

مباراة الدخول الى كلية التربية لطلاب شهادة الماستر المهني

للعام الجامعي 2018-2019

مسابقة في الثقافة العامة باللغة الإنكليزية

مدة المسابقة: ساعتان

### **Children's mental health: it's time to put well-being on the curriculum**

Adapted from Andy Cope

Friday 25 August 2017

The Guardian

With mental health problems on the rise in classrooms, we're bringing happiness inspectors into schools. It's no secret that low-level disruption, burnout, anxiety, absence and mental health problems affecting staff and pupils alike are on the rise.

Statistics show that one in 10 children –an average of three in every classroom– has a diagnosable mental health problem, and that 75% of mental health problems in adults have their roots in childhood. At the chalkface, teachers will be teaching children who have anxiety, depression and phobias, and a scary number of children now self-harm. Worse still, these disorders now manifest at earlier ages.

How can we stop young people from suffering mental health problems in the first place? I believe the answer is simple: equip them with the knowledge and skills to be in charge of their own well-being.

That's why a small band of heads and classroom teachers and I are currently trialing a new "Happiness" approach in which we deliver training to children in years five to 13 and introduce them to a range of positive psychology topics such as well-being, resilience, personal responsibility, growth mindsets, kindness, mindfulness and gratitude.

The lessons are adapted from a successful business model that my team and I have delivered around the world. The principles of well-being are universal. Everyone wants to feel amazing and function at their optimal level but the current system fails to tell you how. Our happiness workshops are designed to be interactive and great fun, as well as being grounded in the very latest thinking, all the while lining young people up to be their best self.

Students are challenged to design their own "Brilliant Schools" program focused on how they can improve their own happiness and learning, how they can improve the well-being of their school, and how they can improve the well-being of their community.

The children share their ideas and devise their own 10-point plan so each school does their own thing. But most important, the children get excited about taking the messages across their school and community and we leave them to it. Young people have risen to the challenge, often reporting the

project to have boosted their confidence, happiness and outlook on life, things like: "It taught me how positivity can spread" and "I feel proud of myself for doing this, and for joining a club that will help my confidence and positivity."

We've had children setting new world records for random acts of kindness. We've seen them washing teacher's cars at lunchtime, holding school assemblies on kindness, visiting local care homes for older people, designing and delivering their own well-being curriculum. The list is endless.

A teacher is appointed to help them deliver their 10-point plan, and after a few months we revisit the school as the "happiness inspector" and check on the children's progress. The children present "evidence" against their plan: a presentation and a tour of the school showing the things they have done. If they've achieved what they wanted, the school is awarded a banner to hang on the school gates, saying: "We are an outstandingly happy school". It's a very powerful message.

The best part is that the children have designed and delivered their own program, so it's sustainable because the culture has changed from the inside-out. Teachers love the way the project changes behaviors and it has even resulted in improved SATs results. It impacts positively on learning but also leaks into the wider community. One said: "In 20 years of teaching, this has given the biggest impact on children."

We decided not to stop there and are currently writing a syllabus that will raise the educational well-being bar. Thus, our next step is to produce a syllabus in which teenagers will be taught half a dozen modules and build a portfolio of personal growth. This syllabus will have a strong academic underpinning and modules will include positive psychology (the science of happiness), resilience and relationships. It will also place an emphasis on learning a variety of techniques including mindfulness. The golden thread throughout all the modules will be young people aspiring to be their best selves and learning strategies and life skills to maintain their own mental well-being.

Our hope is that, one day, this syllabus will sit alongside math, science and English as a core subject, and that it will impact positively on school grades across the board. My research has shown that happiness is good for business (happy employees work harder, are more creative and have less time off sick) so common sense tells us the same principles will also apply to children.

### **Part One: Reading (30pts)**

Summarize the main principles and goals of the happiness school program as well as the objectives of its syllabus.

### **Part Two: Writing (70pts)**

**Write a well-organized essay of an introduction, two body paragraphs and a conclusion on the topic below (Organization 10pts/Language 30pts/Content 30pts):**

Is the program described in the text applicable to the Lebanese context? If not, explain why; if yes, explain how.