



Cambridge International School

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures

NAME OF POLICY	Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure
APPROVED BY	Principal
DATE APPROVED	October 2023
SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE	October 2024
RELATED POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GEMS Safeguarding Policy• E-Learning Policy• Anti-Bullying Policy• Student Code of Conduct Policy• Attendance Policy

Purpose

At Cambridge International School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Wellbeing is at the heart of everything that we do! Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard and by using effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all. It is our mission to create students who are emotionally resilient, flexible and inspired to reach their full potential.

Vision: At CIS, our vision is for all students to flourish in a safe and nurturing environment, where we uphold our core values of respect, empathy, honesty, responsibility and perseverance.

Mission: We strive to create an inclusive community that empowers all students to be high performance learners, through the promotion of wellbeing and positive mental health.

Scope

This policy is a guide to all parents and staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Cambridge International School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff
- We create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion, whereby students are valued for their uniqueness
- Provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment that is responsive to personal, social and emotional needs of all members of the school environment
- Promote warm, positive and trusting relationships between students, staff and parents
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people who require mental health support/services
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques
- We provide students, staff and parents with opportunities to develop their awareness, confidence, resilience and coping strategies
- We value and create a diverse school community that encourages students, staff and parents to recognise and respect the views and values of each other
- All students learn and achieve

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

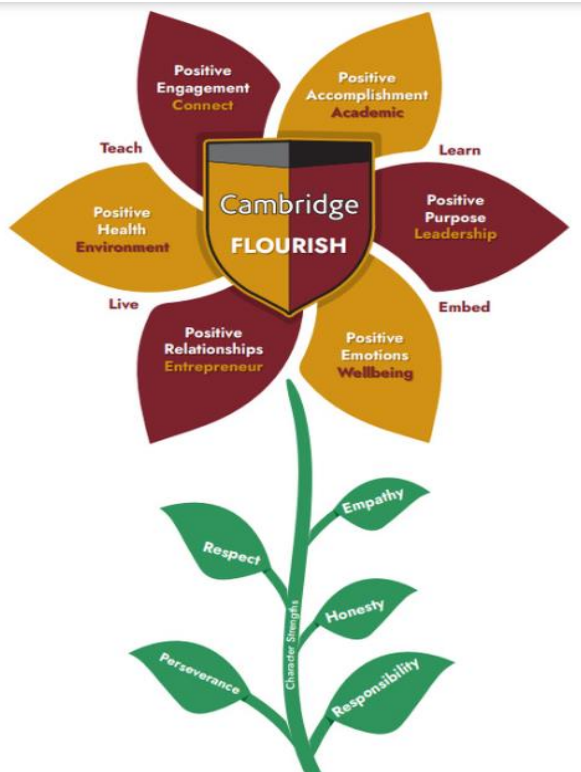
- HOY, Class teachers, TAs, LSAs
- Head of Inclusion
- School Counsellor
- Mental Health First Aid trained staff and students
- HODs Moral, Social, Cultural Studies
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student, in the first instance they should speak to the Head of Year, and as applicable make a referral to the School Counselor. All concerns to be communicated and shared with the Head and Deputy Head of school, during weekly meetings and bi-weekly SLT student wellbeing meetings. If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed, and the DSL (or Deputy DSL) must be informed immediately; the concern must be logged onto GUARD. If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Pastoral Action Planning

At CIS the Heads of Year are key members for the monitoring and support for students within their year group. Collectively, a Pastoral Action Plan is created at the start of the year and periodically reviewed and amended throughout the year. Specifically, the HOY focus on Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills and Performance Standard 5: The protection, care and guidance of and support of students. For each element the HOY create a target, actions, performance indicators and indicate who is involved as well as any key sources of evidence or notes. Within each month, HOY also assign five students to coach and communicate this with the parents, which is then logged on PULSE.

Positive Education



Cambridge International School recognises the importance of Martin Seligman's Positive Psychology approach and introduced the **Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum (PEEC)** in January 2021. It is a whole school, proactive approach that endeavors to provide students with skills and knowledge for when difficulties arise. At all times, we strive to adopt a strength-based approach; the idea of having a language about what is right within our community. We encourage students to learn from their mistakes, to evaluate if it is increasing the wellbeing of students and giving them the resilience and the ability to successfully cope and manage with life's challenges.

