



Mental Health & Wellness Policy

SCHOOL POLICY · DRAFT FOR REVIEW · JULY 2026

JYOTI MODEL SR. SECONDARY SCHOOL, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi

Affiliated to CBSE — School Code: 1309228

Guided by our motto: "Work is Worship"

1. Preamble

At JYOTI MODEL SR. SECONDARY SCHOOL, we believe that emotional well-being is not separate from academic success — it is the foundation upon which success is built. A student who is anxious, depressed, lonely or struggling cannot learn effectively, form healthy relationships or realise their potential. Our Mental Health and Wellness Policy reflects our deep and abiding commitment to nurturing the emotional, social and psychological well-being of every member of our school community.

This policy recognises that mental health is not merely the absence of illness — it is a state of well-being in which every individual can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and contribute to their community. Our goal is not only to support students who are struggling, but to build the emotional resilience and well-being of every student, every teacher and every staff member, every day.

2. Our Approach: A Whole-School Model

We take a whole-school, multi-tiered approach to mental health and wellness, based on international best practices and adapted to the Indian school context.

Tier 1 — Universal Support (for ALL students)

Building emotional literacy, resilience and well-being through curriculum, school culture and everyday practices. This is our foundation — prevention is our primary strategy.

Tier 2 — Targeted Support (for students AT RISK)

Early identification of students who may be struggling, and providing timely, appropriate support before difficulties escalate.

Tier 3 — Intensive Support (for students in CRISIS)

Immediate, specialised intervention for students experiencing acute mental health crises, including referral to external professionals and support for reintegration.

3. Tier 1: Universal Support — Promoting Well-Being for All

3.1 The Wellness Curriculum

Well-being is not a one-off workshop — it is integrated into the daily life of the school. Our wellness curriculum includes:

Daily Morning Assembly (All Classes)

- Guided breathing exercises or one minute of silent reflection
- A positive thought or value-based message for the day
- Recognition of student achievements and acts of kindness
- Announcements that build community and shared purpose

Yoga and Mindfulness (Classes I–XII)

- Regular yoga sessions integrated into the physical education programme
- Breathing techniques (pranayama) taught age-appropriately
- Short mindfulness exercises used in classrooms before tests, after transitions, or during high-stress periods

Life Skills Education (Classes VI–XII)

Integrated into the curriculum as per CBSE guidelines, covering:

- Self-awareness and self-esteem
- Empathy and perspective-taking
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Critical thinking and creative thinking
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Coping with stress and managing emotions
- Building and maintaining healthy relationships
- Resisting peer pressure and making responsible choices

Class Meetings (All Classes)

- Weekly or fortnightly class meetings provide a safe, structured space for students to share concerns, resolve conflicts and build classroom community
- These meetings are facilitated by the class teacher and guided by principles of respect, confidentiality and inclusion

3.2 Positive School Climate

A positive, supportive school climate is the single most important protective factor for student mental health. We actively build this climate through:

- **Relationships:** We prioritise the quality of relationships between students and teachers, among students, and between school and home. Every child should feel that there is at least one trusted adult in the school they can turn to
- **Recognition:** We celebrate effort, improvement and character — not just academic achievement. Our assembly recognition, awards and shout-outs include kindness, perseverance, teamwork, leadership and community service
- **Voice:** Students have meaningful opportunities to shape their school experience through the student council, class meetings, suggestion boxes and feedback surveys
- **Safety:** A zero-tolerance approach to bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy) ensures that no child has to learn in fear
- **Fairness:** Consistent, transparent discipline that focuses on restoration and learning, not punishment

3.3 Awareness and Destigmatisation

We actively work to normalise conversations about mental health and reduce stigma:

- **Wellness Week:** An annual themed week with workshops, guest speakers, assemblies, poster campaigns and classroom activities focused on mental health
- **World Mental Health Day (10 October):** Observed annually with special activities
- **Classroom discussions:** Age-appropriate conversations about feelings, stress, friendships, self-care and seeking help
- **Storytelling and literature:** Books and stories that explore emotional themes are integrated into the curriculum
- **Peer-led initiatives:** Senior students trained as peer mentors conduct awareness activities for younger students

