

GLS WELL-BEING POLICY

2024

APPROVED BY:



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VISION

The school's vision is to ensure that the children in our care are happy and view and experience school as a safe space filled with discovery, opportunity and positive challenge. We firmly believe that happy students learn better, engaging in a more meaningful way, and thereby get the most out of their school experience, which is why ensuring the all-round wellbeing and mental health of our pupils is one of our top priorities.

MISSION

The GEMS Legacy School mission statement reflects the school's commitment to well-being. We prepare students to become leaders by helping them to contribute and succeed in a continuously evolving global arena, thereby ensuring that tomorrow's world is a better and more just place. We promote Academic Rigor, Philanthropy, as well as Innovation, and the school tagline 'A Legacy of Empathy, Resilience, Leadership and Sustainable Living', reflects the well-being ethos and culture of the school.

PRINCIPLE

The PERMA-H model of well-being, which offers an integrated approach to learning and creates engaging learning environments that support children's physical, personal, social, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual well-being, serves as the foundation for the well-being policy.

This model serves as the foundation for our Positive Education philosophy and through this, we foster and support the school's essential principles, which are represented by the acronym PRIDE. The values are:

- Perseverance
- Respect
- Integrity
- Discipline
- Excellence

GLS FRAMEWORK OF HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING

A strong sense of well-being is connected to children's fundamental need for a sense of belonging, being safe and loved. When children feel happy, emotionally secure, and socially successful they can fully participate in their daily routines and learning experiences in their educational setting.

Children thrive in environments that are suited to their interests and developmental stages. As educators, we follow a holistic approach to learning and build stimulating learning environments that foster children's physical, personal, social, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual well-being.

In the Kindergarten classes, inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, where the learning environment is viewed as a third teacher, we provide a safe, sustainable, and inviting learning environment with a wide range of natural and other materials that promote active learning, positive relationships, positive emotions, communication, collaboration, and exploration through purposeful play.

Materials are thoughtfully added to the environment to promote creativity, visible thinking, questioning, experimentation, and open-ended play.

Apart from providing an empowering learning environment, we consciously build the personal, social, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual quotient of our students and staff by following the PERMA-V model for well-being.

Created by Professor Martin Seligman (2011), the PERMA-V framework acknowledges well-being is understood as being more than experiencing positive emotions and feeling happy. This model underpins our Positive Education philosophy.

THE PERMA MODEL OF WELL-BEING

POSITIVE EMOTION

Positive emotions are an essential part of our well-being. Happy people look back on the past with gladness; look into the future with hope; and they enjoy and cherish the present.

RELATIONSHIPS

Everyone needs someone. We enhance our well-being and share it with others by building strong relationships with the people around us - family, friends, coworkers, neighbours.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Everyone needs to win sometimes. To achieve well-being and happiness, we must be able to look back on our lives with a sense of accomplishment: 'I did it, and I did it well'.

ENGAGEMENT

When we focus on doing the things we truly enjoy and care about, we can begin to engage completely with the present moment and enter the state of being known as 'flow'.

MEANING

We are at our best when we dedicate time to something greater than ourselves. This might be religious faith, community work, family, politics, a charity, a professional or creative goal.

- From
*Marting
Seligman's
Flourish, 2011*

THE GLS MODEL FOR WELL-BEING: PERMA-H

Positive Emotions: Positive emotions like happiness, gratitude, and love are the foundations of our well-being and build Self-worth, positivity, and resilience.

Engagement: When we use our strengths creatively and enjoy what we do, we are in tune, experience the sense of 'flow', and are completely immersed.

Relationships: When we build positive and congruent relationships with friends, parents, teachers, and others around us we enhance our happiness and well-being.

Meaning: As human beings, we feel good when we can find purpose and meaning in our lives and are connected to something bigger than ourselves.

Accomplishment: We enhance our self-belief when we experience success and can pursue and accomplish our goals.

Health: We feel a sense of physical and mental well-being when we eat a nutritious diet, sleep soundly, and exercise regularly.

IMPLEMENTING THE PERMA-H MODEL OF WELL-BEING AT GLS

A *well-being calendar* is collaboratively planned by the well-being committee representing all stakeholders. This committee comprising leaders, well-being teacher champions, student ambassadors, and parent representatives meets once a term to discuss well-being at GLS and suggest the next steps. Interesting and age-appropriate activities planned around the six key elements of the PERMA-H framework are interwoven with the school's core values – PRIDE, throughout the year.

The well-being activities and initiatives are linked to the curriculum integrating local and global dimensions. These are aimed at extending learning beyond the boundaries of the classroom and textbooks, bringing together the home, school, and the wider community, thus equipping our students with life-worthy learning and preparing them as global citizens.

