



Draft Guidelines on Wellbeing in Junior Cycle

For consultation

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Section 1: Introduction

The *Framework for Junior Cycle* (2015) provides for a new area of learning at junior cycle called Wellbeing. This area of learning will cross the three years of junior cycle and build on substantial work already taking place in schools in support of students' wellbeing. It will provide learning opportunities that enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students, and will enable students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to the school and to their community. This area of learning will make the school's commitment to wellbeing visible to students.

The aim of these Guidelines is to support schools in planning and developing a coherent Wellbeing programme that builds on the understandings, practices and curricula for wellbeing already existing in schools. The Guidelines can support schools in two ways: reviewing how they are currently supporting the development of student wellbeing, and secondly, in planning a Wellbeing programme that meets students' needs and is consistent with the vision of learning set out in the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Wellbeing is gaining increased attention across all education systems. This is influenced by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child which emphasises children's right to achieve their full potential and participate in decisions that affect them. It is also influenced by a growing body of research that suggests that wellbeing and learning are connected. Students who have higher levels of wellbeing tend to have better cognitive outcomes in school¹.

It is vital that those who seek to promote high academic standards and those who seek to promote mental, emotional and social health realise that they are on the same side, and that social and affective education can support academic learning, not simply take time away from it. There is overwhelming evidence that students learn more effectively, including their academic subjects, if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves, their teachers and feel school is supporting them.²

But wellbeing is important not simply because it leads to better educational outcomes or helps students prepare to take on the challenges of further study and work life. It is important in own right and for all children. If we accept that learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked then we must look to develop the factors that contribute to a sense of wellbeing within schools. In this context, positive relations with teachers and peers are key.

¹ Student Wellbeing: Literature Review. (2015) Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

² Weare, K (2000) Promoting Mental, Emotional, and Social Health: A Whole-School Approach, Routledge: London

There is now a large body of international research from a number of countries showing a strong association between the quality of relationships between teacher and students and a number of student outcomes, including socio-emotional wellbeing, engagement in schoolwork, feeling a sense of belonging in the school, levels of disciplinary problems, and academic achievement.³

The philosopher Nel Noddings, suggests that care is at the heart of human life and flourishing and should be viewed as the ethical ideal of education. She suggests that

'The primary aim of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring.'⁴

Following on from Noddings, other care theorists have articulated this ethic of care in schools and suggested that the ways in which teachers model an ethic of care for their students strongly influences how students develop as learners and as young people.

Having said this, it must also be acknowledged that many of the factors that shape and affect the wellbeing of a student lie beyond the reach and influence of schools. Economic, political, environmental and social factors all have an impact on student wellbeing. The student's particular family circumstances and context can also have a major influence on their experience of wellbeing. The links between poverty and poor physical and mental health are well-documented. In this context, CSO data shows that child poverty doubled between 2008 and 2013, rising from 6% to just under 12%, with inevitable impact on the wellbeing of children.⁵

Whilst acknowledging these external factors, it is important that the role of school in relation to wellbeing should not be underestimated. By optimising opportunities for young people to learn about wellbeing and by being aware of the protective elements that the whole school community can provide to enhance young people's sense of wellbeing, schools can make a significant difference.

³ Smyth E (2015) *Wellbeing and School Experiences among 9- and 13-Year-Olds: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study* ESRI/NCCA, p.3

⁴ Noddings, N, (1984) *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education*, New York, , p172

⁵ CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions Accessed at [http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Database/eirestat/Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20\(SILC\)/Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20\(SILC\)_statbank.asp?SP=Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20\(SILC\)&Planguage=0](http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Database/eirestat/Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20(SILC)/Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20(SILC)_statbank.asp?SP=Survey%20on%20Income%20and%20Living%20Conditions%20(SILC)&Planguage=0)

Childhood can be seen as a process of 'well-becoming', where young people are gaining knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will sustain them throughout their lives⁶ This is a life-long journey but one where schools play an important part. The goal for wellbeing is human flourishing and flourishing rests on five pillars: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment⁷. When children and young people are 'flourishing', they are not only curious and eager to learn, they are:

- Creative and imaginative
- Connected and empathetic
- Good team players
- Confident about who they are
- Resilient and persistent
- Positive about themselves and see themselves growing into better people.⁸

Schools have a central role to play in supporting and promoting students' learning *about wellbeing* and *for wellbeing*. They learn *about* wellbeing through specific areas of the curriculum and various wellbeing events and initiatives that are organised to develop awareness, knowledge and skills about wellbeing. They learn *for* wellbeing when their whole experience of school life and all the day-to-day interactions both within and beyond the classroom are respectful and caring. Thinking about learning *for* wellbeing requires that we consider not only what students learn but also how they learn it. Learning *for* wellbeing not only happens in specific subject areas but can be nurtured in all subjects and all teachers.

Professor Katherine Weare (2015)⁹ summarises some key factors that contribute to supporting learning *about* and *for* wellbeing in schools. These include:

- A whole school approach which encompasses and mobilises the totality of school experience to promote well-being and address mental health issues

⁶ *Learning and Well-being: An Agenda for Change*. (2015) Awartani, M and Looney, J. (World Innovation Summit for Education)

⁷ Seligman, M. (2011) <https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/newsletters/flourishnewsletters/newtheory> Accessed March, 21st, 2016

⁸ Growing great kids: helping young people to flourish in life: <http://growinggreatschools.com.au/growing-great-kids-helping-young-people-flourish-in-life/> (Accessed March, 23rd, 2016)

⁹ Weare, K. (2015) What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools?: Advice for Schools and Framework Document. Partnership for Well-being and Mental Health in Schools

- A positive and universal focus on wellbeing which emphasises strengths and capacities rather than a focus on mental ill-health, problems and weaknesses
- Supportive school and classroom climate and ethos
- The promotion of staff wellbeing because wellbeing in schools starts with the staff
- Professional learning and staff development.

