Arcadia School Wellbeing Policy

1- Vision and Mission

Arcadia's mission statement for wellbeing 'Happiness First', is a clear reflection of its unwavering commitment to placing the happiness, health and safety of its community as its first priority. We believe that this is the foundation from which all success begins. The statement is displayed in the entrance to both schools and around the school, serving as a reminder to all stakeholders of our wellbeing vision and mission.

2 - Purpose and Rationale

At Arcadia School, the mental health and wellbeing of our students, families, and staff lies at the centre of our decision-making processes. This policy is designed to embed our commitment to promoting and monitoring wellbeing within our culture. It further aims to articulate a clear, stepped approach to supporting students and staff during periods when their emotional wellbeing is compromised.

In fitting with its position as a community school and aligned with the national agenda of the UAE, Arcadia places the safety wellbeing of its stakeholders as its number one priority. As a school, we aspire to advocate protective behaviours to safeguard the wellbeing of all. We believe that every member of the community has the right to feel secure, and their wellbeing should be prioritised. Nothing is considered too small or insignificant to discuss with a trusted adult within our school support network.

3 - Aims

- We are dedicated to supporting the wellbeing and mental health of our students, staff, and community.
- To foster an environment where emotional wellbeing is valued and respected to cultivate positive relationships.
- To teach and build a culture of resilience, self-advocacy and emotional intelligence amongst our pupils.
- To provide a space where individuals can express any worries or concerns, they may have.
- We aim to educate our students, parents and staff on the importance of kindness, to each other and to one another.

4- Accountability and Leadership

The Arcadia School Wellbeing model is centred around dispersed leadership and accountability, designed to ensure each member of the community is able to take responsibility for and contribute to the wellbeing of themselves and others. The vision and active approach to wellbeing are a key priority for the School Chairman, who serves as the wellbeing governor. Through regular visits to the school and first-hand quality assurance, he holds the Executive Principal and Senior leadership accountable at the highest standard.

The Executive Principal oversees the development and implementation of an in-depth and robust wellbeing strategic plan, which stands alone from the school's other strategic priorities in order to provide a meticulous and precise approach to school wellbeing initiatives. The wellbeing strategic plan, led by the Director of Inclusion, Wellbeing and Pastoral care is formulated using a variety of formal and informal sources and outlines innovative school initiatives and targets to improve community wellbeing in a measured way. The strategy outlines targets and actions for staff members at every level of leadership and a variety of staff, fostering a culture which encourages all members of the Arcadia team to contribute effectively.

5- Data and Response

While a culture of positive wellbeing permeates throughout the school, a range of data sources are actively used to inform the response to challenges and ensure a measured and proactive response to needs effectively serves the community.

The combination of yearly PASS data, the Komodo wellbeing platform and an in-depth student satisfaction survey allows leaders to identify trends in student wellbeing data which is both formative and summative. Student wellbeing data is used to inform collective response strategies, daily planning and curriculum design, in addition to the highly personalised intervention and pastoral responses on an individual level.

In order to ensure the same data-led approach impacts staff and additional members of the community, annual surveys for parents and staff provide valid insights into their subsequent needs. Staff and community wellbeing are both key features of the wellbeing strategic plan.

6 - Looking After Each Other

It is the personal and professional responsibility of all staff members to collaborate in promoting the positive wellbeing of themselves and others. At Arcadia School, we have an open-door policy, ensuring all staff members feel comfortable and secure, knowing that personal or confidential information will be heard, and the best possible support will be implemented. We recognise that in the wake of the global pandemic and other significant world issues, increased anxiety, concerns, or

worries affecting mental health and wellbeing are prevalent amongst our community. A dedicated staff and student wellbeing team are responsible for planning events and implementing initiatives, supported and monitored by the Wellbeing, Pastoral and Leadership Team.

We will ensure that staff, students, and parents are aware of sources of support within the school and the wider community. Relevant sources of support will be displayed around the school, highlighting those who can assist students and staff. Regular check-ins with students and staff are conducted through meetings, surveys, and assemblies, offering opportunities for feedback and implementation of required support.

Self: If a staff member requires social or emotional support to maintain positive wellbeing, they should approach the Head of Year, department, or their allocated senior leader. Time will always be allocated to ensure the staff member is listened to, valued, and supported, or agreed-upon next steps will be established. Staff will have the option to meet with the school counsellor for further personal support if needed.