3.4 Staff Well-Being

We recognise that teachers cannot support student well-being if their own well-being is neglected. The school supports staff through:

- Reasonable workload expectations and planning time
- Regular staff appreciation and recognition
- Access to the school counsellor for personal support (confidential)
- Professional development on stress management and self-care
- A supportive, collaborative working environment
- Open-door policy for sharing concerns with the school leadership

4. Tier 2: Targeted Support — Early Identification and Intervention

4.1 School Counselling Services

Qualified mental health professionals are available at JYOTI MODEL SR. SECONDARY SCHOOL. Our counsellor(s) provide:

- **Individual counselling:** Private, confidential, one-on-one sessions for students experiencing emotional difficulties, anxiety, stress, grief, family challenges, peer relationship issues, academic pressure, or any other concern
- **Group counselling:** Structured group sessions focused on specific themes (social skills, anger management, exam stress, grief processing, building confidence, etc.)
- **Parent guidance:** Counsellors meet with parents to discuss concerns, provide strategies for supporting their child at home and make referrals to external professionals when needed
- **Teacher consultation:** Counsellors work with teachers to develop classroom strategies, identify at-risk students and implement support plans
- **Classroom observations:** Where needed, the counsellor observes a student in the classroom setting to better understand their needs
- **Crisis intervention:** Immediate support for students in acute distress

Accessing Counselling Services

Students may access counselling through:

- Self-referral — any student may request to see the counsellor by speaking to their class teacher, the counsellor directly, or by placing a note in the suggestion box
- Teacher referral — a teacher who is concerned about a student may refer them to the counsellor with parental knowledge
- Parent referral — parents may request counselling support for their child by contacting the school office or the class teacher
- School leadership referral — the Principal or Vice Principal may refer a student to the counsellor

Confidentiality

Counselling sessions are confidential. Information shared by a student in counselling will not be disclosed to parents, teachers or other students without the student's consent, EXCEPT in the following circumstances:

- The student is at risk of harming themselves or others
- The student discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation (mandatory reporting under POCSO and other laws)
- A court of law orders disclosure
- The student gives explicit consent for specific information to be shared

In cases where confidentiality must be breached, the counsellor will inform the student first, wherever possible.

Parents are informed that their child has met with the counsellor (general notification, not details of content). For ongoing counselling, periodic general updates may be shared with parents with the student's consent.

4.2 Identifying Students at Risk

Teachers and staff receive annual training on recognising early warning signs that a student may be struggling emotionally. These signs may include:

Academic Indicators:

- Sudden decline in grades or academic performance
- Frequent incomplete assignments or refusal to participate
- Difficulty concentrating or staying focused
- Excessive absences or tardiness

Behavioural Indicators:

- Withdrawal from friends, activities or social situations
- Irritability, mood swings or frequent outbursts
- Aggressive behaviour or fights with peers
- Risk-taking behaviour (substance use, reckless actions, running away)
- Talking about running away from home or school
- Self-harm (cutting, burning, hitting oneself)
- Talking about death, dying, suicide or hopelessness

Physical Indicators:

- Frequent complaints of headaches, stomach aches or other physical symptoms with no medical cause
- Changes in appetite or eating habits
- Changes in sleep patterns (fatigue during the day)
- Neglect of personal hygiene or appearance
- Unexplained injuries

Social Indicators:

- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Isolation from peer group
- Sudden change in friendship groups
- Being bullied or socially excluded
- Expressing that no one likes them or that they have no friends

What Staff Do When They Observe Warning Signs:

1. Express concern and offer support to the student in a private, non-judgmental conversation
2. Document observations (what was seen, heard, when, where)
3. Refer the student to the school counsellor
4. Inform the class teacher and/or grade coordinator
5. If there is immediate risk of harm (self-harm, suicidal talk, violence), the student is escorted to the counsellor or Principal immediately and parents are contacted

4.3 Parent Partnership

Parents are often the first to notice changes in their child's emotional state. We encourage parents to:

- Maintain open, non-judgmental communication with their child
- Watch for changes in mood, behaviour, sleep, appetite or social habits
- Contact the school counsellor or class teacher if they have concerns — early intervention is more effective
- Avoid dismissing emotional struggles as "just a phase" or "attention-seeking"
- Attend parent education sessions on adolescent mental health and well-being
- Model healthy coping strategies and self-care at home
- Seek professional help outside school when recommended

5. Tier 3: Intensive Support — Crisis Intervention

5.1 Mental Health Crisis Protocol

A mental health crisis is any situation in which a student is at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others, or is experiencing an acute emotional or psychological breakdown.