The draft Guidelines begin with this introductory section, setting the policy and educational context for wellbeing. Section two looks at the connections between wellbeing and the *Framework for Junior Cycle*. Section three considers the elements that contribute to a whole school approach to wellbeing, while section four provides an overview of planning considerations for and some examples of programmes for wellbeing. Section five sets out initial thinking in how schools can assess student learning in Wellbeing and report on learning in Wellbeing.

The policy context

In discussions and consultations associated with the junior cycle developments, teachers, schools and students all stressed the importance of concerted attention being given to student wellbeing in the new junior cycle. Hence, *the Framework for Junior Cycle* (2015) states that

*The junior cycle years are a critical time in young peoples' lives. Students are exposed to a range of influences, including peer pressure. They require support to make positive responsible decisions relating to their health and wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. Wellbeing in junior cycle is about young people feeling confident, happy, healthy and connected.*¹⁰

The National Children's Strategy¹¹ proposes a vision for an Ireland where

children are respected as young citizens with a valued contribution to make and a voice of their own; where all children are cherished and supported by family and the wider society; where they enjoy a fulfilling childhood and realise their potential.

Healthy Ireland; a framework for health and wellbeing¹² sets out a similar vision for an Ireland where

¹⁰10 Department of Education and Skills, Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, p.22

¹¹11 The National Children's Strategy: Our children, Their lives Department of Education and Department of Health (2000)

.... everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

The inclusion of wellbeing as an area of learning is also in keeping with the Government's policy framework *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020*. This sets out a vision and outcomes which all government departments and agencies, statutory services and the voluntary and community sectors will work towards, to enhance children's wellbeing. These guidelines contribute to this vision of schools as places *where the rights of children and young people are respected, protected and fulfilled; where their voices are heard and where they are supported to realise their potential now and in the future.*¹³

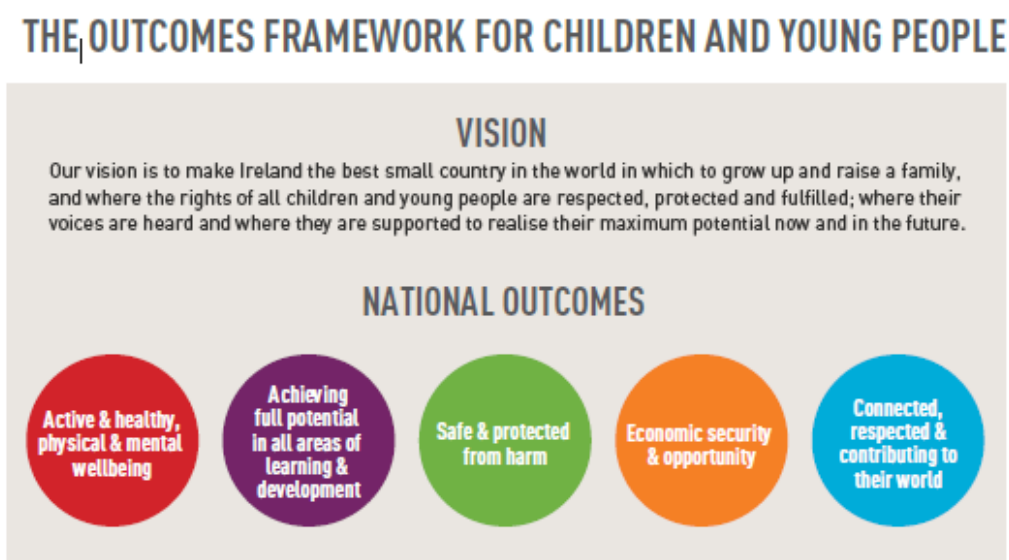


Table 1. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: Vision and National Outcomes

¹² Healthy Ireland: A framework for improved health and wellbeing. 2013 – 2025. Department of Health 2013 <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/hieng.pdf> (Accessed March, 23rd. 2016)

