AL ZUHOUR PRIVATE SCHOOL

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Approved by: SLT
Last reviewed on: June 2026
Next review due by: June 2027

Rationale

Recognizing that mental health is fundamental to student learning, staff wellbeing, and the broader educational mission, we are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, supportive environment that promotes resilience, emotional wellbeing, and healthy mental growth. This policy aligns with UAE Federal Law No. 10 of 2023 on Mental Health, and the UAE National Policy for the Promotion of Mental Health.

Definitions

1. Mental Health**:** An individual's state of psychological, emotional, and social well-being.
2. Mental Disorder / Illness**:** Diagnosable disturbance in thinking, mood, behavior, perception, memory, or mental ability that impairs social, educational, or occupational functioning.
3. Wellbeing**:** Overall wellness including mental, emotional, physical, social, and environmental health.
4. Vulnerable Phase: Periods in academic life where stress or emotional vulnerability is elevated (e.g. exams, transitions, university applications).

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students (K-12 / all grades served)
- All staff and faculty
- Parents / guardians
- All activities occurring on campus, as well as school-related off-campus activities where the school has supervisory responsibilities

Aims

- To promote awareness, understanding, and literacy around mental health among students, staff, and parents.
- To prevent mental health issues through early identification, education, and resilient skills building.
- To provide timely, effective, safe, confidential support and counselling for those who need it.
- To support students during vulnerable periods to reduce stress and emotional distress.
- To ensure inclusion and provide reasonable accommodations to students with additional learning / mental health needs.
- To ensure respect for rights, dignity, privacy and non-discrimination for all.
- To monitor, evaluate, and continuously improve mental health and wellbeing services in the institution.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. School Leadership / Principal / Board: Policy approval; allocation of resources; oversight; ensure compliance with ADEK / legal requirements.
2. Wellbeing Team: Deliver services; maintain records; liaise with staff and parents; ensure confidentiality.
3. Teachers / Staff: Early identification; creating supportive classroom culture; referring students; participate in training.
4. Head of Inclusion: Ensure accommodation; coordinate support for students with additional needs.
5. Parents: Support at home; participate in policy awareness; collaborate with school when concerns arise.

6. Students: Participate in awareness programs; use resources; support peers; respect others' privacy.

Procedures & Protocols

1. Referral & Crisis Protocols: Clear steps for when a student is in crisis (suicide risk, abuse, trauma). Include lines of communication, external professional involvement, emergency contact.
2. Documentation & Confidentiality: Maintain records securely; limit sharing; inform students/parents of their rights; consent protocols.
3. Support during emergencies / trauma: After whole-school emergencies, bereavement, or traumatic events, provide appropriate interventions, counselling, debriefing.

Implementation

1. Establish a Mental Health / Wellbeing Committee
2. Staff training; student and parent workshops; develop curriculum / programs.
3. Establish or improve counselling services; wellness spaces; referral networks
4. Collect data; gather feedback; adjust policy; report.

Communication

- The policy shall be made available to all staff, students, and parents in Arabic + English languages
- Summaries or guides may be produced for different groups (students, parents, staff).
- Regular reminders & refreshers

Review & Amendments

- This policy will be reviewed at least once per academic year.
- Amendments must be approved by School Leadership