

**21/22**  
**May**  
**2025**

.....  
Sofitel Downtown  
Dubai

**Enhance your inclusion  
and wellbeing provision  
to build an environment  
where everyone is  
supported to flourish.**

# MENA Inclusion and Wellbeing Summit

## EXPERT SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

**Nina Jackson**

SEND, Mental Health  
and Wellbeing  
Consultant

**Sam Garner**

Mental Health and  
Inclusion Consultant,  
Founder of  
Balanced People

**John Bell**

Principal,  
Bloom World Academy

**Berna Bower**

Corporate Head of  
Inclusion,  
GEMS Education

## Refresh

Update your high-quality teaching practices to ensure inclusive teaching for all.

## Lead

Lead inclusion and wellbeing with a clear strategy that supports all.

## Communicate

Navigate parental and external relationships to create a joined-up approach.





# Why is this conference relevant?

## Our MENA Inclusion and Wellbeing summit returns to Dubai in May 2025.

With a focus on practical workshops and networking, take this opportunity to strengthen your connections with other inclusion and wellbeing leaders from international schools. Learn from shared best practice and gain strategies to support your high-quality provision.

Join us in Dubai for a fantastic opportunity to hear expert advice on leading whole-school inclusion. Gain tools for adaptive teaching for all and strong support systems that ensure all students have a sense of belonging. Innovate and develop your wellbeing support with sessions focusing on behaviour, anxiety and engaging with your parent community.



## The Benefits

### Support

Meet the needs of your students with personalised learning through adaptation and wellbeing support.

### Innovate

Stay up to date with leading practice. Grow and develop through shared practical case studies.

### Connect

Prioritise your professional development, connect and learn from your colleagues.





# Programme

Inclusion Day, 21 May, Sofitel Downtown Dubai

<b>08:15 – 09:00</b>	<b>Registration and refreshments</b>	
<b>09:00 – 09:05</b>	<b>Welcome and housekeeping</b> <i>Optimus Education</i>	
<b>09:05 – 09:15</b>	<b>Chair's Welcome</b> <i>Nina Jackson, SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant</i>	
<b>09:15 – 09:45</b>	<b>Support individual needs in a whole class</b> Offer a personalised approach for students within the classroom with effective adaptation and scaffolding. <i>Hannah Grange, Training and School Improvement Manager - Secondary, Aldar Education</i>	
<b>09:55 – 10:30</b>	<b>Inclusion by design</b> Develop inclusive practices that are embedded into all elements of the school day for all students. <i>John Bell, Principal, Bloom World Academy</i>	
<b>10:15 – 10:35</b>	<b>Keynote</b>	
<b>10:35 – 10:50</b>	<b>Questions using <a href="https://www.sli.do">www.sli.do</a> #oeMENA</b>	
<b>10:50 – 11:30</b>	<b>Morning refreshments, networking, and exhibition</b>	
<b>11:30 – 12:30</b>	<b>Workshop choices one</b>	
<b>1A: Emotionally based school avoidance</b> Increase your understanding of EBSA and gain techniques to support students and remove barriers to learning. <i>Sam Garner, Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant, Balanced People</i>	<b>1B: Inclusive technology and AI</b> Boost the confidence and outcomes of students with additional needs by incorporating technology and AI as a learning tool. <i>Nina Jackson, SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant</i>	<b>1C: Consider the mental health of EAL students</b> Improve the mental health of EAL students and their experiences with social integration, assessment and attainment. <i>Flash Academy</i>
<b>12:30 – 13:20</b>	<b>Lunch, networking, and exhibition</b>	
<b>13:30 – 14:30</b>	<b>Workshop choices two</b>	
<b>2A: Ensure all staff support Inclusion</b> Onboard teachers into your inclusive culture, ensuring they are confident teaching all students with adaptive pedagogy. <i>Sarah Al-Maawali, Advisory Inclusion Teacher and Nadia Sultan, Educational Psychologist and Owner &amp; Founder, Inspire Educational Consultancy</i>	<b>2B: Empower students of determination for lifelong success</b> Equip students with the life skills and confidence to thrive beyond the classroom and lead fulfilling lives. <i>Ceanlia Vermeulen, Head of Inclusion and Wellbeing, Al Reef School, Al-Ain</i>	<b>2C: Embrace neurodiversity</b> Ensure a sense of belonging for neurodivergent students and staff within an inclusive culture. <i>Nina Jackson, SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant</i>
<b>14:30 – 14:50</b>	<b>Afternoon refreshments, networking, and exhibition</b>	
<b>13:30 – 14:30</b>	<b>Workshop choices three</b>	
<b>3A: Autism</b> Boost your understanding of Autism Spectrum Condition to support skill development and engagement of your learners. <i>Sam Garner, Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant, Balanced People</i>	<b>3B: Early identification: what should you be noticing?</b> Identify and recognise early signs of neurodevelopmental conditions to benefit early intervention. <i>Dr Wafa Saoud, Clinical Psychologist, Lead of Children and Adolescent Services, Sage</i>	<b>3C: Support transitions of English language learners</b> Lead high quality English language provision across the curriculum so learners quickly adjust to their new environments and gain a sense of belonging. <i>Gemma Donovan, Head of Whole School EAL, Southview School, Dubai</i>
<b>15:55 – 16:15</b>	<b>Parent partnerships</b> Confidently engage hard-to-reach parents, align support and ensure your students benefit from positive parental partnerships. <i>Berna Bouwer, Corporate Head of Inclusion, GEMS Education</i>	



# Programme

Wellbeing Day, 22 May, Sofitel Downtown Dubai

**08:15 – 09:00 Registration and refreshments**

**09:00 – 09:05 Welcome and housekeeping**

*Optimus Education*

**09:05 – 09:15 Chair's Welcome**

*Sam Garner, Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant, Balanced People*

**09:15 – 09:45 Wellbeing first: Redefining success in schools through evidence and action**

Prioritise wellbeing with a data driven approach, strengthen emotional resilience, and establish a school culture where both students and staff truly succeed.