¹³ Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020*, p 1V

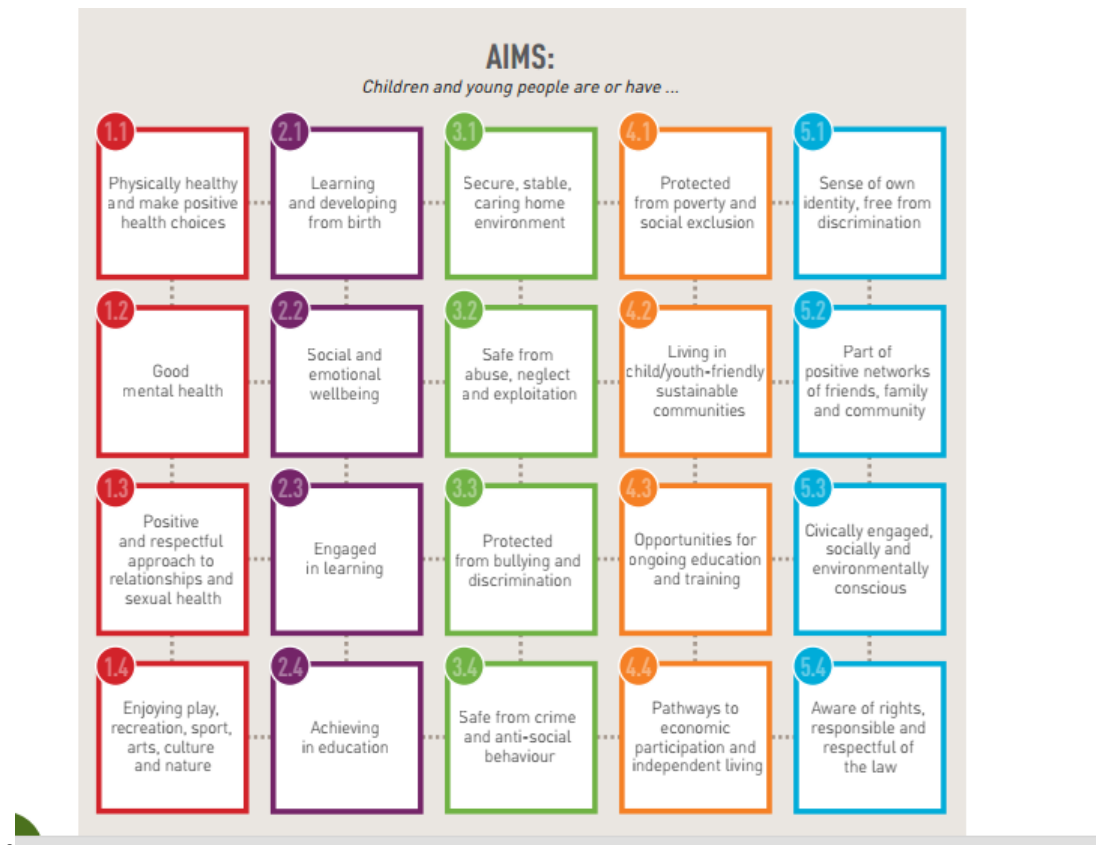


Table 2. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: Aims

Wellbeing has also been afforded increasing attention in education policy in recent times. The Department of Health and Children and the Department of Education and Skills have initiated and supported a range of initiatives aimed at promoting health and wellbeing in schools, such as the Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School, the Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion, guidelines for responding to critical incidents in school, and the Active School Flag, to name but a few. These and other initiatives have made a significant contribution to the growing awareness of how schools can promote health and wellbeing.

In a curriculum context, the theme of wellbeing is central to the *Aistear Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* which describes wellbeing in terms of *children being confident, happy and healthy*¹⁴ (NCCA, 2009, p.16). Aspects of wellbeing are also present in a number of curriculum areas of the *Primary Curriculum* (1999).

¹⁴ Aistear framework http://www.ncca.biz/Aistear/pdfs/PrinciplesThemes_ENG/WellBeing_ENG.pdf

Towards an understanding of student wellbeing in junior cycle

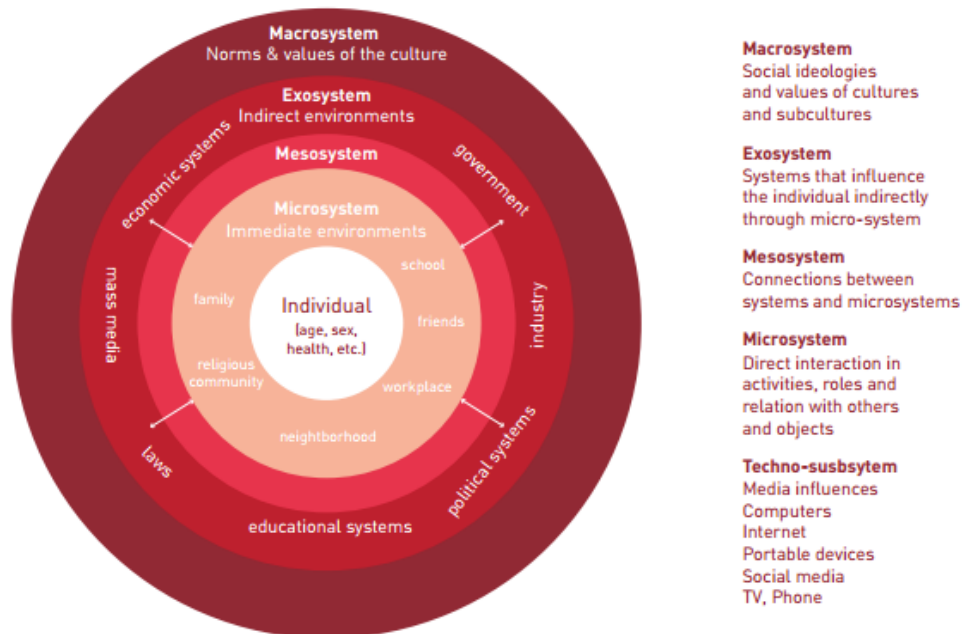
It is important for the school community to build and share a common understanding of wellbeing, especially of what we mean when we talk about student wellbeing. Wellbeing can mean very different things to different people. Hence, it is important to create a space for teachers to dialogue and share their own vision and understanding of wellbeing (see Appendix 2 – Getting started workshop).

