



ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL

ABUDHABI

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

2024-2025

INTRODUCTION

St. Joseph's School is committed to positively influence the wellbeing of student progress and success. We are responsible to nurture and sustain the mental well being of student community and to identify and support students at risk of poor mental health.

PURPOSE

- We ensure that mental health is prioritized and integrated in all aspects of the school environment.
- We aim mental health through awareness campaigns and initiatives aimed at all stakeholders.
- Support early identification and intervention by establishing systems and protocols for identifying and addressing mental health concerns.

SCOPE

Our policy provides guidelines to all students to ensure that mental health is prioritized and integrated in all aspects of the school environment.

▪ **Providing positive environment**

We nurture positive mental health and emotional well-being of all students.

- Assembly programs, Thought for the day, Exercise.
- Providing equal opportunities to students to participate in assembly programmes, sports, art and various activities in and out of the school.
- Bulletin boards to communicate students work on positive wellbeing of students.
- Encourage student to foster mental health by star of the week, positive feedback by teachers.
- Encourage students to participate SJS radio waves and volunteer club activities in school.

▪ **Mental Health Awareness and Education**

School is committed to provide insight to students about mental health and living healthy, balanced lives, with a focus on increasing protective factors and developing coping mechanisms.

▪ **Student Counselling**

The provision of in-school or outsourced qualified specialist services to students who may require additional support or counselling. The school has shared referral forms to the parents, teachers so that concerns are raised and confidentiality is well maintained.

▪ **Parent Consent**

Schools shall seek consent from parents if regular or structured counselling is provided to a student. Where the need for counselling is identified but parents refuse to give consent, schools shall require them to indicate their decision in writing, with an acknowledgment that they will take responsibility for the wellbeing of the student.

- Parental consent shall not be required when a student interacts with the school counsellor(s) in an unstructured or irregular manner (e.g., as spontaneous conversation regarding daily life, or unplanned drop-ins).
- Parental consent shall not be required if the counsellor deems it to be in the best interest of the student, i.e., in situations where informing parents may adversely affect the wellbeing of the child.
- Where a parent refuses to give consent to the counsellor and school determine that access to a counsellor is a necessary measure to prevent potential significant harm to the student, schools shall report this as neglect to the Child Protection Specialist and/or Child Protection Unit, in line with the ADEK Child Protection Policy.

Key Staff Members

- Principal/Vice Principal
- Teachers
- Social Worker/Counsellor
- Psychologist
- Mental Health Committee members
- Head of Inclusion
- Child Protection Officer

▪ **Support During Vulnerable Phases**

- Schools shall take structured measures to reduce the chances of increased stress and emotional vulnerability such as the time of examinations, university applications, transition between grade cycles, etc., and where applicable, alleviate students' stress and enhance their mental health.
- Brief one-on-one online or offline sessions between teachers and students for sharing feedback, both positive and constructive at the end of term.

- Individual or group workshop sessions with students to equip them to cope with stress and emotional vulnerability during vulnerable phases.
- **Support for Students with Additional Learning Needs**
 - Schools shall offer reasonable accommodations to support the mental health needs of students with additional learning needs.

Date of Review: 31st March 2025

Prestina Rocha

**Sr. Suranjana (Prestina Rocha)
Principal**