PEEC is an evidence-based approach, that is continually evolving as we tailor it to our curriculum and the needs of students at CIS. This year, we have introduced a **NEW** Curriculum for Life across the whole school. The Curriculum for Life comprises of explicit PEEC lessons that link to the six domains (Positive Engagement, Positive Accomplishment, Positive Purpose, Positive Emotions, Positive Relationships and Positive Health) and bespoke sessions on financial literacy, future careers and sustainability development goals. The amount of time spent teaching Wellbeing differs across departments and year groups and is reviewed annually.

Whole school timings for the explicit teaching of Wellbeing:					
	Monday Motivation	Happy-grati-Tuesday	Wellbeing Wednesday	Thoughtful Thursday	Feel good Friday
Early Years Foundation stage	What's your Mantra today? (Cambridge Flourish Flower) Form-time 5 mins Celebration Assembly – 30mins (First Monday - once a month for FS2)	My top 3 people to thank today. Form-time 5 mins WB – 30mins PEEC	How are you going to be kind to others, yourself, and the planet? Form-time 5 mins	What's something kind you can do today? Form-time 5 mins WB - 30mins PEEC	Share 3 good things that happened this week? Form-time 5 mins Life Skills Focus of the Month 30 mins
Year 1	What's your Mantra today? From-time 5 mins	My top 3 people to thank today. Form-time 5 mins CFL PEEC 50 mins: W1, W2 and W3 Life skills: focus of the month W4	How are you going to be kind to others, yourself and the planet? From-time 5 mins	What is something kind you can do today? From-time 5 minutes P4C to promote discussion and positive interactions	Share 3 good things that happened this week? From-time 5 minutes Celebration Assembly
Year 2	What's your Mantra today? From-time 5 mins P4C to promote discussion and positive	My top 3 people to thank today. Form-time 5 mins CFL PEEC 50 mins: W1, W2 and W3	How are you going to be kind to others, yourself and the planet? From-time 5 mins	What is something kind you can do today? From-time 5 mins	Share 3 good things that happened this week? From-time 5 minutes

	interactions- 50 mins	Life skills: focus of the month W4 –time 50 mins			Celebration Assembly- time 50 mins
Years 3 – 6	PEEC and Character Strengths 1 lesson 30 minutes	Financial Literacy Squirrel 1 lesson 30 minutes	Sustainability Development Goals Earth Cubs 1 lesson 30 minutes	Future Careers My Compass 1 lesson 30 minutes	Primary Collective Celebration Assembly 45 minutes
Years 7 - 8	Assembly 40 minutes	PEEC 1 lesson 40minutes	Upstrive 1 lesson 40 minutes	Future Careers My Compass 1 lesson 40 minutes	Registration Time Reflection
Year 9 - 10	PEEC 1 lesson 40minutes	Assembly 40 minutes	Upstrive 1 lesson 40 minutes	Future Careers My Compass/My Mentor 1 lesson 40 minutes	Registration Time Reflection
Year 11	PEEC 1 lesson 40minutes	Upstrive 1 lesson 40 minutes	Assembly 40 minutes	Future Careers My Mentor 1 lesson 40 minutes	Registration Time Reflection
Years 12 and 13	PEEC 1 lesson 40minutes	Future Careers My Mentor and UniFrog 40 minutes	Upstrive 40 minutes	Year 12 and 13 Assembly 40 minutes	Registration Time Reflection

The Cambridge International School’s approach to explicitly teaching wellbeing

At CIS, we use **four quadrants** that enable us to ensure that **student voice, wellbeing, personalised learning and preparing for the future** are key drivers within our explicit and implicit teaching of wellbeing.