Arriving at a definition that communicates the multidimensional nature of student wellbeing is a challenge. Different disciplines offer diverse and sometimes competing perspectives on wellbeing. Much of the research and policy documentation defines student wellbeing in narrow psychological terms and so wellbeing is commonly seen as a combination of sustained positive feelings and attitudes - happy, healthy and confident young people who feel safe, secure, cared for, included, involved and engaged, and so on. Such a view of wellbeing tends to narrowly identify wellbeing with the subjective mental state of the student. There are some problems with this approach. Firstly, it ignores the fact that wellbeing and ill-being exist together as part of the human condition and wellbeing doesn't necessarily mean the absence of negative moods, feelings or thoughts. Secondly, the individual is seen as being solely responsible for their wellbeing without reference to the wider context and social conditions necessary for individual wellbeing to flourish. Even with our best efforts, the wellbeing of individuals can be compromised by the wider social, economic and cultural landscape.

The tendency towards a narrow psychological definition of wellbeing needs to be balanced with one which communicates the multidimensional nature of wellbeing and by an understanding of wellbeing as a process of well-becoming which is brought about by the synergy of the personal, relational and collective wellness.

Brofenbrenner's ecological model of human development is helpful as it provides a comprehensive systems-based approach to understanding wellbeing. It begins by acknowledging the importance of the individual and his/her immediate relationships and then moves outwards to show how a consideration of the wider community and social context is needed to accommodate a multidisciplinary, systems-based and holistic approach to wellbeing. This perspective recognises that sometimes the wellbeing of individuals is hindered by wider social, economic, or cultural factors and conversely, sometimes one's own

behaviour, choices or goals may compromise the collective wellbeing. In a nutshell, it provides a reminder that wellbeing is always realised in community.



Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model of Human Development¹⁵

Furthermore, it is important to think about wellbeing as both a state of *being* and a process of *becoming*. The challenge is for students to develop an orientation towards the goal of wellbeing, and to seek wellbeing both in the now and as a lifelong journey. In this context, it is important to validate young people’s current experiences and not to focus only on the wellbeing knowledge, skills and dispositions that they will need in their adult lives.

Wellbeing will never be fully realised, with set-backs always possible. Negative moods, feelings, thoughts and poor self-esteem should not be seen as obstacles to wellbeing development but as aspects of the full range of the human condition. By acknowledging the experience of ill-being as part of the continuum of wellbeing students learn to accept that everyone experiences vulnerability and a need for care at stages in

¹⁵Awartani M and Looney J, *Learning and Wellbeing: An Agenda for Change* p. 19 https://www.wise-qatar.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/wise-research-5-eispptu-11_17.pdf

their journey. Students can also be encouraged to recognise that wellbeing does not necessarily mean the absence of stress or negative emotions in their lives.

The following definition¹⁶ aims to take account of the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing encompassing social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, environmental and physical wellbeing

Student wellbeing is present when the student realises his or her abilities, can cope with the stresses of life, has a positive and successful experience of learning and has a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community, such as the school community.

Through discussion and consultation, schools may come to their own understanding of student wellbeing but, in doing so, wellbeing should not be confined to a narrow psychological definition which focuses exclusively on the child's state of mind or holds the individual as responsible for her/his own wellbeing, without reference to the wider social context and factors that play a part. Factors such as social class, ethnic identity and gender cannot be ignored when considering student wellbeing.

As a school comes to a shared understanding and vision of wellbeing it is imperative that everyone sees themselves as having a role and responsibility in supporting students' wellbeing. This is in line with the *Healthy Ireland Framework* which sets out a vision of

*a healthy Ireland where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society, and is everyone's responsibility.*¹⁷

While every teacher can support student wellbeing, it is further enhanced when important aspects of wellbeing are the subject of learning and teaching in specific curriculum areas and are allocated specific time. For this reason, the Guidelines place a strong emphasis on the role that Physical Education (PE), Social, Personal and Healthy Education (SPHE), Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) and Guidance can play in supporting *learning about wellbeing and learning for wellbeing*. Other subjects can also make an important contribution to wellbeing. Links can be made with Art, Music, Home Economics, and Religious Education, to name but a few related subjects. Links with topics in new junior cycle short courses can also be made, for example with Philosophy, Digital Media Literacy and Performing Arts. Examples of

¹⁶ Adapted from WHO definition, (2001). <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Resources-Guidance/Well-Being-in-Post-Primary-Schools-Guidelines-for-Mental-Health-Promotion-and-Suicide-Prevention-2013.pdf>

¹⁷ Healthy Ireland – A framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013 – 2025, Dept. of Health <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/hieng.pdf>

how schools might plan Wellbeing programmes, incorporating subjects, short courses, learning units and other learning experiences are an important feature of these Guidelines.

Section 2: Wellbeing and the Framework for Junior Cycle

The junior cycle years are an important time in young peoples’ lives as they learn to take greater responsibility for their lives and to cope with new experiences, influences and pressures. Student wellbeing is at the heart of the vision of a new junior cycle and the Framework for Junior Cycle provides an excellent basis for planning a junior cycle Wellbeing programme.

The *Framework for Junior Cycle* is underpinned by eight principles that inform the development and implementation of junior cycle programmes in all schools. All of these principles are important in supporting the student experience of wellbeing in junior cycle. It’s worth noting that wellbeing is both a principle of junior cycle education and also a curricular area.

