



## **Bright Riders School**

# **STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

At Bright Riders we recognize that student mental health and wellbeing are foundational to academic success and personal development. In line with the **ADEK Wellbeing Policy**, we are committed to creating an environment where mental health is prioritized, nurtured, and supported. This policy outlines our approach to promoting mental wellbeing, raising awareness, and providing accessible, responsive support systems for our student community.

### **2. Purpose**

This policy aims to:

- Integrate mental health into every aspect of school life, ensuring it is recognized as a key component of student development.
- Promote a school-wide culture that supports mental wellbeing through awareness initiatives and collaboration with all stakeholders.
- Establish clear systems for early identification and timely intervention in response to mental health concerns.

### **3. Policy Scope and Definitions**

This policy is guided by the ADEK Wellbeing Policy and relevant associated policies including the Student Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Student Protection Policy, and In-School Specialist Services Policy. Key terms such as mental health, concerning behavior, emotional regulation, counselling, and protective factors are aligned with the definitions outlined by ADEK.

#### **The Key Elements**

The Bright riders school emphasises on prevention and early intervention, in line with the ADEK wellbeing policies. We follow an approach to promoting mental wellbeing through awareness, education, accessible support services, and a nurturing school culture. We are committed to identifying and addressing mental health concerns early and holistically, while maintaining a respectful, confidential, and inclusive approach for all members of our student body.

## **1. Student Awareness and Education**

Our school implements age-appropriate programs and classroom learning that build students' understanding of mental health, emotional regulation, and healthy coping strategies. These include:

- Mindfulness practices
- Social and emotional learning (SEL)
- Stress and time management
- Resilience-building techniques
- Awareness of stigmatization and how to support peers seeking help

For students in **Cycles 2 and 3**, education includes more advanced topics such as:

- Mental health challenges (e.g., anxiety, depression)
- Substance use and prevention
- Eating disorders
- Digital addiction
- Suicidal ideation
- Responding to family crises and maltreatment

## **2. Student Counselling Services**

Our school ensures access to mental health support through:

- On-site counsellor
- Private and confidential individual counselling services
- Targeted support for academic, social, and emotional wellbeing
- Referrals to external specialists when support needs exceed school capacity

Counsellors meet ADEK qualification standards and collaborate with teachers, families, and external agencies when appropriate.

## **Referral Pathways**

Clear, confidential referral pathways are in place to support early intervention. These include:

- Self-referral by students
- Referrals by teachers, counsellors, or parents
- Internal review and monitoring of student wellbeing
- Escalation to external professionals when necessary

- Referral forms are readily available through two channels:
  - With the school counsellor, who can assist students and staff in initiating the referral process.
  - On the school parent portal, allowing parents to access and submit referrals conveniently.

Students, staff, and parents are encouraged to use these referral pathways when they observe or experience signs of concerning behaviour. All referrals are handled confidentially and with sensitivity to the student's best interests.

### **Support During Vulnerable Phases**

We proactively support students during high-stress periods, such as:

- Examination seasons
- Grade transitions (e.g., from Cycle 1 to 2)
- University/college application periods

Support measures include:

- Wellness workshops and coping-skills training
- Authorized study leave
- End-of-term teacher-student feedback sessions
- Access to school wellness resources

### **Wellness Resources**

Our school provides access to designated **wellness spaces called RETREAT** to help students manage stress, decompress, and prioritize their mental and emotional wellbeing.

### **Support for Students with Additional Learning Needs**

In collaboration with the Head of Inclusion, tailored support is provided for students with additional learning needs. Mental health strategies are integrated into Documented Learning Plans (DLPs) and may include:

- Adjusted schedules or uniform flexibility
- Sensory accommodations
- Additional monitoring in social settings

This is in accordance with the ADEK Inclusion Policy and Federal Decree-Law No. (29) of 2006.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### School Counsellor

- Delivers counselling services and develops wellbeing programs
- Collaborates with families and staff while maintaining appropriate confidentiality
- Liaises with external bodies when advanced intervention is needed

### Social Worker

- Supports students and families with social and emotional challenges
- Connects home and school to foster student success
- Does not provide therapy but plays a key role in community support

### Mental Health Lead or Committee

- Oversees awareness initiatives and mental health strategies
- Monitors implementation of this policy across the school

## 6. Confidentiality and Consent

We adhere to all relevant **data protection** and **child protection laws** regarding confidentiality:

- Students are informed of confidentiality limits in age-appropriate language.
- Parental consent is sought for regular counselling services.
- In cases where disclosure is necessary for the student's wellbeing (e.g., risk of harm), the counselor will inform appropriate school leaders, as required by the **ADEK Student Protection Policy**.
- If a parent refuses consent but the student requires support, the school may report this to the appropriate child protection authorities as neglect.

### Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with ADEK directives or as required to reflect emerging needs and best practices in student mental health.

### Approved By:

Rachna Prakash  
Principal  
Bright Riders School- Abu Dhabi

Next Review: AY 2026-2027

