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| Published Date:  | <b>January 2025</b>  |
| The Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly, in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be: | <b>February 2027</b> |

### **Counselling Policy**

At GFM, our counselling policy aligns with our vision to empower students to celebrate their uniqueness and become innovative problem solvers who create positive change. In keeping with the UAE’s National Policy for the Promotion of Mental Health, we aim to support the emotional well-being of students and staff by providing access to onsite counselling services.

#### **Rationale**

The GFM counselling system works in conjunction with our Wellbeing Policy to promote emotional and social welfare. All students and staff can access counselling, which includes developmental programs tailored to specific needs, individual support plans for emotional challenges, and external referrals where necessary. Programs are designed to encourage a growth mindset and empower individuals to manage their emotional and social health effectively.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

At GFM we aim to provide:

- A safe and confidential environment for students and staff.
- Equal access to counselling services.
- Support for recognizing and responding to changes in behavior.
- Clear guidance on confidentiality, safeguarding, and reporting procedures.
- Improvements mental health and well-being.
- Provision of pastoral support through counselling.
- Reduction of stigma around seeking mental health support.
- Enhancement of student attainment and engagement.
- Reduction of bullying and fostering of positive relationships.

#### **Confidentiality and Consent**

All counselling interactions are confidential unless there is a risk of significant harm to the student or others. Students can request the counsellor share information with parents or teachers as needed. Parents will be notified and consent obtained for any significant concerns and programmed work. Counsellors adhere to safeguarding and child protection policies.

#### ***Vision***

*‘At GFM we empower students to have the heart to celebrate uniqueness and the mind to be innovative, creative problem solvers, bringing a positive change to the world in which we live.’*

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Counsellors:** Operate within UAE and international ethical standards, maintain confidentiality, and provide expert support.

**Teachers:** Play a critical role in identifying concerns and supporting students through collaboration with counsellors and following referral procedures

**Parents:** Actively engage in the counselling process, providing information and consent where required.

**Leadership Team (SLT):** Promote counselling initiatives and uphold policy standards.

**Community:** External professionals and organizations provide additional support options when required.

## Referral Process

Any student can be referred for counselling by:

- Self-referral
- Teacher or staff member
- Parent referral

## Counselling Services

Services may include, but not be limited to:

- Individual Support: Tailored sessions for emotional challenges.
- Group Workshops: Year-group activities promoting resilience.
- Staff Training: Building awareness and skills for emotional support.
- Resources: Materials for teachers and parents to maintain consistent support.
- Alternative Support and external support/provision

By integrating counselling into the fabric of GFM, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all. Our approach emphasizes prevention, early intervention, and collaboration with families and external networks to promote emotional well-being and success for every student.

## **Vision**

*'At GFM we empower students to have the heart to celebrate uniqueness and the mind to be innovative, creative problem solvers, bringing a positive change to the world in which we live.'*