

HOLISTIC HEALTH AT NURAFSHON PRESIDENTIAL SCHOOL: INTEGRATING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING INTO THE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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Abstract. Nurafshon Presidential School (PSN) prioritizes student well-being through a holistic framework that integrates social-emotional learning (SEL), comprehensive medical care, and diverse extracurricular activities. This article explores how PSN fosters a supportive environment for students' physical and mental health, emphasizing initiatives like the Grade 5 SEL program, 24/5 nurse-led medical care, and creative after-school activities. By addressing community feedback and planning enhancements like expanded mental health resources, PSN demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, equipping students with lifelong wellness skills.

Keywords: Student well-being, Social-emotional learning (SEL), Physical health, Mental health, Child safeguarding, Extracurricular activities, School healthcare policy

Introduction

At Nurafshon Presidential School (PSN), student well-being is the foundation of a thriving educational environment. Recognizing that physical and mental health are integral to academic and personal success, PSN has developed a multifaceted approach to wellness. This article examines how PSN integrates social-emotional learning (SEL), robust medical care, and engaging extracurricular activities to support students holistically. It also analyzes the school's response to community feedback, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement to ensure a nurturing environment that fosters lifelong well-being.

Welcoming New Students with Social-Emotional Learning

The transition to a new school can be daunting, particularly for young students entering a boarding environment. At PSN, the Grade 5 Adoption Program addresses this challenge through a carefully designed Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative, implemented during

the first two weeks of the academic year. This program, led by the school psychologist, vice principal for spiritual affairs, and Tarbiyaschi educators, introduces 5th-grade students and their families to the school's boarding facilities, health services, and emotional support systems. The goal is to foster a sense of belonging and confidence, enabling students to navigate their new academic and social environment with ease.

A key feature of the SEL program is the creation of socio-psychological passports for each new student. These passports document critical information about a student's mental, physical, and spiritual well-being, as well as their family circumstances and cognitive abilities. By identifying students who may require additional emotional or social support, educators can tailor interventions to ensure inclusivity. For example, students flagged as needing social protection receive targeted recommendations from the school psychologist, ensuring their needs are met without compromising their emotional well-being.

The SEL program is a strength, as it addresses the emotional and social challenges of transitioning students, fostering a supportive environment from the outset. However, the program's focus on the initial two weeks limits its long-term impact. Extending SEL activities throughout the year, as recommended in the Domain E evaluation, could provide sustained support, particularly for students facing ongoing adjustment challenges. Additionally, incorporating peer-led initiatives could enhance student engagement and foster a sense of community ownership.

Comprehensive Medical Care for Physical Health

Physical health is a cornerstone of PSN's wellness strategy, supported by a fully equipped nurse station operating 24 hours a day, five days a week. Staffed by skilled nurses, the station addresses immediate health concerns, from minor ailments to emergencies requiring referral to hospitals or treatment centers. Incident reports are completed promptly, and parents are informed of significant developments, ensuring transparency and trust. Annual medical screenings, as outlined in the Medical Screening and Checkups document, track students' height, weight, and chest circumference, while educational sessions cover personal hygiene, nutrition, and infectious disease prevention. For adolescent female students, targeted health education addresses puberty-related changes, promoting awareness and confidence.

The Nurafshon PS Healthcare Policy provides a clear framework for in-school medical care, detailing protocols for canteen hygiene, weekly dormitory checks, and physical activities like morning exercises and swimming. Developed in response to community feedback—where 25% of students and 15% of parents expressed concerns about healthcare services—this policy clarifies the scope of care and aligns with Ministry of Health regulations. For instance, nurses are limited to providing specific medications without a doctor's prescription, a constraint that was communicated to address misconceptions about in-school healthcare capabilities.

PSN's medical care system is robust, with 24/5 nurse availability and thorough health monitoring ensuring student safety. The development of the healthcare policy demonstrates responsive leadership, addressing survey concerns (25% of students and 15% of parents dissatisfied) by clarifying care limitations. However, the survey also revealed that 10% of

faculty lack understanding of the medical policy, suggesting a need for enhanced staff training. Additionally, the 18% of students who feel they do not learn enough about maintaining health indicate a gap in health education delivery. Incorporating more interactive, student-centered health education sessions could bridge this gap and empower students to take charge of their well-being.

Extracurricular Activities for Mental and Physical Fitness

PSN's commitment to holistic education extends beyond academics through a diverse array of extracurricular and post-curricular activities. As detailed in the After School Activities for Refreshment document, students engage in creative clubs, sports games, and therapies such as art and music, designed to alleviate stress and enhance mental well-being. These activities are supervised to ensure safety, providing students with opportunities to explore interests and unwind from academic pressures. For example, sports games promote physical fitness, while art and music therapies offer creative outlets for emotional expression.

Environmental initiatives, such as tree and flower planting led by the deputy director for spirituality, foster physical activity and instill values of responsibility and environmental stewardship. These activities align with Domain E standard E1ii, which emphasizes developing compassion and leadership through community-related activities. The school psychologist further supports mental health through individual conversations and group therapy sessions, addressing students' daily challenges and building resilience. By offering round-the-clock supervision, PSN ensures that students' well-being is prioritized during these activities.

The extracurricular offerings are a significant strength, promoting both mental and physical fitness while aligning with PSN's holistic education goals. The inclusion of creative therapies and environmental initiatives reflects a forward-thinking approach to well-being, addressing diverse student needs. However, the Domain E evaluation suggests that anti-bullying measures, such as annual training and anonymous questionnaires, could be strengthened with peer-led initiatives and regular follow-ups. Expanding these efforts could further enhance the positive impact of extracurricular activities on school culture and student relationships.

Addressing Challenges and Building Trust

Community feedback is a cornerstone of PSN's wellness strategy, with bi-annual surveys and anonymous suggestion boxes providing platforms for students and parents to voice concerns. The Domain E evaluation highlighted concerns, including 25% of students and 15% of parents feeling healthcare services were insufficient, and 18% of students reporting inadequate health education. In response, PSN's leadership collaborated with nurses to develop the Nurafshon PS Healthcare Policy, clarifying the scope of in-school care and addressing regulatory limitations. This transparent communication has strengthened community trust and aligns with Domain E standard E3iv, which emphasizes awareness of local health services.

To further enhance mental health support, PSN is exploring partnerships with external agencies, as recommended in the Domain E evaluation. These collaborations aim to provide additional resources, such as external counselors or therapists, to complement the school psychologist's

efforts. Plans to extend the SEL program beyond the initial two weeks will ensure sustained emotional and social support, addressing the evaluation's recommendation for ongoing SEL initiatives. Additionally, addressing the 10% of faculty who lack understanding of the medical policy requires targeted training to ensure all staff are well-informed.

PSN's responsiveness to community feedback is a key strength, as evidenced by the healthcare policy's development and plans for external partnerships. However, the persistence of concerns about healthcare and health education suggests a need for improved communication strategies, such as parent workshops or regular updates, to align expectations. The proposed extension of the SEL program and additional mental health resources are promising steps, but their success will depend on consistent implementation and evaluation. Strengthening faculty training and student health education will further enhance PSN's wellness framework.

Conclusion

Nurafshon Presidential School's holistic approach to wellness integrates social-emotional learning, comprehensive medical care, and diverse extracurricular activities to create a supportive environment where students thrive. By addressing community feedback through transparent policies and planning enhancements like extended SEL support and external partnerships, PSN demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement. This multifaceted strategy not only meets students' immediate needs but also equips them with the skills and resilience needed for lifelong well-being.

References:

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