

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

2022/23

Kent College Dubai



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Approved by
Principal:



Jared Nolan

Date:

24/02/23

Approved by
KCD Board Representative :

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Date:


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KCD Authorised Stamp



Shafigh Khoury
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1. Our Vision

KCD is committed to encouraging all pupils and staff to be self-aware, confident and resilient, experiencing a positive approach to wellbeing and mental health. KCD offers a nurturing and personalised approach to mental health and wellbeing, ensuring the staff and pupils feel valued, cared for and know that they can access support should they need.

2. Mission

We recognise that it is the collective responsibility of the family, school and community, to ensure the wellbeing of the pupil. KCD will ensure all pupils and staff are supported in nurturing their mental health and wellbeing. The Senior Leadership team will regularly discuss the wellbeing of staff and pupils at meetings.

3. Aims

Our aim is to promote the wellbeing of all pupils and staff 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 staff feel valued and cared for.
- To foster nurturing relationships between staff and their line managers.
- The aim of the policy is to show our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community
- Promote mental health and wellbeing throughout the school
- Promote the schools mission, vision and values, of which developing happy pupils is one, and promote a sense of belonging and community.



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- 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.
- Raise awareness around mental health for the community of KCD 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 pupils, parents and colleagues.
- Support staff who are struggling with their own mental health.

4. What is Mental Health?

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” (World Health Organization, 2022).

At KCD, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Happiness and wellbeing are at the forefront of everything we do and we wish to enable all staff and pupils to strive to reach their full potential during their time at KCD. We endeavour to make KCD a safe place to be, both physically and psychologically and hope that pupils and staff can be open about their mental health and wellbeing so that we can support them appropriately to the best of our ability. We understand that everyone goes through different life changes and experiences and that they may need someone to support them at points. Positive mental wellbeing is everybody’s responsibility and we all have a role to play with our own wellbeing as well as the students.

5. Policy Scope

This policy is to guide and support all staff, to make them aware of what KCD’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
- Counselling Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Staff handbook



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6. Key Staff Members

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in safeguarding and wellbeing. These are;

Principal: Jared Nolan

Deputy Principal and Head of Senior School: Tim Hollis

Whole School Counsellor: Laura Channer

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Andrew Spencer, Annie Lavelle and Muireann Carroll

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

7. Teaching

At KCD we pride ourselves on our curriculum provision that is adapted to the needs of the pupils throughout the year. All pupils have the opportunity to learn about mental health and wellbeing through different classes such as Moral Education and PSE, alongside various awareness days throughout the year such as World Mental Health Day on 10th October each year.

The importance of resilience is emphasised throughout all subjects and in assemblies. The school focuses on resilience as the most important strategy for pupils maintaining and improving their wellbeing.

8. Support for staff and pupils

Within the school we have one full-time social/emotional counsellor who is there to support pupils, staff and families in certain circumstances. The School Counsellor is available to support staff and pupils individually, in groups, after school sessions, and class discussions/sessions where needed. For regular counselling sessions for pupils, a referral system is in place (see the Counselling Policy). The School Counsellor reserves the right to refer the pupil or member of staff to an external professional, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist, if deemed necessary for more specialist support.

There is a range of services outside school that offer support to pupils and staff at a cost. Information about these can be provided by the school but KCD has no affiliation with any of these providers. The School Counsellor 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.



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9. Identifying needs and warning signs

All staff will be trained on how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems at the beginning of the year and again throughout the year, where needed. KCD provides a range of learning opportunities through the CPD programme, both face to face workshops and online courses. This means all staff can offer basic support when needed and refer on to the necessary person. It is important that if you have a concern about a child's mental wellbeing you first discuss with a member of the team named in this policy.

All warning signs will be taken seriously and staff who notice any of the following signs will communicate their concerns to the School Counsellor and/or Designated Safeguarding Leads where appropriate.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including;

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/ or joking about self-harm and/ or suicide.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of the year, eg. Jumpers in the middle of the summer.

Other signs that may be a concern;

- Erratic attendance and high absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

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

10. Disclosures

If a student makes a disclosure to you, about them or someone else, staff are to remain calm, be supportive and in a non-judgemental manner. Listen to what the person is telling you, you can tell the person after they have told you what they need to get out, that you are concerned for them and that there is people in the school that can support them and that you can come with them if they want. Never tell them you can keep a secret.

All safeguarding and child protection disclosures must be kept confidential and documented on CPOMS with the correct category tagged in order to alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. All records are to be kept confidential and only shared with certain members of staff where deemed necessary by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In some situations, you may be required to attend meetings with the team of child protection officers to best support you and the pupil. If staff require support after a disclosure this will be provided by the School Counsellor. If a parent or staff make a disclosure it is important to follow the steps outlined also and talk to the Principal or Head of School.



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11. Confidentiality

Every concern regarding mental health and wellbeing should be 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 pupil, parent, staff member concerned should be informed of the steps along the way.

12. 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 KCD.
- Ensure parents are aware of who to talk to and how to get in touch with them.
- Give parents support and guidance of 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 KCD take 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.
- The school counsellor.
- Other counselling/ therapy services.
- Behavioural therapists.
- Occupational therapists.
- Speech and language therapists.

13. 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. If it arises that staff need more training maybe through school or outside of school this will be considered. Training will be offered in a combination of face-to-face and online methods. Examples of training include but are not limited to

- Educare courses
 - Depression in International Schools
 - Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People
- Workshops and talks delivered by Clinical Psychologists from local clinics
 - Nurturing your Third Culture Kid
 - Identifying and managing anxiety within the classroom
- 'Tea and talk' sessions with parents hosted by various key members of staff in the school on a variety of topics.



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14. Staff Wellbeing

Staff Wellbeing at KCD is considered within two categories, wellbeing Institutional and wellbeing initiatives.

Institutional Wellbeing

- *Security through a self assessment appraisal system.
- *Consideration and minimisation of meetings.
- *Child care services provided for meetings,
- *Staff voice through SWOT analysis and feedback.
- *Open door policy with SLT.
- *Workload management (collaborative lesson planning, parents' evenings through zoom, ECA commitments, timetable allocations).

Wellbeing Initiatives

- *You have been "mugged"
- *Staff member of the week
- *Wellbeing days (non-curriculum days)
- *Inter-house staff competitions (netball, X fit games)
- *Teacher appreciation days.

