MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL -BEING POLICY

Policy Name	Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy	Policy No.	WPSH_PLC_006
Effective Date	April 2025	Date of Last Review	25th March 2025
Date of Next Review	March 2026	Person in-charge	

Purpose

- To ensure that wellbeing—emotional, social, physical, mental—is central to our culture,
- practices, and policies at Woodlem Hamidiya.
- To foster an environment in which all students and staff have the knowledge, skills,
- support, and resilience to thrive.
- To embed Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), via the CASEL framework's five core
- competencies, across all aspects of school life.
- To provide clear structures for prevention, early identification, intervention, recovery,
- and continuous improvement.

This policy applies to all students, all teaching staff, nonteaching staff, and leadership at the school, and covers all school settings: classroom, playground, corridors/hallways, school transport, extracurricular, and during school events.

2. Definition: CASEL Framework & Key Competencies

According to CASEL, SEL comprises five interlinked competencies. CASEL+1

Competency	Definition
Self-Awareness	Knowing one's emotions, values, strengths, limitations; having self-confidence and a growth mindset. CASEL+1
Self-Management	Managing emotions, impulses, stress; setting goals; showing personal discipline; resilience. drc.casel.org+1
Social Awareness	Empathy, perspective-taking, recognizing social norms; respecting diversity; understanding others. CASEL+1
Relationship Skills	Communicating clearly, cooperating, resolving conflict, seeking and providing help, working in teams. CASEL+1
Responsible Decision-Making	Making constructive choices about behavior; considering further consequences for self and others; ethical norms. CASEL+1

These competencies will guide our wellbeing goals, programmes, instruction, and policy decisions.

3. Guiding Principles

1. **Proactive & Preventative Approach**
   We aim to build wellbeing early, not wait until crisis. Early detection, timely support, and preventive strategies are essential.
2. **Whole-School Integration & Culture**
   Wellbeing isn't a separate set of add-ons. It is woven into every routine, policy, classroom, staff meeting, playground, and community interaction.
3. **Equity, Inclusion & Belonging**
   Every student and staff member should feel seen, heard, and supported, regardless of background, ability, culture, or challenge. SEL must affirm diversity. Casel Schoolguide
4. **Shared Responsibility**
   All stakeholders—students, teachers, leadership, school staff, parents, community—share responsibility for wellbeing.
5. **Continuous Improvement & Data-Driven**
   Use data (attendance, behavior, wellbeing surveys, feedback) to monitor, evaluate, and refine wellbeing practices.
6. **Confidentiality, Safety & Support**
   Ensure safe reporting, proper training, adherence to child protection and staff wellbeing laws/policies.

4. Student Wellbeing: Policies & Practice

4.1 Embedding SEL into Curriculum & Classroom Practice

- **Explicit SEL instruction**: Regular lessons or modules teaching each CASEL competency, age-appropriately (e.g. self-awareness lessons in early years, then growing complexity).
- **SAFE implementation**: Instruction should be Sequenced, Active, Focused, and Explicit. drc.casel.org
- **Integration with academic subjects**: Embedding SEL in subjects such as Language, Science, Social Studies, Arts—e.g., assignments or discussions where students reflect on values, emotions, decisions.
- **Classroom climate**: Establish shared norms, restorative discipline, peer support, collaborative learning, circle time, reflection time.

4.2 Emotional & Mental Health Support

- **Counselling services**: Full-time or part-time counsellors; group and individual sessions.
- **Peer mentoring & peer support**: Train older students to be mentors; buddy systems.
- **Resilience building programmes**: Workshops on stress, anxiety management, growth mindset.
- **Mindfulness, relaxation, coping strategies** practices embedded weekly.

4.3 Physical Health & Safety

- Ensure nutritious meal options; educate on healthy eating, sleep, physical activity.
- Regular physical exercise / sports & movement breaks.
- Safe and hygienic facilities: washrooms, playgrounds, labs, etc.
- Medical/health screening and protocols; first aid; emergency procedures.

4.4 Social Wellbeing & Positive Relationships

- Anti-bullying policy: clear definitions; procedures; restorative practices; peer mediation.
- Encouraging collaboration: group work; cooperative tasks; clubs & extracurriculars.
- Cultural awareness, inclusion: celebrate diversity, accommodate students with SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities), provide support for gifted/talented.

4.5 Responsible Decision-Making & Life Skills

- Ethics, values education: honesty, responsibility, integrity, respect.
- Decision-making workshops: scenarios, case studies, role plays.
- Digital citizenship, online safety, critical thinking.
- Civic awareness: community service, social responsibility projects.

5. Staff Wellbeing: Policies & Practice

5.1 Adult SEL, Professional Development, Emotional Resilience

- Training for teachers and all staff in SEL, mental health literacy, stress management, work-life balance.
- Leadership modelling: leaders who show vulnerability, empathy, self-awareness.
- Regular wellbeing workshops, retreats or reflective sessions.

5.2 Workload, Support, Recognition

- Manageable workloads; clear expectations. Avoid overburdening with extra tasks without support.
- Provide planning time, non-contact periods. Shared resource banks.
- Recognise achievement: staff awards; peer appreciation; feedback loops.
- Adequate staffing; support for novice teachers; mentoring.

5.3 Safe & Healthy Workplace

- Policies for physical health (ergonomics, breaks, medical support).
- Psychological safety: respectful environment; zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination.
- Mechanisms for staff to raise concerns confidentially.