The activities are self and peer-assessed by all stakeholders and the impact is measured through well-being questionnaires and surveys at regular intervals to monitor and enhance the levels of happiness and well-being in the school. The well-being framework encompasses the interests of all stakeholders and includes holistic planned activities for enhancing staff and parent well-being as well.

The GEMS Jewels of Kindness and Respect is a means of encouraging students to think about being Kind (Respectful, Empathetic, Helpful and Compassionate are all kind qualities). The students are recognized, following nominations received from teachers, peers, members of staff and parents, based on acts of kindness that go above and beyond the expected good manners such as:

- Supporting a peer through a difficult time
- Helping out with something above and beyond
- Showing kindness to someone that needs it
- Charitable work
- Community work
- Supporting those less able
- Showing kindness to our support team

Family First is a transformative GEMS Education movement that actively seeks to strengthen family bonds, foster intergenerational learning, and combat issues such as loneliness, isolation, and depression. It seeks to empower global change through love, care, and shared stories, with a focus on strengthening family and community bonds across generations. Family First will play a pivotal role in students' wellbeing and success as they reap the benefits of deeper connections and an engaged and supportive community around them.

Empathy Week is a global school program celebrated worldwide, enabling students to discover and build empathy. The *Empathy Curriculum* and *Empathy Week* are invitations for young people across the world to put empathy into action, developing the skills of leadership and resilience along the way. This allows them to have a sense of connection and meaning beyond themselves.

HOPE - Helping Out Possibly Everyone, the school's philanthropic campaign, has the primary objective of nurturing hope as a sustaining force for the world while also focusing on enhancing the personal, social, intellectual and emotional well-being of all our students. This campaign recognizes that every individual yearns for the knowledge that someone, somewhere cares for them and is ready to offer assistance, thereby aiding them in navigating life's intricate journey. To bring this vision to life, HOPE is intricately aligned with the school's empathy curriculum and encourages both staff and students to dedicate themselves to one act of hope each day and document it in their journals. These actions can take various forms, including but not limited to teaching someone a new skill to enhance their life, sharing a meal, guiding or mentoring a peer, performing selfless acts of kindness without expecting anything in return, practising and expressing gratitude, and providing emotional support to acquaintances in times of need. The HOPE campaign aspires to instill that beauty lies not in grand gestures but in the smaller acts of kindness that possess the power to forge friendships and nurture profound, holistic connections, and relationships.

The Middle School Voluntary Service Program, 'All for Altruism' aims to provide an enriching and transformative experience for middle school students, allowing them to actively participate in various community service initiatives. This initiative not only fosters their individual development but also makes a positive contribution to the community. A total service of a minimum of 150 hours between grades 6 and 10 is compulsory, these could be from a plethora of activities majorly under any of the three umbrellas- Environment conservation and animal care; Education, coaching and teaching others; Looking after the needy and Healthcare.

The school has recently integrated KOMODO, a data-driven well-being platform tailored for schools to monitor and support student and more recently staff well-being proactively. The three-step approach by KOMODO to student well-being is as follows:

- Monitoring data to track holistic health
- Measuring results for powerful school reports
- Managing data for meaningful interventions

The Komodo Well-being resources are now accessible to both staff and students. These resources offer a comprehensive

range of tools and support aimed at promoting mental, emotional, and physical well-being within our school community.

The school has implemented the bi-annual Best School to Work Survey, by T4 Education. Best School to Work is an independent, evidence-based mechanism to certify the school's culture and working environment, granting the senior leadership access to detailed feedback, actionable insights, benchmarking data and the tools needed to put the school on the map. The aim is to build the very best working environment and nurture the wellbeing of all teachers to attract top talent and retain experienced educators.

Student counseling is available to all students, regardless of age, and is provided on a request and need basis. The school's counseling services are designed to offer personalized support, helping students navigate academic challenges, emotional concerns, and personal development.

Whether a student is facing stress related to exams, struggles with peer relationships, or any other emotional or mental health issue, the counseling team is there to listen and provide guidance. The sessions are confidential, ensuring that students feel safe and supported in addressing their concerns. In addition to one-on-one counseling, students can seek help for a range of issues such as managing anxiety, building resilience, and developing coping strategies for both school and personal life. The goal is to foster a nurturing environment where every student feels empowered to seek help when needed, promoting overall well-being and growth.

Counseling services are available for staff to support their well-being, personal development, and professional growth. These services help address stress, mental health, work-life balance, and career concerns in a confidential setting. Providing this support fosters a positive work environment, enhancing both emotional resilience and productivity.