Crisis situations include, but are not limited to:

- Suicidal ideation, threat or attempt
- Self-harm requiring medical attention
- Severe anxiety or panic attack
- Psychotic episode or loss of contact with reality
- Violent behaviour or threat of violence
- Disclosure of ongoing abuse
- Acute grief or trauma response

Immediate Response Protocol:

1. **Ensure Safety:** The student is accompanied to a quiet, safe, private space by a trusted adult (counsellor, Principal, or designated staff member). They are never left alone

2. **Assess Risk:** The counsellor or Principal assesses immediate risk of harm using a structured risk assessment
3. **Contact Parents:** Parents are contacted immediately and informed of the situation. They may be asked to come to the school or meet at a hospital
4. **Medical Attention:** If the student requires medical attention (self-harm, overdose, severe panic), they are taken to the nearest hospital — either by parents or, in an emergency, by school staff accompanied by ambulance (dial 102)
5. **Safety Plan:** A temporary safety plan is developed with the student, parents and counsellor until the student can be seen by a mental health professional. This may include:
 - Removal of access to harmful objects or substances
 - Increased supervision at school and home
 - A clear plan for who the student can contact if they feel unsafe
 - A plan for the student's immediate return to school or temporary absence
1. **External Referral:** The counsellor provides parents with a list of qualified mental health professionals (psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, counsellors) for ongoing treatment. The school counsellor coordinates with external professionals with parental consent
2. **Documentation:** All actions taken are documented in a confidential incident report, including:
 - Date, time and location
 - Description of the incident
 - Risk assessment findings
 - Actions taken
 - Parent communication record
 - Follow-up plan

5.2 Reintegration After a Mental Health Crisis

When a student returns to school after a mental health crisis, a structured reintegration plan is developed in consultation with the student, parents, counsellor and class teacher. The plan may include:

- A gradual return (starting with half-days or specific periods)
- A designated safe adult the student can check in with daily
- Academic accommodations (extended deadlines, reduced workload)
- Adjusted classroom seating or routines
- Regular check-ins with the counsellor
- A clear plan for what to do if the student feels distressed during the school day
- A communication plan between parents and the school

The goal of reintegration is not to return to "normal" as quickly as possible — it is to support the student in returning to school in a way that is sustainable and healing.

5.3 Students at Chronic Risk

For students who experience ongoing mental health challenges, the school develops an individualised support plan in consultation with parents and external professionals. This plan is reviewed term-wise and adjusted as needed.

6. Examination Stress Management

We recognise that examinations are a significant source of stress for many students. The school proactively addresses examination stress through:

During the Academic Year:

- Regular guidance on study skills, time management and organisation
- Teaching of relaxation techniques (deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualisation)
- Emphasis on learning over marks — fostering a growth mindset
- Open communication about examinations — normalising anxiety and teaching coping strategies

During Examination Periods:

- Pre-examination briefings for students on managing stress
- Special counselling hours available during examination weeks
- Relaxation breaks integrated into the examination schedule
- Teachers instructed to be supportive and encouraging, not pressurising
- No ranking or public comparison of results

For Parents:

- Parent guidance sessions on supporting children through examination periods
 - Tips shared through circulars and the school website on creating a supportive home environment during exams
 - Encouraging parents to maintain perspective — to value their child's effort and well-being above marks
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7. Peer Support Programmes

We recognise that students often turn to each other first when they are struggling. We harness this natural support network through structured peer support programmes:

Peer Mentoring (Senior Students)