Others: If a staff member observes a change in another member of staff indicating a need for support, they should report to the allocated senior leader to discuss their concerns. Confidential discussions will be handled sensitively to protect all involved.

Students: Any staff member with a social or emotional concern about a child should directly contact the dedicated Pastoral Leader for the year group. If it is a Child Protection concern, the same procedures must be adhered to as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Child Protection, the School Counsellor, Pastoral, and Inclusion Teams will collaborate to develop an individual care plan for students causing concern or receiving a mental health diagnosis.

Parents: Collaboration with parents is crucial to educate them on positive mental health and wellbeing. Constant communication through the class teacher and pastoral team ensures support strategies at home. Clear means of contact are provided for further questions, with follow-up meetings or phone calls arranged promptly. Each meeting concludes with agreed-upon next steps, documented on the child's confidential record on Edukey. If additional help is needed, parents will be recommended resources as appropriate.

7 - Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum maintains a sustained focus on wellbeing and encourages a self-centred approach to exploration. It connects students with Health and Wellbeing from the start, fostering an understanding of how to approach individuals in our support networks. Lessons, events, and a 'values in practice' initiate mental health conversations and further develop emotions and

communication. An overview is sent to parents on a termly basis featuring our curriculum, themes, and topics related to students' wellbeing.

Primary and Secondary stage students have the opportunity to support their peers by becoming Wellbeing Champions. Student leaders integrate wellbeing into the curriculum by leading lessons and events related to mental health.

In order to develop resilience, emotional regulation and self control, the school also deploy other processes to support wellbeing in their students, including:

8- Physical Wellbeing (Through PE and Sport)

Physical education (PE) and sport play a crucial role in promoting overall wellbeing by addressing various components that contribute to a healthy and active lifestyle. The wellbeing components of physical education encompass not only physical health but also mental, social, and emotional aspects. Here are some key components undertaken at Arcadia:

Physical Fitness:
- *Cardiovascular Endurance:* Activities such as running, swimming, and cycling improve heart and lung health.
- *Muscular Strength and Endurance:* Exercises like weight training and bodyweight exercises enhance muscle strength and endurance.
- *Flexibility:* Stretching exercises improve joint flexibility and reduce the risk of injuries.

Mental Health:
- *Stress Reduction:* Physical activity has been linked to the reduction of stress hormones and the release of endorphins, promoting a positive mood.
- *Cognitive Function:* Regular exercise is associated with improved concentration, memory, and overall cognitive function.

Social Skills:
- *Teamwork and Cooperation:* Team sports and group activities foster teamwork, cooperation, and communication skills.
- *Leadership:* PE provides opportunities for students to take on leadership roles, boosting their confidence and social skills.

Emotional Wellbeing:
- *Self-esteem:* Physical activity and skill development contribute to a sense of achievement, enhancing self-esteem.
- *Mood Regulation:* Exercise is known to positively impact mood and emotional regulation.

Nutrition Education:
- *Healthy Eating:* PE often includes components of nutrition education, teaching students about the importance of a balanced diet and healthy eating habits.

Lifelong Physical Activity:
- *Skill Development:* PE focuses on developing a range of physical skills, encouraging students to find activities they enjoy and can continue throughout life.
- *Intrinsic Motivation:* The goal is to instil a love for physical activity, promoting lifelong fitness habits beyond the classroom.

Risk Management and Safety:
- *Injury Prevention:* Educating students about proper warm-up, cool-down, and safety measures reduces the risk of injuries during physical activities.

Health Education:
- *Understanding the Body:* PE often includes lessons on anatomy, physiology, and how physical activity impacts overall health.

Inclusive Approach:
- *Adaptability:* PE programs should strive to be inclusive, catering to different abilities, needs, and interests of students.

Regular Physical Activity:
- *Establishing Habits:* PE aims to instil the habit of regular physical activity, contributing to a healthy and active lifestyle.

By addressing these components, physical education programs aim to enhance students' overall wellbeing, providing them with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to lead physically and mentally healthy lives.