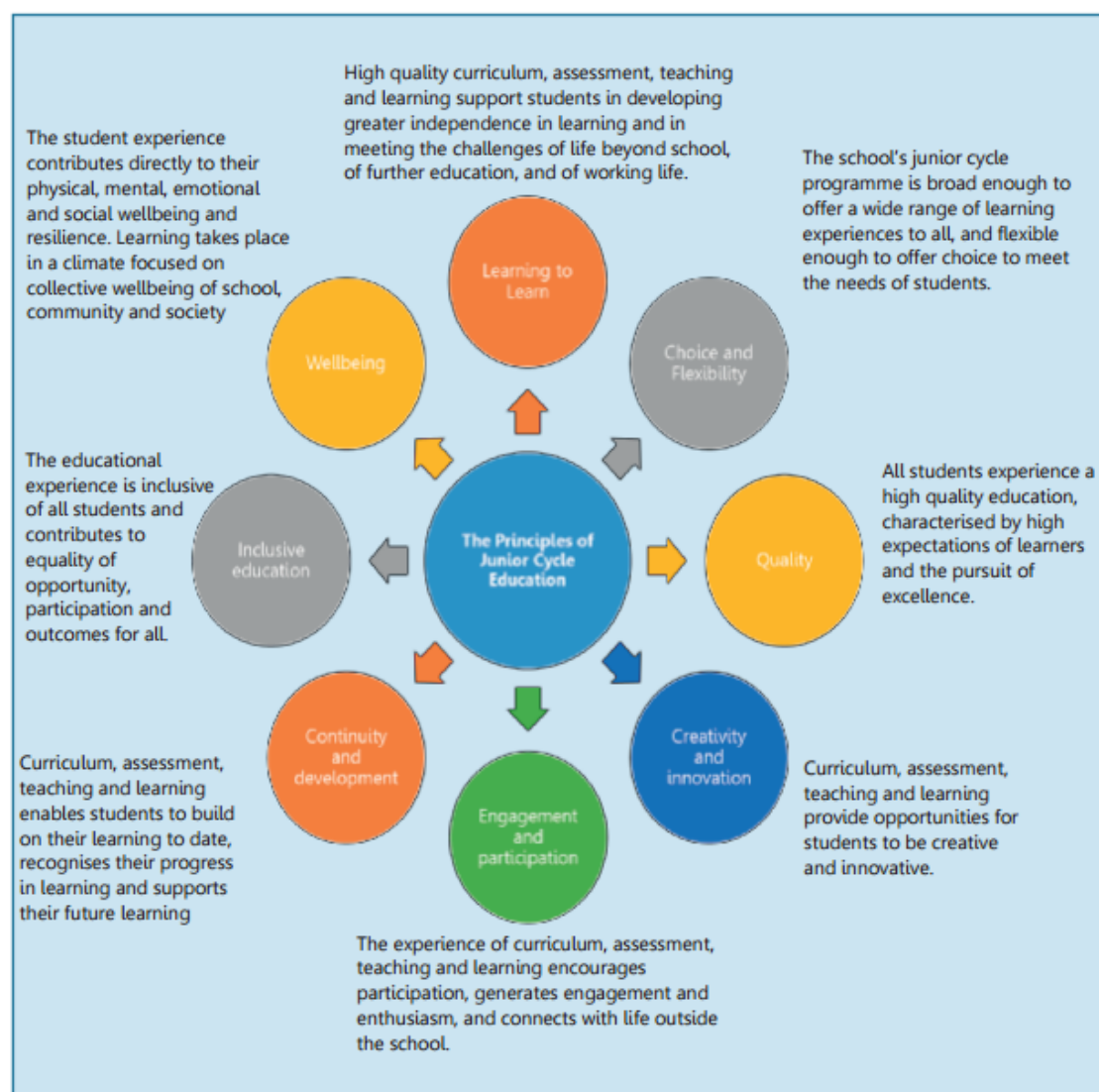
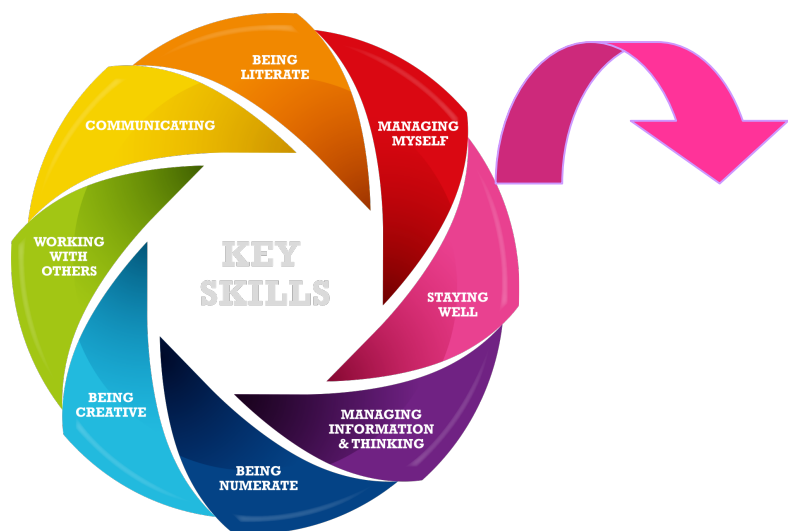


Table 3. Principles for junior cycle education

The 24 Statements of Learning included in the Framework, along with the Principles, are central to planning for the students' experience of the school's junior cycle programme. A number of the statements of learning relate explicitly to wellbeing, including:

- The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making (SoL 5)
- The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts (SoL 7)
- The student has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably (SoL 10)
- The student takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (SoL 11)
- The student is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active (SoL 12)
- The student understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices (SoL 13)

The statements, and the principles, provide the basis for planning and evaluating all junior cycle school programmes. The promotion of key skills within teaching and learning also has an important part to play in supporting student wellbeing. When teachers plan skills-rich lessons, students are more actively engaged in their learning, feel more positive about learning and take more responsibility for their learning. Many of the positive dispositions associated with student wellbeing are fostered through the conscious development of key skills in the classroom. While the key skill of Staying Well is most directly relevant to wellbeing, all the key skills can contribute to this area.