Student Voice: We believe that by giving students a voice empowers them to take ownership of their wellbeing and play an active role in nurturing their holistic development. FS students express their feelings as soon as they self-register and greet their teacher with the help of visual clues. The teacher monitors the student's well-being and reports any concerns to HoY and HoS and appropriate action is taken. We encourage students to actively and autonomously promote their own wellbeing through the use of Upstrive (Year 5+): a platform for students to identify, and understand their own emotions and needs, to make informed choices and seek support when needed – ultimately they are advocates for their own wellbeing! All students have access to ‘Speak Up’ and Phoenix to log any concerns they may have and this is monitored and actioned by our School Counsellor. Student-led initiatives, like the 'Mental Health First Aiders,' and 'Happiness Ambassadors' offer peer support and promote empowerment in our student body.

Student Wellbeing: Our leadership teams, including our LAB and Parent Wellbeing Team, passionately advocate for strategic planning that centers on students’ mental health and wellbeing. At CIS every student has the **right to respect**, the **right to learn** and the **right to learn and play in a safe environment**. We create a nurturing and inclusive culture that is crucial for promoting mental health. We are committed to being emotionally available adults, ready to address concerns promptly and utilise the expertise of our School Counsellor Ms Suzie. We approach wellbeing from a place of student strengths and communicate this with students through high quality feedback, awarding House Points (Secondary), Dojo Points (EYFS-Y6), Character of Cambridge Awards and High Performance Learner Awards.

Personalised Learning: This year, we have introduced our Curriculum For Life, which is underpinned by our Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum. It is a proactive approach that endeavours to provide students with skills and knowledge for when difficulties arise. We are unique in the sense that we dedicate curriculum time to the explicit teaching of Wellbeing with the aim that all students are equipped to Flourish. Throughout the whole school we conduct a PASS survey twice a year to track Student Attitudes to Self and School; from this we design PASS action plans that are tailored to support students’ mental health and wellbeing. Leuven scale of engagement is a useful tool to help FS parents and teachers fully understand how their children are

involved in activities and what their level of emotional wellbeing is. Our Wellbeing team collaborate with teachers, parents, and external agencies to ensure a holistic approach to student support. We are implementing evidence-based programmes within our Curriculum For Life and engage students in decision-making processes.

Preparing for the Future: As part of our Curriculum For Life we have allocated time to prepare our students for the future of the unknown. We explicitly teach Financial Literacy, Sustainability Development Goals and Careers using our new online platforms: Squirrel, Earth Cubs and My Compass. In Secondary, 8 Billion Ideas has been launched to equip our students with the skills and belief to change the world, as well as using platforms such as Unifrog and My Mentor to support students' transition into the next stage of education and/or careers. The Capable Kids and Junior Duke and Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes continue to run this year, to promote students to become independent learners whilst achieving important life skills. We understand that these skills are the bedrock of a well-rounded education and are just as vital as traditional academic subjects. In fact, they form the foundation for students to flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

Despite all we do to promote positive mental health and wellbeing we know that some students may suffer from poor mental health

Identification process

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify students with wellbeing and mental health needs as early as possible to ensure we are proactive in our approach. The school has standing agenda items of safeguarding, student attendance, student welfare and health and safety to ensure these key areas are kept as a regular focus. These are opportunities for all and Key Staff to identify emerging signs of students with poor mental health and swiftly act upon any concerns. We do this in different ways including:

- Wellbeing calendar to identify regular student wellbeing check in as well as school events
- Analysing of external and internal student wellbeing surveys
- Analysing behaviour and attendance
- Staff report concerns in regards to individual children to the relevant lead person/people
- Pupil Progress Review meetings
- Use assemblies and lead time to discuss key wellbeing themes to raise awareness for our students.
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer
- Parental meetings and coffee morning
- Enabling students to raise concerns to any member of staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. All staff to monitor attendance and response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

PASS Action plans

When a student has been identified as having cause for concern, been flagged from the PASS survey, attendance has declined, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support through another organisation the students are identified and strategies to support are listed on the PASS action plans. Students are referred to the School Counselor and the students' needs and support are communicated with the parents.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Low PASS satisfaction factors identified and set as targets
- Key strategies and actions identified
- Performance indicators outlines as small, achievable outcomes
- Detailed notes of the student's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects

- The role the school and specific staff

Upstrive

'Upstrive' an online application is used daily from Y5-Y13 to monitor student wellbeing. Students complete their daily 'check-in' at the start of each morning which is viewed by their Learning Manager. The check-in asks 'How are you feeling today?' and each student's response is shared confidentially with their teacher. The student also has an option to write and disclose why they are feeling this way so that they can confidentially communicate this with their teacher. This is monitored daily by each Head of Year and School and appropriate action is taken for any students who make any disclosures.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PEEC curriculum, assemblies and our Mental Health First Aiders and Happiness Ambassadors support. We will follow the guidance issued with regard to Moral, Social, Culture, Studies to further enable us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively. This curriculum is supplement by relevant resources. Incorporating PEEC into our wider curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people. Additionally, we use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, welcome board and classroom display etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at?
- How to access it
- Why should they access it?
- What is likely to happen next

Sources of support at school and in the local community / School based support:

Local Support

In Dubai, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support for mental health. A Government portal for Mental Health is available here - [Mental health - The Official Portal of the UAE Government](#)

Emirates Health Services which provides Mental Health Services - [Mental Health Services | Services Directory | Services | Emirates Health Services - UAE \(ehs.gov.ae\)](#)

Warning signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student or colleague is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert one of the Key Staff Members noted on page 2.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement / enthusiasm for vocation
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, or loss of hope

Targeted Support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence. We are fortunate to have a School Counsellor and Wellbeing Support worker located at the school to support and provide advice to the community around the emotional and mental health needs of our students. Work is undertaken with families and individuals where required. Our Key Staff, as identified earlier in the policy, work hard to identify issues early, determine potential risks and provide early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural challenges.
- Identifying children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems.
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach.
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs.
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, so that emotional, social, and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur.
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality.
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers.

*It is essential all staff members to recognise the boundary between support and professional health care. **Only suitably trained healthcare professionals are qualified to diagnose and treat health conditions, whether mental or physical.***

Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive, and non-judgemental. All disclosures should be recorded confidentially using 'Safe Guard' and raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL). Our Mental Health First Aiders, are be trained so that any disclosures made to them will immediately be reported to the School Counsellor (who coordinates them) and ultimately Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy DSL as appropriate. Support will be available for Mental Health First Aiders through regular meetings with the School Counsellor.

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on serious concerns about a student to someone outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student and/or parents. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we are going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student and/or parents first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as when students are deemed to be in danger of harm. It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a Key Staff Member or DSL as appropriate, this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support. If a student gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Working with Parents

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents of any concerns, there are questions we consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Can the meeting take place somewhere quiet without disturbance?
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents, Key Staff Members etc?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for any parent, hearing about concerns for their child can be upsetting and distressing. They may, therefore, respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation. Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage. Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the student's record on Guard / SIMS as appropriate and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

Supporting Parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing students' emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to material promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (social media, newsletters etc.)
- Offering support to help parents develop their parenting skills as appropriate
- Offering bespoke 1:1 support and advice through our School Counsellor
- Having open lines of communication between parents and class teacher or tutor, Head of Year and/or Key Staff Members
- Wellbeing seminars to be held for parents by the School Counsellor

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from poor mental health, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering, and their parents, with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support and safe sources of further information
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. Additional and specific training is undertaken by all staff regarding supporting Mental Health in children. All staff are encouraged to visit <https://www.minded.org.uk/> learning portal which provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more students. Our curriculum is enhanced by a wellbeing focus in Moral, Cultural and Social Studies and through our assemblies. Suggestions for individual, group, or whole school CPD should be discussed with SLT and the School Counsellor who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Staff wellbeing:

There is a dedicated Staff Wellbeing coordinator working alongside the Staff Wellbeing working party to promote PERMAH and wellbeing through the school. There is an additional policy for Staff Wellbeing that includes the procedures at CIS. The Staff Wellbeing policy is shared with staff and outlines pillars for support and tools to promote wellbeing. All staff have access to the school counsellor. Staff wellbeing feedback is collected regularly and the data is analysed, an action plan is then created and processes and policies are

reviewed accordingly.

All staff will:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect;
- Understand their safeguarding duties concerning students' mental and physical health and wellbeing, and raise any concerns promptly with the DSL or other members of the safeguarding team;
- Adhere to this policy and any related policies and procedures.