*Dr Funke Baffour-Awuah, Corporate Head of Wellbeing, GEMS Education*

**09:55 – 10:30 Practical tools to support anxious pupils**

With numbers of students with anxiety rising, develop positive relationships and gain tools to support early intervention.

*Nina Jackson, SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant*

**10:15 – 10:35 Keynote**

**10:35 – 10:50 Questions using [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do) #oeMENA**

**10:50 – 11:30 Morning refreshments, networking, and exhibition**

**11:30 – 12:30 Workshop choices one**

**1A: Wellbeing interventions**

Increase your understanding of EBSA and gain techniques to support students and remove barriers to learning.

*Nina Jackson, SEND, Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant*

**1B: Develop positive peer relationships**

Boost student confidence and life skills with constructive lessons on friendships and social skills.

**1C: Inform decision making with student voice**

Collect and analyse student voice to inform data driven decision making regarding your wellbeing provision.

**12:30 – 13:20 Lunch, networking, and exhibition**

**13:30 – 14:30 Workshop choices two**

**2A: Engaging parents with wellbeing**

Effectively communicate the importance of wellbeing with your parent community, ensuring they are supportive stakeholders in their child's wellbeing.

*Louise Dawson, Education Consultant and Inclusion Specialist*

**2B: Coaching culture**

Develop your support mechanisms for staff with dedicated coaching and supervision as part of professional development.

*Sarah Curran, Head of Wellbeing, Dubai English Speaking School*

**2C: Address low-level disruption with positive behaviour management**

Gain positive techniques to limit low-level disruption in the classroom, supporting whole class focus and wellbeing.

*Dr Funke Baffour-Awuah, Corporate Head of Wellbeing, and David Irish, Senior Vice President of Children's Services, GEMS Education*

**14:30 – 14:50 Afternoon refreshments, networking, and exhibition**

**13:30 – 14:30 Workshop choices three**

**3A: Student wellbeing in a virtual world**

In a world that is viewed through screens, ensure your students understand risks and can manage their own wellbeing effectively.

*Sam Garner, Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant, Balanced People*

**3B: Staff wellbeing: workload management**

Manage your wellbeing with a healthy workload. Set limits, prioritise tasks and achieve your goals.

**3C: Classroom-based wellbeing activities**

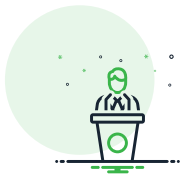
Enhance mood, concentration and behaviour with short wellbeing activities implemented into lessons.

*Nancy Hee Chung, School Counselor and Psychologist, Summit International School*

**15:55 – 16:15 Prioritise your own wellbeing**

Build self-compassion, prioritise yourself and ensure capacity to support your students.

*Sam Garner, Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant, Balanced People*



# Speakers



## **Nina Jackson**

SEND and Mental Health and Wellbeing  
Consultant  
(Chair, Inclusion)



## **Sam Garner**

Mental Health and Inclusion Consultant  
and Founder, Balanced People  
(Chair, Wellbeing)



## **Sarah Al-Maawali**

Advisory Inclusion Teacher,  
Inspire Educational Consultancy



## **John Bell**

Principal,  
Bloom World Academy



## **Berna Bouwer**

Corporate Head of Inclusion,  
GEMS Education



## **Louise Dawson**

Education Consultant and Inclusion  
Specialist



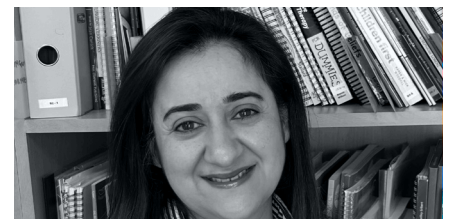
## **Gemma Donovan**

Head of Whole School EAL,  
Southview School, Dubai



## **Hannah Grange**

Training and School Improvement  
Manager - Secondary  
Aldar Education



## **Nadia Sultan**

Educational Psychologist, Owner &  
Founder  
Inspire Educational Consultancy





# BOOK TODAY

[oego.co/MENAInclusionandWellbeing](https://oego.co/MENAInclusionandWellbeing)



*‘Brilliant sessions, great speakers and efficiently run.’*

Counsellor,  
Nord Anglia

*‘Supportive and very helpful for the roles we play each day in our schools.’*

Inclusion and Wellbeing Lead,  
NAS Dubai

## MENA Inclusion and Wellbeing Summit

21 and 22 May 2025, Dubai

### PRICING

Your ticket includes copies of presentation slides from every speaker’s session, refreshments and opportunities to network with other school leaders, practical, topical strategies to impact your school and a choice of workshops to tailor your day.

	Early bird pricing - First 50 places	Pricing
Two-day ticket (21 and 22 May 2025)	£430.00 + VAT ≈ 1977 AED	£490.00 + VAT ≈ 2254 AED
Inclusion day (21 May 2025)	£230.00 + VAT ≈ 1057 AED	£260.00 + VAT ≈ 1196 AED
Wellbeing day (22 May 2025)	£230.00 + VAT ≈ 1057 AED	£260.00 + VAT ≈ 1196 AED

If you are interested in just attending one day, or have an enquiry about group rates, please contact us on 020 8315 1506 or [contact conference.bookings@optimus-education.com](mailto:conference.bookings@optimus-education.com)