Staying Well - elements

- *Being healthy, physical and active*
- *Being social*
- *Being safe*
- *Being spiritual*
- *Being confident*
- *Being positive about learning*
- *Being responsible, safe and ethical in using digital technology*

Each school has the autonomy to design its junior cycle programme drawing on a combination of curriculum components (subjects, short courses, learning units and other learning experiences). An important criterion for the inclusion of the different components is that they provide engaging, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences for students, thereby supporting their experience of wellbeing.

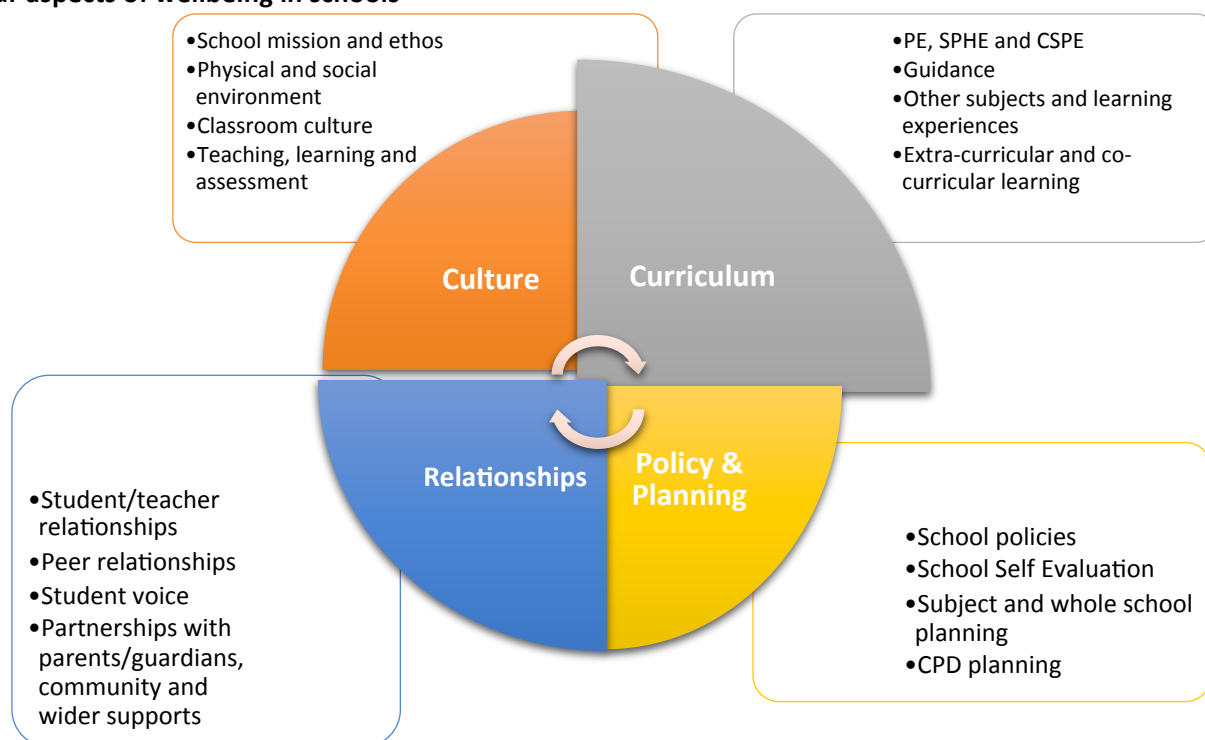
Advice on, and examples of, how different curriculum components can be employed and combined in junior cycle Wellbeing programmes is set out in a later section of these guidelines.

Section 3: Wellbeing – a whole school endeavour

Four aspects of wellbeing in schools

Planning for wellbeing involves consideration of these aspects – Culture, Relationships, Policy and Planning and the Curriculum. This section focuses on the first three of these and looks at ways in which a whole school community can contribute to building the kind of culture, relationships and policies that support student wellbeing. The question of wellbeing and the curriculum is the subject of detailed discussion in the next section.

Four aspects of wellbeing in schools



Wellbeing is a multi-faceted concept and efforts to promote student wellbeing require a whole school approach. This means looking at structures, experiences, resources and other elements that the whole school community can provide to enhance young people’s sense of wellbeing. Much of the research in this area concludes that positive relationships¹⁸ between teachers and students, and students and their peers, along with a sense of connectedness, are the key influences on a student’s sense of wellbeing while in school.

