



California American School

School

Wellbeing Policy & Mental Health

Review No.	Description of Change	Review by	Date of Issue
1	Adoption of Policy	CAS Administration	August 2023
2	Review and Update	CAS Administration	August 2024
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The Policy

At California American School, we are committed to promoting and supporting the Wellbeing (psychological, social, mental, physical, intellectual, digital, and environmental) and mental health of every individual through creating a whole school ethos in which the whole community (children, staff, parents and carers) feel secure, know that they are valued and are encouraged in their learning, growth and social development and recognize how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is in our lives. Individuals are better prepared for learning when they are healthy, safe and happy; therefore, Wellbeing is the responsibility of the whole school community. The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview of what Wellbeing is and the systems and procedures in place to support the Wellbeing needs of our children and staff.

At California American School our role is to ensure that children can manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Aims and Objectives

All children are valued.

- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health and wellbeing are promoted and valued.
- To ensure CAS School provides a safe, secure, supportive and stimulating environment that is responsive to the personal, social and emotional needs of all members of the school community.
- To encourage co-operation, respect and consideration for and between all members of the school community.
- To promote positive relationships between children, staff and parents.
- To build an atmosphere of trust.
- To help children and staff grow in self-esteem, confidence and independence of thought.
- To provide children and staff with opportunities to develop their resilience and coping strategies.
- To provide a safe and nurturing environment that prioritizes the physical, mental, and emotional health of our students and staff.
- To develop and implement comprehensive wellbeing programs and initiatives that address the diverse needs of our school community.
- To promote healthy lifestyle choices and habits that contribute to overall wellbeing.
- To prepare the children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- To provide staff with opportunities to develop professionally and personally.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

Wellbeing and Mental and the Curriculum

As part of the whole school's curriculum, schools provide age-appropriate activities that support their wellbeing, integrate activities in the lesson that meets the purpose, whether through student-teacher interactions or through counseling support. Wellbeing support is provided at a classroom level through positive teacher-student interactions, but also during the moral education lessons that are a part of their timetable.

Students are engaged in school activities and extracurricular activities that provide social and emotional learning tools and skills. Wellbeing is also promoted on a community level where students, staff and parents are educated and involved in well-being and mental health awareness celebrations, wellness days, fitness challenges set by the physical education teacher, and healthy living initiatives by the school nurses.

The Moral, Social and Cultural Studies Curriculum, support the development of positive wellbeing and teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively. providing clear progression and continuity as students move through each phase.

Signs that a child could be struggling with their mental health

1. Appearing withdrawn and not enjoying activities that they were previously.
2. Feeling tearful regularly.
3. Experiencing low self-esteem and speaking negatively about themselves.
4. Spending more time alone and avoiding spending time with family and friends.
5. Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
6. Increased irritability.
7. Regressing in developmental milestones such as wetting the bed or having toileting accidents.
8. Is afraid or worried a lot.
9. Complaining of physical problems such as headache and upset stomach more frequently.
10. A decline in academic performance and poor concentration in school.

Prevention strategies

There are many different strategies that can be implemented by schools and parents that can help keep children mentally healthy and improve their overall well-being. These strategies can include:

1. Encouraging children to have regular exercise throughout the day.
2. Eating a healthy diet.
3. Teaching children how to recognize and understand their emotions can improve their ability to communicate how they are feeling.
4. Teaching coping strategies such as mindfulness, deep breathing and other activities that can relieve stress.
5. Promoting and implementing healthy sleep habits.
6. Increase awareness of mental health difficulties so that the signs and symptoms can be recognized earlier.
7. Students should be taught strategies to help with time management and organizational skills to aid with their learning and reduce their stress.

Identification process

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. We do this in different ways including:

- Wellbeing calendar to identify regular student wellbeing check in as well as school events
- Analyzing of external and internal student wellbeing surveys
- Analyzing behavior and attendance
- Staff report concerns individual children to the relevant lead person/people
- Student 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
- Enabling students to raise concerns to any member of staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

Supporting Physical Wellbeing

- Encourage regular physical activity through physical education classes, sports programs, and extracurricular activities.
- Promote healthy eating habits through the school cafeteria and educational programs.
- Ensure a safe and clean environment that supports physical health and hygiene practices.

Supporting Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

- Implement a comprehensive counseling program that offers individual and group counseling services to students, staff and parents.
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their understanding of mental health and wellbeing.
- Promote emotional intelligence and resilience through social-emotional learning programs and workshops.
- Establish a peer support system to encourage students to seek help and support from their peers.

Supporting Social Wellbeing

- Encourage positive relationships and social connections through extracurricular activities, clubs, and community service initiatives.
- Promote a culture of respect, empathy, and kindness through anti-bullying campaigns and character education programs.
- Provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and engage in collaborative projects.

- Foster practices that educate our community and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice for all community members.
- Cooperation and collaboration are encouraged across the curriculum, supporting the development of key social skills.
- Flexible friendships are promoted, reminding students that they may have different friends relating to their different interests. We encourage students, and staff, to have wide friendship groups.
- The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. All instances or accusations of bullying are recorded, and the Safeguarding Team follow up with individual students/families.

