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STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Policy Reference: SJS/SMHP/2025

Approved By: School Leadership Team

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Next Review Date: 31st March, 2027

Introduction

St. Joseph's School is committed to positively influence the wellbeing of student progress and success. We are responsible to nurture and sustain the mental well-being of student community and to identify and support students at risk of poor mental health.

Purpose

- We ensure that mental health is prioritized and integrated in all aspects of the school environment.
- Support early identification and intervention by establishing systems and protocols for identifying and addressing mental health concerns.
- We aim mental health through awareness campaigns and initiatives aimed at all stakeholders.

Scope

Our policy provides guidelines to all students to ensure that mental health is prioritized and integrated in all aspects of the school environment.

Providing positive environment

We nurture positive mental health and emotional well-being of all students.

- Assembly programs, Thought for the day, Exercise.
- Providing equal opportunities to students to participate in assembly programmes, sports, art and various activities in and out of the school.
- Bulletin boards to communicate students work on positive wellbeing of students.
- Encourage student to foster mental health by positive feedback by teachers and star of the week.
- Encourage students to participate SJS radio waves and volunteer club activities in school.

Mental Health Awareness and Education

- School is committed to provide insight to students about mental health and living healthy, balanced lives, with a focus on increasing protective factors and developing coping mechanisms.
- This shall include mindfulness, social and emotional learning (including emotional regulation and resilience), stress management, communication, time management and organization, and the importance of creating a receptive environment for those seeking mental health support and avoiding actions that can lead to stigmatization.

Student Counselling

- The provision of in-school or outsourced qualified specialist services to students who may require additional support or counseling.
- The school has shared referral forms to the parents, teachers so that concerns are raised and confidentiality parental Consent form.

Parental Consent

- Schools shall seek consent from parents if regular or structured counseling is provided to a student.
- Where the need for counseling is identified but parents refuse to give consent, schools shall require them to indicate their decision in writing, with an acknowledgment that they will take responsibility for the wellbeing of the student.
- Parental consent shall not be required when a student interacts with the school counselor(s) in an unstructured or irregular manner.
- Parental consent shall not be required if the counselor deems it to be in the best interest of the student, i.e., in situations where informing parents may adversely affect the wellbeing of the child.
- Where a parent refuses to give consent to the counselor and school determine that access to a counselor is a necessary measure to prevent potential significant harm to the student, schools shall report this as neglect to the Child Protection /or Child Protection Unit, in line with the ADEK specialist and/or Child Protection Unit, in line with the ADEK Child Protection Policy.

Referral Pathways

External Referral

Where it is determined that a student requires specialized support beyond the professional qualifications of the school counselor, schools shall require students to seek help from external professionals.

Referral procedures

- Student, Parent and teachers can refer signs of behaviors of concern in students to the school administration.
- Procedure for informing and engaging with parents, including the procedure through which the school administration needs to inform parents when signs of

- behaviors of concern are identified reported. The decision to inform parents and the choice of the means to inform them shall be made taking into consideration the best interests of the student.
- Schools shall identify and report students who are young caregivers to the Family Care Authority (FCA) and refer them for counselling.

Wellness Resources

- Wellness space-School provide wellness space for quiet calming down, reflection or mental breaks.

Support during Vulnerable Phases

- Schools shall take structured measures to reduce the chances of increased stress and emotional vulnerability such as the time of examinations, university applications, transition between grade cycles, etc., and where applicable, alleviate students' stress and enhance their mental health.
- Brief one-on-one online or offline sessions between teachers and students for sharing feedback, both positive and constructive at the end of term.
- Individual or group workshop sessions with students to equip them to cope with stress and emotional vulnerability during vulnerable phases.

Support for Students with Additional Learning Needs

- Schools shall offer reasonable accommodations to support the mental health needs of students with additional learning needs.
- We included behavior support plan for students of additional learning needs in documented learning plan holistic and take the level of functioning of the students with additional leaning needs into account, in line with ADEK School Inclusion Policy.
- Accommodations-Accommodate breakout timings for students experiencing high levels of anxiety, Close monitoring of students who are identified as being at risk of teasing or bullying.

Approved by:

Prestina Rocha
Principal