¹⁸ ‘The quality of teacher-student relationships emerges as a key influence on child self-image’. Dr Emer Smyth, *Wellbeing and School Experiences among 9- and 13-Year-Olds: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study*, ESRI/NCCA, 2015, p v

A sense of belonging to the school environment is an established protective factor for child and adolescent health, education, and social wellbeing.¹⁹

Connectedness is realised and promoted through the quality of relationships experienced within the school environment and through the values and school culture experienced on a day-to-day basis. In this context, wellbeing can not only be taught through explicit curriculum components, but can be modelled by those working in the school as they show care, respect and consideration in their interactions with students.

*The Health Promoting Schools' programme and research emphasise the significance of holistic educational experiences for students so that it is not sufficient to teach 'about' good relationships and respect; this needs to be modelled and experienced in the school community.'*²⁰

Research also indicates that it is possible to influence the development of social and emotional skills within formal schooling and this in turn can lead to better learning outcomes and academic achievement.

*The importance of feeling connected to school, that you feel it matters that you are there, is increasingly seen as vital for both health and academic outcomes.*²¹

*The good news is that some of the social and emotional skills are malleable, and teachers can play a pivotal role by improving learning environments to enhance these skills. ...raising levels of social and emotional skills – such as perseverance, self-esteem and sociability – can in turn have a particularly strong effect on improving health-related outcomes and subjective well-being, as well as reducing anti-social behaviours.*²²

Everyone within each school, regardless of the level and frequency of contact they have with young people, shares the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and climate of respect and care – one in which everyone can make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of each individual within the school and to the wider community. *'All of us need "one good adult" in our corner. This is someone in our lives who gets us, who listens to us and who believes in our potential.'*²³ Often a teacher can be 'that one good adult'. Therefore the importance of small, everyday acts of kindness, interest, consideration and positivity cannot be underestimated. These dimensions of relationships and interactions communicate to students that they are recognised, cared for, valued and listened to and thereby contribute significantly to the student's feeling of wellbeing.

¹⁹ *Student Wellbeing: Literature Review*, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, New South Wales Dept of Education and Communities, May 2015

²⁰ O' Brien, M, (2009) *Well-being and post-primary schooling*, NCCA, p.180

²¹ Blum, 2005; Rowe, Stewart and Patterson, 2007

²² *Skills for Social Progress*, OECD, 2015, p.13 and p14

²³ Dr Tony Bates, article: *We have the power to help those in a dark place*, Irish Times, April 2nd 2016
<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/tony-bates-we-have-the-power-to-help-those-in-a-dark-place-1.2595364>

Wellbeing as a whole school endeavour can support all students, albeit in different ways. When schools have a strong focus on taking care of the needs of all students then those children who are vulnerable or experiencing particular difficulties also benefit. It is important that as educators that we do not assume that we know what children need and design the curriculum to satisfy these assumed needs. Students should have opportunities to express their needs so that Wellbeing programmes are developed that respond to their real and expressed needs rather than adult perceptions of what they need.²⁴ The main focus of these guidelines is on building a whole school approach to wellbeing and a curriculum for wellbeing that is the responsibility of all and supports wellbeing for *all*.

The physical environment and wellbeing

The physical environment of the school matters to students' experience of wellbeing.

Each school has a distinctive atmosphere which usually reflects the extent to which the school takes care of the social, emotional and physical needs of those who learn, work and visit'.²⁵

The cleanliness and orderliness and general 'feel' of school buildings has been shown to influence student behaviour and engagement with their learning.²⁶ It is important that schools ensure that the physical environment is clean and well maintained with good ventilation and light. Where possible, schools should provide facilities such as social/meeting spaces, a quiet room, pleasant outside areas and access to sports facilities.

Teaching and learning, and wellbeing

Teachers can play a particularly important role in raising children's self-esteem, motivation and confidence by the way they organise teaching and learning.²⁷

How teaching happens matters! Given that students spend most of their day in class, the day-to-day experience of teaching and learning within the classroom probably provides the greatest opportunity to

²⁴ Noddings, N. (2005) Identifying and responding to needs in education. Cambridge Journal of Education, Volume 35, Issue 2

²⁵ Well-being in post primary schools: Guidelines for mental health promotion and suicide prevention (2013) DES, DHC.

²⁶ Kutsyuruba, B., Klinger, D, Hussain, A.(2015) relationship among school climate, school safety, and student achievement and well-being: a review of the literature. Review of Education: Vol. 3, No. 2, pp 103 -135.

²⁷ *Skills for Social Progress*, OECD, p. 83

contribute to student wellbeing. Wellbeing is supported through learning and teaching that helps students feel confident, connected and actively engaged in their learning. It is further enhanced when students experience progress and mastery in the different subjects and courses they are studying.

Allal²⁸ has suggested that learning involves the construction of one's identity as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In this context, students' identities and beliefs about themselves are significantly impacted by the personal values, assumptions and beliefs about learning that both they and their teachers bring to the classroom.

Carol Dweck's research has demonstrated the powerful effect of a growth mindset and a fixed mindset view of intelligence.²⁹ A fixed mindset assumes that our intelligence and creative ability are static givens which we can't change to any significant degree, and success is the affirmation of inherent intelligence. A growth mindset is based on the belief that although people may differ in their initial talents and aptitudes, interests, or temperaments everyone can change and grow through effort and experience. Accordingly, everyone has the potential to grow in intelligence and in ability. A growth mindset thrives on challenge and sees mistakes and failure not as evidence of lack of intelligence but as a source of learning. On the other hand, when one adopts a fixed mindset then challenges are avoided, intelligence is seen as something you are born with and if students don't succeed it is due to a deficit on their part.

