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	10ᵗʰ March 2026
Date of Next Review	March 2027	Person in-charge	Ms. Anitha Blessie

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. <u>Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting</u>

- 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. <u>Key Programmes & Initiatives (Examples)</u>

- 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. <u>Resources & Support</u>

- 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. <u>Policy Review & Revision</u>

- 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. <u>Conclusion</u>

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,

Principal.