

SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

2018-19

OBJECTIVE : We use the World Health Organisation’s definition of mental health and wellbeing “**a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community**”.

MEMBERS OF THE METAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

1. Dr Bharati Baweja (Former Prof CIE, Prof,School of Ed, Ambedkar University & Management Board Member)
2. Mrs Suman Kumar (Principal)
3. Ms Manju Sethi (Head Academics)
4. Ms Preeti Puri (Consultant-Curriculum Development& Career Counsellor)
5. Dr Poojashivam Jaitely (Clinical Psychologist- Visiting Faculty)
6. Ms Ramya Anand (Adolescent Sexual Health Counsellor)
7. Ms Swapna Soni (Parent of Hridika Soni, Class X - A)
8. Sukrit Bhatia (Class XI, Senior Student Counsellor – 2018-19)
9. Ms Bhavana Bhasin (HOD, Social Work Department)

Policy Statement

Bluebells School International is committed to promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils and staff. To do so the school will:

- Have a Consultant Psychologist, Counsellors, social workers and special educators who are responsible for coordination and delivery of the school’s mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy.
- Creating a shared understanding of all aspects of mental health
- Encourage and provide appropriate training and information to the whole school community including parents, staff and students through inbuilt programmes -
 - a. on mental health and emotional wellbeing
 - b. to be positive in its approach to mental health wellbeing.
- Enabling those with mental health related issues to self-disclose and seek support in a safeconfidential manner.
- Consult and work with other organisations like Pravah (Adolescent Wellbeing), Wiscomp (Gender Issues), Xpressions (Peer Education), Tarshi (Adolescent Sexual Health) etc involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional wellbeing services.
- Keep this policy under review and make changes annually.

Confidentiality

Observing the principles of confidentiality and data protection in respect of mental health and wellbeing the school will follow the following -

- **At times it is noted** that some children do not want their parents to be involved in counselling. Mental health professionals' guidance is that it is important to assure the child a confidential counselling/mental health service. We can assure confidentiality to your child only with your **prior consent**.
- **If your child chooses that he/ she wants an Assurance of Confidentiality, then what he/ she shares during the counselling process will not be shared with you or anyone unless:**
 - The counsellor or the mental health team or the school Principal think that the **child is at risk to himself/herself or others** and there is a clear and present danger to the child's best interest.
 - Or there is **statutory requirement to inform the legal authorities** due to disclosure of bullying, violence or abuse.
 - If the need to break confidentiality arises, the concerned student will be informed first, and the child encouraged to inform the parent with the support of mental health team/ counsellor.

Personnel Available For Mental Health Programs

Counselling and other mental health services available at school on the basis of prior appointment as per the following structure :

Dr.. Pooja ShivamJaitely (Clinical Psychologist) (Visiting Faculty)	: Monday & Friday	(9:00 am – 2:00 pm)
Ms. Tanya Mittal (Special Educator) (Visiting Faculty)	: Monday, Wednesday, Friday	(9:00 am – 2:00 pm)
Ms. Bhavana Bhasin (Counsellor)	: Monday, Tues, Friday	(8:00 am – 10:00 am)
Ms. Ramya Anand (Adolescent Sexual Health Counsellor)	: On call	
Ms. Preeti Puri (Career Counsellor)	: Monday, Tues, Friday	(8:00 am – 10:00 am)

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people/staff to:

- Feel confident about themselves.
- Be able to express their emotions properly.
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- Cope with challenging situations of everyday life.
- Be able to deal with and accept change.
- Learn and achieve to the best of their potential.
- Feel valued and safe
- Develop sense of belonging
- Build resilience to mental health problems

Universal Mental Health Services for all Children:

Mental health and emotional support is integrated in the curriculum through several programs including life skills classes, Physical social, and emotional program (PSEP) for classes Nur to V and adolescent programmes from middle and above.

Wellbeing Centres: Every child has access to walk to the **Counsellor/Supervisor on each floor** of the school to seek information, support and help. They are provided empathetic listening, immediate difficulties are addressed and need for further help is assessed.

Counselling Services by Student Council: is provided during the recess time by the Senior & Junior prefect for Counselling & Social Justice. These prefects are trained by school counsellor to do peer counselling and handle minor issues.

Career Guidance Services: we have Guidance Counsellor at school and professionals and parent volunteers are invited regularly to share real life information on potential career paths.

Drop Box Services: Suggestion boxes are placed on all the floors and outside the Wellbeing Centres and Supervisors rooms.

Needs Assessment and First Aid Services: If it is observed that a child is showing early signs suggestive of psychological difficulties, a teacher or the counsellor may invite the child for a conversation to assess his/her mental health needs and status. This would be summarized in the form of an **Individual Care Plan**. In such a situation, the counsellors will also provide initial support and mental health first aid to the level of their competence. If the child agrees to involve the parents at this stage a face to face meeting is arranged with the

parents and the Individual Care Plan is shared with the parent. If the child does not want parental participation at this stage the child is continued to be supported and is gradually encouraged to involve the parents to be a part of the process.

Accommodations for Children with Mental Health Problems: are provided as per CBSE by laws. Modification syllabus/assessment, flexibility in attendance and changes in the classroom environment are investigated on individual needs to ensure that the child remains included in mainstream education.

Referral Service: Following initial intervention if a student/parent needs the help of a professional, the child and the parents are referred for support of external mental health services. Parents have the right to choose any service they may consider appropriate.

Managing Risk & Mandatory Reporting

- If a child is at risk of violence, abuse, neglect or maltreatment, the counsellor/ mental health team will assess risk and make a **collaborative plan** with you and the child for mitigating the risk. If the risk is such that the child requires legal safeguarding or there is need for mandatory reporting to statutory authorities (such as Child Welfare Committee or law enforcement), the counsellor will involve the assigned **Child Protection Officer** in the School. All matters requiring mandatory reporting or where a child is facing a clear and present danger will be reported to the Principal of the School immediately by the designated Child Protection Officers of the school.

- If the nature of difficulties or needs is such that the child does not need safeguarding, the child will be offered a period of reflection and encouraged to involve their parents at their own pace.

You are requested to take a moment to authorize us and enable us to provide mental health or counselling services to your child if needed, by signing the attached **Prior Consent form available with all Supervisors and Counsellors**.

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Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Your permission is requested for your child, _____ of class _____ for assessment/counselling/special education at Bluebells School International, New Delhi with the School Counsellor /Special Educator and/or counselling/special education intern.

Because counselling is based on a trusting relationship between counsellor and client, the counsellor will keep information shared by the client confidential except in certain situations in which an ethical responsibility limits confidentiality. You will be notified under the following circumstances:

1. The student reveals information about hurting himself/herself or another person.
2. The student or another person may be in physical danger.

By signing this form, I give my informed consent for my child to participate in counselling. I understand that anything that my child shares will be kept confidential except in the above-mentioned cases.

This consent will be on file throughout the time that your child attends Blue Bells International School. You may revoke this consent at any time.

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____