9- Digital wellbeing

The Arcadia digital education program encompasses various components that contribute to the overall well-being of learners. Well-being in the context of education extends beyond academic achievement and includes aspects such as mental, emotional, social, and physical well-being. Some of the key components related to well-being in a digital education program are:

Mental Well-being:
- Adaptive Learning: Customised learning paths and pace to accommodate individual learning styles and abilities, reducing stress associated with a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Mental Health Resources: Access to digital resources, such as counselling services, stress management tools, or mindfulness exercises to support mental health.

Emotional Well-being:
- Feedback Mechanisms: Constructive feedback and encouragement from digital platforms to boost students' confidence and emotional resilience.
- Inclusive Content: Diverse and inclusive educational content that reflects various perspectives, promoting empathy and emotional intelligence.

Social Well-being:

- Collaborative Tools: Platforms that facilitate collaboration, discussion, and group projects, fostering a sense of community and social interaction among learners.
- Online Communities: Digital spaces where students can connect, share experiences, and provide mutual support, promoting a sense of belonging.

Physical Well-being:
- Ergonomic Considerations: Designing digital interfaces with consideration for ergonomics to prevent physical strain and discomfort during prolonged device use.
- Balanced Screen Time: Encouraging breaks and promoting a healthy balance between screen time and physical activities to address potential issues like eye strain and sedentary behaviour.

Safety and Security:
- Online Safety Measures: Implementing robust measures to ensure online safety, protecting students from cyberbullying, harassment, and other online threats.
- Data Privacy: Strict adherence to data protection and privacy regulations to ensure the security of personal information and maintain trust in the digital learning environment.

Skill Development:
- Life Skills Integration: Incorporating elements of digital literacy, critical thinking, problem-solving, and other life skills into the curriculum to enhance students' overall capabilities and adaptability.

Parental Involvement:
- Communication Channels: Establishing effective communication channels between educators, students, and parents to keep everyone informed and engaged in the learning process.
- Parental Support Resources: Providing resources and guidance for parents to support their children's digital learning journey and well-being.

Assessment and Recognition:
- Fair Assessment Practices: Implementing fair and transparent assessment methods to reduce stress and anxiety associated with examinations.
- Recognition of Achievements: Celebrating and acknowledging students' achievements, fostering a positive learning environment.

By integrating these components, our digital education program can contribute to the holistic well-being of learners, ensuring that education goes beyond academic success to nurture the overall development of students.

10 - Training

All staff receive regular training on recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their child protection training. The Pastoral Team and the school counsellor closely work with staff

to stay updated on current issues affecting individual students. Training and sharing of best practices through team meetings, webinars, and outside agencies are planned in line with curriculum topics, adapted to meet the needs of our Arcadia community.

Training opportunities for staff requiring more in-depth knowledge are considered in the performance management process, and additional CPD is supported throughout the year when appropriate. Suggestions for individual, group, or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Pastoral Team, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support.

In addition to staff training, regular coffee mornings, webinars, newsletters, and information sessions are provided to best support families, regular needs-based workshops are delivered to students and to parents to

11- Confidentiality

Maintaining transparency with regard to matters of confidentiality is imperative. In instances where it becomes necessary to communicate concerns regarding a student or staff member, such discussions should comprehensively address the designated individuals to be informed, the specific details to be disclosed, and the rationale behind the necessity of sharing this information. Any disclosures must be conveyed to a member of the Child Protection Team. This practice is essential for the preservation of our emotional wellbeing, ensuring the continuity of care in our absence, and providing an additional source of ideas and support. It is incumbent upon us to elucidate this procedure to the student, engaging in a discussion to determine the most suitable and beneficial recipients for this information. All staff members are obligated to adhere rigorously to the Confidentiality Policy to safeguard themselves, fellow staff members, and the students under our care.

12 - Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal, in collaboration with the Pastoral Team, holds overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the impact of this policy on the social and emotional well-being of our staff and children. This policy will be reviewed by the Principal, the Wellbeing Team, and the Pastoral Team at the start of each academic year and adapted as required throughout the year.

13 - Reference Documents

This document outlines the school's approach to promoting positive Mental Health and Wellbeing. The policy serves as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with:

- **Arcadia School Safeguarding Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Healthy Eating Policy**
- **Teaching and Learning Policy**
- **Digital Learning Policy**
- **Counselling Policy**
- **Equity and Diversity Policy**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Inclusion Policy**

N.B. All policies available on request.

Policy term date: 2023-24 Academic Year

Policy review date: August 2024

Signed:
Executive Principal