to formal education; learning new skills, such as cooking a new recipe or picking up a musical instrument, can be both fun and beneficial for mental health.

Give

Acts of kindness, whether small or large, can create feelings of happiness and fulfilment. This includes not only materialistic giving but also giving time, attention, or even just a smile. Volunteering, helping a neighbour, or just offering gratitude can enhance well-being.

The New Economics Foundation recommends these actions as simple, everyday routes to improved well-being that individuals can incorporate into their daily lives.

Available Support

Both pupils and staff have access to various support networks and dedicated trained coaches, mental health first aiders and a designated Pastoral and student wellbeing lead. These members of staff are highlighted around the school in various locations, with each staff member responsible for a particular group of stakeholders.

There are a range of services outside school that offer support to students and staff. Staff have also been offered counselling sessions if required, with 5 sessions being paid for by school. Information about other providers can be given by the school, but Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia has no affiliation with any of these providers.

The wellbeing team and Head of Inclusion can provide guidance and recommendations, but it is then the responsibility of the member of staff or the parents of the pupil to contact the providers, arrange appointments and pay for the appointments.

Warning Signs

All staff will be trained on how to recognise warning signs of safeguarding and common mental health problems at the beginning of the year and again throughout the year, where needed. Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia provides a range of learning opportunities through the CPD programme, both face to face workshops and online courses using National Safety Online. This means all staff can offer basic support when needed and refer on to the necessary person. All warning signs will be taken seriously and staff who notice any behaviour and physical changes will communicate their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads where appropriate.

There will be other times when a student or member of staff may need extra support, eg. A bereavement or health difficulties for themselves or a family member (See Bereavement Policy)

Some examples of warning signs are:

- Repeated or seemingly non-accidental physical injuries.
- Altered eating or sleeping patterns.
- Growing detachment from friends or family, leading to increased social withdrawal.
- Mood swings or shifts in daily demeanour.
- Diminished passion or excitement for school life
- References to, or light-hearted remarks about, self-harm or taking one's own life.
- Voicing sentiments of inefficacy, hopelessness, or worthlessness.

It's imperative that we support and watch over each other.

Recording of Wellbeing Concerns

Staff identified

If it is observed that a child is encountering concerns regarding their wellbeing, then a Safeguarding concern should be raised using Nexquare. The school's pastoral lead will make an intervention based upon this feedback.

Disclosures

In the event of a student disclosing information about themselves or someone else, our staff members are trained to maintain a composed, supportive, and non-judgmental approach. They listen attentively to the individual, reassuring them that there are supportive resources within the school and offering to accompany them if needed. All safeguarding and child protection disclosures are treated as confidential and recorded on Nexquare, adhering to the guidelines outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Such records are kept confidential and only shared with specific staff members as necessary, as determined by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff members requiring support following a disclosure will receive assistance from the DSL or Head of Inclusion. Similarly, if a parent or staff member makes a disclosure, it is essential to follow the prescribed steps and consult with the Principal/DSL. In cases where the Principal/DSL is involved in the disclosure, the matter should be reported to the DDSL or another member of the Safeguarding Team.

Student (self) identified

Children are able to log their own concerns using Komodo, which is in place to support the tracking of children's wellbeing. In the first instance, a child's teacher should address any concerns raised by the child, but may need to seek the advice or further assistance of the school's pastoral lead.

Confidentiality

Every concern regarding mental health and wellbeing is kept confidential and only the people who need to know (namely the people mentioned within this policy) should be informed. Mental health is still a very sensitive topic and respect needs to be shown to all involved. The student, parent, staff member concerned should be kept informed of the steps along the way.

Training

All staff will receive training at the start of the academic year to support them and the students throughout the year. This will form part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection training and training records will be held.

Training will be offered in a combination of face-to-face and online methods. Examples of training include but are not limited to

- NSO Online courses
- Annual certificate in online safety
- Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People
- Workshops and talks delivered by School Doctor
- EpiPen Training

Komodo Wellbeing

To comprehensively monitor student wellbeing, our school utilises the Komodo Wellbeing platform, an online survey-based system that empowers our students to assess their own wellbeing by answering specifically designed survey questions, crafted by psychologists.

These allow us to evaluate various facets of wellbeing, including emotional awareness, digital wellbeing, friendship, resilience, confidence, and happiness. The data is then consolidated into a teacher dashboard, equipping educators with the necessary insights to provide appropriate check-ins and interventions for students requiring additional support.

Students are also provided with an opportunity to request a check-in with a member of staff, offering them a safe space to discuss any challenges they may be experiencing. Through the implementation of Komodo Wellbeing, we remain dedicated to nurturing the holistic wellbeing of our students and fostering a conducive learning environment. Survey data is analysed at school, year group, class and at an individual level to identify trends and create actions to improve wellbeing.

Our Pastoral lead actively supports and offers advice to class teachers about possible interventions. Where teachers are concerned about individual students, as a result of a wellbeing survey, parents will be informed, and the school will work with the family to create and take next steps to support the child.

To monitor staff and parent wellbeing we periodically send out questionnaires to gather feedback about our school community, implementing suggestions made where appropriate.

For more information

<https://www.komodowellbeing.com/>



Victory Heights Primary School City
of Arabia
**Student Mental Health and
Wellbeing Policy
Appendices**

Appendix 1

Five Ways to Wellbeing

Five ways to wellbeing



Talk with someone in your family or group of friends and really listen to what he or she has to say. Perhaps ask about something that happened at work, at a club or perhaps how he or she is feeling today and why that is.



Do something active with your family or friends like going for a walk or playing a game that gets you moving.



Take a bit of time to notice things around you, perhaps have a mindful moment, notice what you can see, hear, smell, feel. Perhaps notice what the people around you are up to, how they are feeling or acting.



We're learning new things all of the time. See if you can find out about something new, or an interesting fact, perhaps learn a new skill.



Think of an opportunity to show kindness to someone else. Being kind to others actually makes you feel good so it's a kindness for you as much as the person on the receiving end!

Appendix 2

VHPS-COA Wellbeing Definition

Wellbeing

We believe that each member of our school community has a responsibility to prioritise their own well-being and contribute to the well-being of others. We promote self-care and offer resources to support physical, emotional, and mental health. We acknowledge that there may be times of challenge and adversity, and we are committed to supporting each other with empathy and compassion.

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Appendix 3

VHPS-COA Manners Matter



Monitoring and Compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly in line with the Policy Review Policy. Updates and changes will be documented in the Version Control Table to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

Version Control Table

Policy Title: Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Owner: Principal

Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	October 2023	PLT	Initial policy release	August 2025
1.1	February 2024	PLT	Added Monitoring and Compliance Amended EQ Statement	August 2025