Supporting Digital Wellbeing

- Educate students, staff, and parents about responsible and safe internet use through digital citizenship programs.
- Establish guidelines for appropriate technological use within the school premises.
- Encourage a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

Supporting Psychological Wellbeing

- All staff promote self-esteem in their daily interactions with students. Positive praise and feedback are key.
- Students' strengths and achievements are celebrated regularly through displays, certificates, awards, home communication and assemblies
- Teachers explore ways of motivating students, taking into consideration their interests, and preferred ways of working
- Staff create a trusting ethos where students are confident to speak to adults about any concerns that they may have
- Mental health days feature in the school calendar to raise awareness of psychological health amongst students, staff, parents and the wider community.
- All staff celebrate cultural diversity across the year, valuing each student's cultural background and heritage.
- All students and staff are treated fairly and equally, regardless of gender, background, religion, race or educational needs.
- All staff are willing to offer care, guidance and support as students grow, learn and move through the school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiatives

- Wellbeing Webinars/Workshops
- Mental Health Awareness
- Counselling service
- Awards Ceremonies
- Class Quizzes
- Community service/ Work Experience
- School Wellbeing Surveys.
- Student Wellbeing Activities
- School Extra-Curricular Activities

Mental Health and Wellbeing committee

This team is responsible for school wellbeing. This committee is dedicated to creating a positive and supportive work environment by acknowledging and appreciating staff, students and parents, organizing events and initiatives that celebrate staff and students' achievements and milestones. By actively addressing staff and students' wellbeing.

Key Staff Members

- School Senior Leadership Team.
- Social Worker.
- School Counsellor.
- SOD Department.
- School Nurse.
- Activities Coordinator.
- Extra-Curricular Coordinator.
- Student Affair Department
- HODs Moral, Social, and Islamic.

Roles and Responsibilities of Wellbeing Committee

1. Annually monitor and review the effectiveness of the school's Wellbeing Policy to ensure it is known, understood, and practiced appropriately by the school community.
2. Oversee the design, delivery, and analysis of an annual student and staff wellbeing survey(s)
3. Update the wellbeing strategy and/or relevant policies and initiatives, as required, in line with the insights received from the monitoring and evaluation measures.
4. Ensure that all members of the school community are informed of the school's wellbeing strategy and its efforts to promote wellbeing (psychological, social, mental, physical, intellectual, and environmental) across the entire school community including engagement with students with additional learning needs.
5. Ensure parents have access to the school's Wellbeing Policy and all supporting initiatives and procedures documents.
6. Develop an induction and training strategy to ensure all staff and volunteers receive information on the school's wellbeing requirements.

Students are expected to:

1. Engage in wellbeing activities and events that are provided at school regarding mental health awareness
2. Engage in advisory lessons where content is being addressed and taught
3. Consider their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others by advocating for themselves and others and communicating with trusted adults (teachers, counselors, parents) if needed

Staff are expected to:

- Integrate a culture of wellbeing into classes, events, and/or school ethos
- Be role models when it comes to wellbeing practices
- Engage in events and activities revolving around wellbeing awareness
- Monitor and identify any warning signs or concerns about a student's wellbeing to counselors or principal.
- Identify any concern about a staff member's wellbeing to counselors, principal or SLT
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedure.
- Be familiar with support resources available in the school and in the local community.
- Engage in yearly safeguarding and child protection training.
- Assist the school in collecting and analyzing wellbeing data.

Parents are expected to:

1. Communicate and collaborate with a counselor, principal, or SLT member for any concerns regarding their own child or another student's wellbeing.
2. Support the wellbeing practices at school by engaging in school events revolving around wellbeing.

Administrators and Board members are expected to:

1. Ensure a Board member sits on the Wellbeing Committee
2. Ensure the school collects and actions the findings from wellbeing data through the Wellbeing Improvement Plan
3. Support the wellbeing practices at school by engaging in school events revolving around wellbeing
4. Foster manageable workloads
5. Implement positive and meaningful appraisal systems to promote staff wellbeing

Wellbeing Data

At CAS, the school implements different approaches to gathering data in relation to all stakeholders' wellbeing including:

1. Parent Satisfaction Surveys are analyzed in depth and the school makes changes/improvements based on the results.
2. Student Surveys (including a well-being component) are analyzed and interventions for wellbeing are put in place based on the results.
3. Staff Wellbeing surveys - staff feedback is taken into consideration and concerns are addressed
4. Staff Committee - a team of staff members from different school departments and divisions (teachers, SLT, non-teaching staff) who get together to address any teacher - staff feedback is taken into consideration and concerns are addressed.
5. Wellbeing Committee (includes a Board member, staff, parents, students) – a team that works together to address any concerns regarding student wellbeing.

Wellbeing Survey

1. **Psychological wellbeing** (e.g., positive sense of self, personal development).
2. **Physical wellbeing** (e.g., student participation in sports and extracurricular activities, healthy eating).
3. **Social wellbeing** (e.g., sense of belonging, positive relationships, sense of being or feeling safe, staff work-life balance).
4. **Intellectual wellbeing** (e.g., effective learning time, interest and motivation, teaching relevance, curriculum relevance, engagement, positive attitude towards learning, work satisfaction).
5. **Digital wellbeing** (e.g., digital competency, digital safety).
6. **Environmental wellbeing** (e.g., knowledge of sustainable practices, satisfaction with school environmental wellbeing efforts, suggestions to improve).

School Support

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, common rooms, toilets 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 is it aimed at?
- How to access it
- Why should they access it?
- What is likely to happen next

Local Support and 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 CPT 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.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognizing 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.

Policy Review and Evaluation

This well-being policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from students, staff, and parents will be sought to identify areas for improvement and to address emerging well-being needs. The policy will be revised accordingly to reflect the evolving nature of wellbeing and to ensure the continued wellbeing of our school community.