جيمس مدرستنا الثانوية الإنجليزية، دبي
GEMS Our Own English High School, Dubai

STUDENT LEARNING AND WELLBEING POLICY

"More learning occurs in a joyous classroom where children feel safe, secure and accepted, and where they feel the teacher sees them for who they really are." – Diamond (2010)

According to the World Health Organisation "*Wellbeing is a state in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.*"

At OOD we realize that wellbeing is connected to learning. Our students are growing up in a world driven exponentially by new technologies and information explosion. They need a new set of cognitive, social, and emotional skills for success as future global citizens. We wish our pupils to be healthy, confident, and resilient young people who can successfully navigate a more complex world.

We know that a supportive environment that combines a focus on wellbeing with that on learning is optimal — both are mutually inclusive.

Responding to individual and group differences, promoting collaborative learning, connecting to the heart and mind of every student, and teaching students how to manage their wellbeing, are just some of the ways our teachers are making sure students thrive.

We must continue to provide inclusive environments that nurture the wellbeing of all students, so that they become resilient lifelong learners who respond positively to their changing world and pursue their passions with confidence.

To foster wellbeing, our approach is five-fold:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Personal
- Social
- Cognitive

Our teachers provide inclusive learning environments that support every student to manage their wellbeing and achieve success.

Our school leaders create a whole school approach that provides the right conditions to achieve excellence and lift learning outcomes.

Our school community strengthens connections with parents, support services and the wider community.

Our student wellbeing and engagement is measured by success factors of a) attendance and b) student retention data.

The basis of our approach to student learning and wellbeing is through the following:

1. Creating safe, supportive and inclusive environments by:

- providing safe environments where diversity is valued, positive social interactions are promoted, and risk of injury or harm is minimised.
- developing an approach to wellbeing that supports the collective action of parents, teachers, inclusion and counselling teams and the leadership team.
- demonstrating and communicating positive, respectful relationships between staff, students, parents and members of the community.
- explicitly teaching and modelling social and emotional skills, values, and expectations for behaviour to support student wellbeing.
- making sure the physical environment and school policies and practices are safe, accessible and inclusive of students and families.
- planning for opportunities to promote and celebrate the traditions, values and cultures of UAE and the school community.
- providing learning opportunities and environments that promote healthy lifestyle choices.

2. Building the capability of staff, students, and the school community by:

- providing health and wellbeing learning opportunities for students through a curriculum that focuses on mental health, relationships, substance abuse, food and nutrition, benefits of physical activity, and safety – in real and virtual worlds.
- identifying opportunities to build the capabilities of teachers and school leaders to support a whole school approach to student wellbeing and its connection to learning.
- communicating information and advice on the benefits of supporting young people to be healthy, confident, and resilient.
- responding positively to the needs of different groups within the school community.
- strengthening connections with parents to support early intervention for students whose wellbeing is at risk.
- supporting staff health and wellbeing and recognising the resulting benefits for students.
- committing to continual improvement using evidence-based strategies to improve student wellbeing and seeking ways to develop and share new ideas.

Developing strong systems for early intervention by:

- recognizing early signs that a student's wellbeing is at risk, planning and documenting school processes to help staff respond appropriately to such students.
- sharing responsibility for supporting students at risk by seeking support from the inclusion and leadership teams; encouraging students and families to access support services.

Dr. Sheeba Jojo
Principal