6. Implementation Strategy: Systemic SEL via CASEL

Following CASEL's four Focus Areas for systemic SEL implementation. drc.casel.org+1

Focus Area	Key Activities at Woodlem Hamidiya
Focus Area 1: Build foundational support & plan	- Form a Wellbeing & SEL Leadership Team (principal, counsellors, teachers, parents) - Allocate budget and resources for SEL and wellbeing programmes - Develop a multi-year SEL & wellbeing plan, with milestones and SMART goals - Ensure policy alignment across discipline, curriculum, behaviour, health, safety.
Focus Area 2: Strengthen adult SEL competencies and capacity	- Provide ongoing training for teachers/staff in CASEL competencies - Coaching / mentorship for teachers in SEL integration - Reflection groups for staff to share successes/challenges - Provide well-being resources, mental health days, staff counselling as needed.
Focus Area 3: Promote SEL for students	- Embed SEL into daily school schedule (morning circles, check-ins, advisory periods) - Use explicit SEL curriculum modules

Focus Area	Key Activities at Woodlem Hamidiya
	- Peer leadership / student voice bodies to co-design wellbeing programmes - Out-of-classroom experiences: projects, service learning, community engagement aligning with SEL.
Focus Area 4: Practice continuous improvement	- Collect data: wellbeing surveys (students, staff), incident reports, attendance, engagement metrics - Review programmes regularly; audit strengths & gaps - Stakeholder feedback (students, parents, staff) - Use data to refine action plans and policies.

7. Roles & Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Role & Responsibilities
Leadership (Principal & Senior Leadership Team)	Champion wellbeing; allocate budget; set tone; embed SEL in policies; monitor progress; ensure structures are in place.
SEL & Wellbeing Committee	Multi-stakeholder team (teachers, counsellors, parents, students) to plan, review, propose initiatives; conduct audits; ensure inclusion.
Teachers & Classroom Staff	Deliver SEL lessons; model the competencies; maintain caring classroom environment; identify students needing support; engage with parents; use restorative behaviour practices.
Counsellors / Support Staff / SEN Team	Provide interventions; support students with mental health or learning needs; crisis response; liaise with external agencies.
Students	Participate actively; contribute to wellbeing programmes; support peers; maintain respectful behaviour; provide feedback.
Parents / Caregivers	Support SEL at home; engage with school; communicate concerns; reinforce values of respect, emotional intelligence, responsibility.
All Staff (administrative, maintenance, transport, cafeteria etc.)	Model behaviours; contribute to creating a safe, respectful, caring environment; understand signs of distress; follow protocols.

8. Procedures for Identification, Intervention & Support

1. **Early Identification**
   o Regular wellbeing checks (questionnaires, one-on-one check-ins) for students and staff.
   o Monitoring signs: attendance, behaviour, performance, emotional indicators.
2. **Referral Pathways**
   o Clear procedures: teacher → counsellor / SEL lead → if needed external professional.
   o Confidentiality maintained; informed consent as appropriate.
3. **Levels of Support**
   o *Whole school support*: SEL lessons, whole-school programmes, morning check-ins.
   o *Targeted support*: small group interventions; mentoring; peer support.
   o *Intensive support*: individual counselling; specialised external referrals; crisis intervention.
4. **Crisis Management**
   o Emergency response protocols (for mental health crises, accidents).
   o Staff trained in psychological first aid.
   o Clear communication channels and documentation.
5. **Confidentiality & Safeguarding**

- o Policies aligned with legal requirements.
- o Records kept securely; sharing only as needed with proper consent or for safety.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

- **Data Collection Instruments**: annual surveys for students and staff; wellbeing metrics; behaviour/incident logs; attendance; academic engagement.
- **Indicators**: sense of belonging, emotional distress rates, disciplinary incidents, staff turnover, reported stress levels.
- **Review Cycle**: quarterly check-ins, biannual reports to leadership, annual full review with policy updates.
- **Stakeholder Feedback**: student focus groups, parent workshops, staff input.

10. Key Programmes & Initiatives (Examples)

- **Wellbeing Week**: focused activities, workshops, mindfulness, physical health & nutrition themes.
- **Morning Check-in Circles**: short time at start of day for students to share emotions and set intentions.
- **Peer Mentoring / Buddy Systems**: especially supporting new students or those showing signs of difficulty.
- **SEL Modules**: structured lessons per CASEL competency per grade.
- **Teacher Wellness Circles**: regular peer reflection; stress-management training; staff retreats.

11. Resources & Support

- Budget allocations for SEL materials, counselling services, external professionals.
- Library of SEL curriculum, lesson plans, training modules.
- Access to community partners / mental health professionals.
- Training for staff certification in SEL, mental health first aid.

12. Policy Review & Revision

- The Wellbeing Policy shall be reviewed at least annually by the SEL & Wellbeing Committee.
- Revisions based on data, stakeholder feedback, emerging research, changing needs.
- Communicated to all staff, students, parents; version controlled.

13. Conclusion

At Woodlem Hamidiya, we affirm that developing the **heart, mind, and character** of each individual is as critical as intellectual learning. By integrating the CASEL framework, adopting whole-school strategies, and investing in both students and staff, we commit to a school where **wellbeing is lived**, **every voice matters**, and all individuals are empowered to grow with dignity, purpose, and resilience.

Regards,

Davison

Principal.