



Al Rabeeh School

Counselling and Well-Being Policy

Implemented September 2021
Reviewed September 2022

Policy Statement

Al Rabeeh School is committed to meeting the physical, social and emotional needs of all members of the school community. The school aims to identify any student who may benefit from further, individualised and specialised support to ensure their well-being and to ensure that all students are able to have access to a safe environment. Through comprehensive and regularly reviewed safe-guarding and child protection policies and a culture of open communication, the holistic well-being of the students is at the forefront of the pastoral system.

Counselling and Wellbeing Support Policy

Ethos

Al Rabeeh School is committed to empowering their pupils to be confident, self-reliant and resilient. It aims to ensure the pupils have a positive mental wellbeing. The counselling service provides a confidential, safe, nurturing and personalised approach for pupils to explore difficulties they may encounter, complementing the pastoral support within the wider school community.

The service is available to any parent within the school community to discuss any concerns they may have regarding their son/daughter and is also available to any member of the school staff.

Entitlement

All students regardless of their learning needs are entitled to a high-quality wellbeing and counselling service if they require it.

Aims

- To provide a safe and nurturing environment to support the therapeutic process for all pupils, appropriate to the needs and life stage of the pupil.
- To identify, alongside the pastoral teams, children who may be at risk of emotional, psychological and/or social issues as early as possible.
- To assess the severity of the problems encountered and implement personalised management plans specific to each child in order for them to unlock their full potential.
- To provide the appropriate type of therapy/support and follow-up with each student in order to achieve the goals required (well-being, etc.).
- To provide ethical and professional support for vulnerable children as well as staff in need.
- To provide individual or group intervention where there is a pattern of behaviour emerging.
- To encourage pupil, parental and staff involvement in accessing the service through a relationship of trust with the counsellor.
- To stay in direct contact with the staff/parents/students involved and maintain supportive and collaborative relationships with each.
- To provide opportunities to raise awareness and address wellbeing and safety issues in school to develop children's sense of self care.
- To ensure children are empowered to make appropriate decisions with regards to friendships and interactions with others.

The counselling support provided is in line with current best practice and professional standards for school based counselling as set out in DFE Statutory Guidance '*Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future* Departmental advice for school leaders and counsellors', which was

published in March 2015. This policy also reflects the ADEC counselling policy (policy 53) as set out in the ADEC Private School policy manual 2014.

Definition(s):

For the purposes of this policy **the School** refers to Al Rabeeh School. For the purposes of this policy, **counselling and wellbeing support** is the support provided by the school counsellor to improve the wellbeing of students in the school.

Counselling provides an opportunity for individual pupils to talk, in confidence, about things that are worrying them or affecting their day to day life. Our school counsellor is trained to listen, without judging, and to help the person to resolve their thoughts and feelings and gain a greater understanding of themselves and their situation. The counselling sessions are dictated by the individual and common issues for pupils are bullying, parental separation, stress, friendships, change, bereavement, distressing traumatic events and anger. The counsellor does not generally offer advice, but rather plans to follow and offer potential treatments to alleviate existing problems through the form of recognised strategies and through collaborations with external agencies when necessary.

Purpose

The specific objectives of the Counselling and Wellbeing policy are:

- To improve the wellbeing of students in school
- To provide a supportive space for the staff
- To provide awareness of personal and wider community issues
- To develop and empower students to make well considered decisions regarding their own wellbeing and behaviour choices in line with the school's values.

Referral

Teachers, parents or students may either be referred (students), or refer themselves to the school counsellor with an issue or request for support.

- Parents are welcome to contact the school counsellor directly; be it through email or phone number. If an appointment is needed, the counsellor will arrange an appointment with the concerned party.
- The students can meet the counsellor through self-referral, immediately if the counsellor is available at the time, or at a later agreed date.
- The parent or guardian can refer a student to the counsellor if the issue is affecting or related to their school life.
- The administration, teacher, or the staff can request for a student to meet with the counsellor.
- Teachers can also refer themselves to the counsellor, either by filling a form and taking an appointment or by walking in. Information will be kept confidential unless posing a risk to their working environment.

Confidentiality

A key feature of the service is that information discussed in the counselling session is treated confidentially. Counselling is a time when the individual needs to feel secure to talk about their concerns without the fear of the conversation being shared. This promotes a trusting therapeutic relationship between the counsellor and pupil/parent/staff member. Confidentiality will be explained at the beginning of the counselling process and periodically thereafter, where there is a need.

However, in the event that there is a child protection concern about a pupil's welfare, then this information will need to be shared. The counsellor will endeavour to seek the pupil's views and consent before sharing the information and will also explain the possible consequences of third party involvement. Where a pupil is at risk of significant harm, the counsellor will initiate the school's child protection procedures (please refer to the Safeguarding policy).

As an integral part of the pastoral system within the school, the Principal and Assistant Head teachers are aware of the teacher-referred pupils accessing the service but they are not party to the information discussed within the sessions.

The counsellor may also liaise with, share information or provide referral information to pupils, parents or staff, depending on the need to know.

Provision

The school counsellor will provide 1:1 support for students in sessions which last up to 40mins dependent on need. There is also the opportunity for social groups for students who require further support with their social skills. The school counsellor also arranges and promotes awareness events following international and local awareness days. Support is also provided through assemblies and in class sessions to develop children's wellbeing.

Monitoring and Recording

The counsellor will keep a formal record of pupils who access the service and a brief description of the presenting issue and plan support required. Where the pupil is referred, a referral form will be kept on file as well as parental consent, where needed. All pupil records will be stored in a locked cabinet in the counsellor's office.

Responsibilities

Principal

- Evaluate current practice in admitting and providing services for students and monitoring the impact.
- Make appropriate modifications to counselling plans and differentiate and adapt the curriculum where required to meet students' needs.
- Ensure parents are informed of their students' progress with regards to their wellbeing.

School Counsellor

- To lead and monitor the counselling provision in school
- To support students as well as staff based on individual needs without any judgement and while ensuring confidentiality
- To meet with parents and share information regarding areas of concern as well as progress
- To consistently develop the school's wellbeing programme where children are able to discuss issues of concern and understand how to make practical and safe decisions

This Policy is reviewed annually.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Draft Date:	2nd September 2022
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Principal Approval:	
Review Date:	August 2023