- Trained senior students serve as peer mentors for junior students, particularly those who are new to the school
- Mentors provide a friendly, non-judgmental ear and can connect mentees with the counsellor when needed
- Mentors receive training in active listening, empathy, confidentiality and recognising when to refer to an adult

Buddy System

- New students are paired with a buddy from their own class who helps them settle in, navigate the school and make friends
- The buddy system is particularly emphasised for students joining mid-session or from a non-English-medium background

8. Grief and Loss Support

The school provides support for students and staff experiencing grief due to the death of a loved one, parental separation, a family member's illness, or other significant losses:

- The class teacher and counsellor are informed so they can provide appropriate support
- The student is given space and flexibility — reduced academic expectations, time out if needed, a safe space to go to if they feel overwhelmed
- The counsellor provides individual grief counselling
- Where appropriate, group support may be offered for students experiencing similar losses
- The class is prepared — with the student's and family's consent — on how to welcome the student back sensitively
- Teachers are guided on how to respond to grief in the classroom — what to say, what not to say, and how to support grieving students long-term

9. Digital Well-Being

In an age where children are increasingly connected online, we teach digital well-being alongside digital citizenship:

- **Screen time awareness:** Helping students understand the impact of excessive screen time on sleep, attention and mood
- **Social media and mental health:** Age-appropriate discussions on comparison culture, FOMO, cyberbullying, body image and the curated nature of social media
- **Healthy boundaries:** Encouraging device-free times (during meals, before bed) and digital detox practices

- **Parent guidance:** Resources and workshops for parents on managing their child's screen time, setting family media rules and modelling healthy device use
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10. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The School Counsellor(s) are responsible for:

- Providing individual and group counselling to students
- Conducting risk assessments and crisis intervention
- Consulting with teachers and parents on student well-being
- Delivering wellness curriculum content (life skills, awareness sessions)
- Coordinating external referrals
- Maintaining confidential records
- Conducting staff training on mental health awareness
- Participating in policy review and development

Teachers and Staff are responsible for:

- Building positive, supportive relationships with students
- Creating a safe, inclusive classroom environment
- Recognising and reporting early warning signs
- Referring students of concern to the counsellor
- Participating in mental health training
- Modelling healthy coping and self-care
- Following crisis protocols when needed

The School Leadership (Principal / Chairperson) is responsible for:

- Ensuring that adequate counselling resources are available
 - Supporting a positive school climate
 - Ensuring that this policy is implemented and reviewed
 - Ensuring staff are trained in mental health awareness
 - Liaising with external agencies and professionals as needed
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11. Community Partnerships

The school maintains a list of qualified external mental health professionals (psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, child psychologists, family therapists) who can be recommended to parents for ongoing or specialised care. This list is updated annually.

The school may also partner with local mental health organisations, NGOs and government agencies for awareness programmes, training and referral pathways.

12. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the school leadership team in consultation with the school counsellor(s) and mental health professionals. Revisions are made based on:

- Emerging research and best practices in school mental health
- Feedback from students, parents and staff
- Analysis of counselling usage data (aggregate, anonymised)
- Incident reports and crisis response reviews
- Changes in legal requirements or CBSE guidelines

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Reviewed By
1.0	July 2026	Initial policy	School Leadership

13. Related Documents

- Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Safety & Security Policy
 - Equity & Inclusion Policy
 - ICT & Digital Safety Policy
 - Student Code of Conduct
 - Crisis Management Plan
 - External Mental Health Resource Directory
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14. Emergency Contact Information

Service	Contact
School Office	011-2768 2469
School Email	info@jyotimodelschool.com
Ambulance	102
Police	100
Child Helpline	1098
Nearest Hospital	[Name & Contact]

For support or questions related to mental health and wellness, please contact the school counsellor through the school office at info@jyotimodelschool.com or call 011-2768 2469. If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 102 (Ambulance) or 1098 (Child Helpline).

Jyoti Model Sr. Secondary School — Mental Health & Wellness Policy. This document is a draft pending formal approval by the school management. For queries: info@jyotimodelschool.com · 011-2768 2469