



MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Introduction

One in ten young people under the age of 16 will have an identifiable mental health issue, rising to one in six amongst University entrants. The promotion of good physical and mental health within a school population has significant benefits. This policy aims to set the parameters for the College's actions given that the responsibility for a child's health, whether emotional, mental or physical, is a shared one with parents/guardians and designated children's services.

Epsom College in Malaysia promotes emotional well-being by

- Empowering pupils to take responsibility for their own emotional wellbeing;
- Encouraging a collective responsibility within the College community for individuals to be empathic towards another's need for help and support;
- Requiring all pupils to maintain good manners, acceptable behaviour and show respect for others regardless of any physical, racial, cultural differences;
- Having a sound Anti-bullying policy in place;
- Sessions and activities within the PSD curriculum which aim to promote good physical health and healthy lifestyle choices;
- De-stigmatisation of mental health issues through educating pupils, staff and parents. Awareness Days across the whole campus, promoting events in the local community / hosting guest speakers to address pupils and staff;
- Visual presentations and information boards in central locations throughout the College to display and promote relevant themes and topics;
- Holding Information Evenings for parents to help to foster and establish greater understanding & cooperation between home and school in promoting good emotional/mental well-being;
- Staff training sessions provided to offer appropriate support for those who may be involved in supporting pupils with mental/emotional issues.

Within the Epsom College in Malaysia community the following are easily accessible and ideally placed to provide pastoral support help and advice to all pupils.

- Housemasters/mistresses, Assistant Housemasters/mistresses and Matrons;
- Deputy Head (Pastoral);
- Head of Prep School;
- All members of teaching staff and tutors;

- College Nurses
- Counsellor;
- Learning Support Team;
- Prefects/Peer Support.

The need for confidentiality must be balanced with that of providing a safe environment for the pupil and to facilitate appropriate treatment. On occasions there may be child protection issues arising from concern for a pupil’s emotional welfare, in which case the College Child Protection Policy Guidelines would be implemented. Information is shared on a ‘need to know’ basis with the full consent and knowledge of the pupil concerned. Individuals need to operate both within their own professional and organisational boundaries, and always with the pupil’s welfare at the centre.

Support in College for Pupils receiving treatment

Whilst it is not the responsibility of the College to replace or act for mental health experts if a pupil has mental or emotional health problems which are being treated, the College will seek to play a valuable role in supporting the pupil.

Subject to any reasonable adjustment, and if well enough, the pupil should be included in the school community. There should be open communication where appropriate between outside agencies/home/College/ Medical Centre.

Common Mental Health Risk Factors

- Physiological Changes/Genetic Transmission
- Physical Illness/ Learning disability
- Family /Social Issues
- Stressful life event
- Sexual Orientation-confusion
- Bullying
- Substance abuse

Sometimes there may be no apparent ‘risk factors’ or obvious reasons for why a pupil is struggling emotionally.

Early recognition of mental health issues

Sleep disturbance	Increased anxiety/erratic behaviour	Self-isolation	Changes to or poor school performance
Loss of interest in activities/people	Mood swings	Self-harming	Changes in appetite
Changes to energy levels	Hearing or seeing things others don’t	Altered decision making	Poor appearance/hygiene

SUPPORT and LISTEN

Reassure; tell them how brave they have been; empathise with them and give them time to talk; gently explain that you would like to help them; work with them to gain their confidence to take the issue to someone who could help further; do not promise confidentiality – depression could be a child protection matter and the young person needs help; work through the avenues of support; explain that you would like to share their thoughts with someone else so that they can get the best help; encourage them to speak to someone – offer to go with them.



AVENUES OF SUPPORT AT EPSOM COLLEGE IN MALAYSIA

Housemaster/mistress, Tutor, Matron, School Counsellor, Head of PSHE, Deputy Head (Pastoral), College Nurses.

TELL SOMEONE

Remember that you are not trained to deal with mental health issues and you should speak to someone about your concerns who has the expertise to help the individual.

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Inform the **Head of Prep School** (Year 1-6) or **HMM** (Year 7-13).

AFTERWARDS

Do not speak about the conversation to other pupils /casually to other members of staff

Access support for yourself if you need it; there is a counselling service for staff or a senior colleague or line manager will happily speak to you and support you.

Useful resources

Stem4: <http://www.stem4.org.uk/>

Young Minds: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Youth2Youth: <http://youth2youth.co.uk>

Mind: <http://mind.org.uk>

This policy makes reference to other relevant school policies as listed below:

Anti-bullying

Behaviour

Depression

Eating Disorders

Self Harm