



Wellbeing Award for Schools Case Study

Co-ordinator/Headteacher's name: Janet Foley, Vice Principal (coordinator)

School name: GEMS Founders School, Dubai

Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Brief summary of your school: Private school for students from 3 to 18 years of age offering the National Curriculum for England. Opened in September 2016 with record numbers and has continued to grow, flourish and succeed.

Why did your school decide to take the Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)?

The wellbeing of all our stakeholders has always been at the heart of our school. The school's vision to Grow, Flourish and Succeed at GFS, helped us to develop our wellbeing vision statement 'To create a supportive community that promotes positive choices and encourages all stakeholders to be well and stay well.' Undertaking the award focused our strategic direction, ensuring our work had the desired impact.

What particular issue(s) did the WAS help you to identify?

The award helped us to be more strategic and look for even more opportunities to develop and expand our wellbeing provision.

What changes did you make as a result of this?

The school introduced a new Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy' that linked with several of our other policies such as our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies. Staff wellbeing is a standing agenda item in leadership meetings.

What impact did this have?

Wellbeing features heavily in our school's current and future plans. Staff and student wellbeing teams have been extremely active and provide support and encouragement at all times. Our stakeholders regular comment on the school's effort and focus on wellbeing and this is reflected in both staff and student retention rates.

Has achievement of the award resulted in any direct impact/s on pupil achievement?

The award's KPI's and action plan definitely helped to make more links with wellbeing and student outcomes. Several other wellbeing initiatives and interventions grew as a result and there is no doubt that students have benefited and their performance has improved as a result.

What are your next steps?

GEMS Founders School is continuing to Grow, Flourish and Succeed. Post Covid 19 we know there will be many challenges in relation to both the physical and mental wellbeing of our community. We will continue to develop our wellbeing provision and look forward to working towards renewing our WAS accreditation.

How would you describe the whole experience from start to finish and achieving the award?

Navigating the initial online processes was a little tricky to begin with, but gathering the evidence and the accreditation visit was extremely beneficial.

How would you recommend this award to a school thinking about undertaking the process?

Yes, and have done already to other schools in our group.

Lastly, please provide a short testimonial from your headteacher.

The Optimus frameworks have been incredibly useful to support the improvements in these key areas and given leaders the focus to continue to drive and improve initiatives and strategies. We are looking forward to reaccreditation to further improve our provision.