To ensure that all students continue to improve and engage with their learning, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- What's the dominant view in our school? How do we build growth rather than fixed mind-sets with our students?
- Is a growth-based approach to intelligence adopted when talking about students and talking to students?
- Are students, as individuals, regularly reminded of their potential and strengths as learners and how they can improve?
- Are there high expectations for *all*?

²⁸ Allal, L 2010 in P. Peterson et al *Intercultural Encyclopedia of Education* (Vol 13 p 348-352), Oxford

²⁹ Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. Carol Dweck (2006) New York

- Are students encouraged to talk about their learning, e.g. what helps them to learn and to set goals for their learning?
- Are different areas of accomplishment nurtured and recognised?

Further ideas on how to encourage students to continue to improve their learning are available in the Junior Cycle Key Skills Toolkit, *Managing Myself*³⁰ and in the Focus on Learning: Ongoing Assessment Booklet, *Students Reflecting on their Learning*³¹.

Junior Cycle Key Skills and the accompanying support materials and toolkits³² provide an important basis for developing students' skills in areas that are critically important for wellbeing – Managing Myself, Staying Well, Being Creative, Managing Information and Thinking, Communicating and Working with Others

Research with teachers has found that learning and teaching associated with developing key skills can help students feel more confident, connected and actively engaged in their learning. In particular, teachers who have adopted a key skills approach to teaching and learning reported the following results:

- The lessons became more learner-centred
- Student motivation and engagement in learning improved
- More positive classroom relationships and pro-social behaviour were in evidence
- More effective learning took place³³

Teachers believed that these results derived from the increased use of cooperative learning strategies, the fostering of greater student autonomy, and engaging students in conversations about their learning. In particular, they pointed to the positive impact of collaborative learning, peer explaining, and feedback as

³⁰ <http://juniorcycle.ie/Planning/Key-Skills>

³¹ <http://juniorcycle.ie/Assessment/On-going-assessment>

³² <http://juniorcycle.ie/Planning/Key-Skills.aspx>

³³ Reports on the developmental work undertaken by 20 schools in embedding key skills (2006-2009) can be accessed at http://ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Senior_Cycle/Key_Skills/Information-and-Research.html

well as the value of giving students opportunities to reflect on their learning, set goals and review their progress. The embedding of key skills in teaching and learning also leads to a more democratic learning environment in which students have a voice³⁴. This too can contribute to student wellbeing.

The wellbeing of young people is enhanced by appropriate experiences of freedom, choice, participation and decision-making. Structures, relationships and democratic participation across the school as a whole can encourage the agency of students and allow them to find and develop their voices. Authentic listening by the school is central to these experiences; this happens when the views and suggestions of young people are sought and acknowledged, and there is a meaningful response to them³⁵ (Flynn, 2014). Students can experience 'authentic listening' in a variety of school contexts. It can happen at a whole school level where, for example, policies are being developed, implemented or reviewed. It can happen in individual classrooms where students and teachers engage in ongoing dialogue about learning, teaching and assessment. These conversations can have significant benefits for student wellbeing. By engaging in authentic listening to students at both whole school and classroom level, the school is recognising students as experts in their own learning and hearing what it is like to be a student in the school. By empowering students to participate meaningfully in improving their experience in school and in class, it not only encourages student engagement in learning (Sebba and Robinson, 2010³⁶) but also improves teacher-student relationships (Tangen, 2009³⁷).

A recent student voice study conducted in the Republic of Ireland found that where students' opinions were heard and their views taken into account, it led to a significant improvement in the quality of their relationships with teachers and their sense of belonging and connection to school. (Flynn et al. 2012³⁸, 2013³⁹ and 2014⁴⁰). As a consequence, these positive student-teacher relationships and a stronger attachment to school generated an improvement in self-reported levels of confidence and wellbeing; a

³⁴ See Irish student's talking about democratic learning through key skills in a video produced for UNESCO <https://vimeo.com/42553073>

³⁵ Flynn, P. (2014) 'Empowerment and transformation for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties engaged with student voice research' *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 49:2

³⁶ Sebba, J & Robinson, C. 2010, *The Evaluation of UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award*, London. UNICEF

³⁷ Tangen, R. (2009) Conceptualising Quality of School Life from Pupils' Perspective: A Four Dimensional Model. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 13 (8) 829 -844

³⁸ Flynn, P., Shevlin, M., & Lodge, A. (2012) Pupil Voice and participation: Empowering Children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, In Cole, T., Daniels, H., & Visser, J. (Eds). *The Routledge International Companion to Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, Oxon: Routledge

³⁹ Flynn, P. (2013). The transformational potential in student voice research for young people identified with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, *Trinity Education Papers*, 2 (2), 2013, 70 – 91

⁴⁰ Flynn, P., Empowerment and transformation for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties engaged in student voice research' *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 49:2 162 – 175

heightened sense of being 'cared for', as well as a general experience of comfort in their education environment.

Teaching and learning that is supportive of student wellbeing:

- Is democratic and takes account of the students' views and experiences
- Is inclusive, and consciously addresses the specific needs of minority student groups
- Engages students through the use of a variety of approaches including active, cooperative and peer learning
- Takes account of the diverse needs and learning approaches of students
- Fosters expectations of high achievement and provides opportunities for success for all
- Encourages students to support each other and act as positive role models for others
- Encourages and capitalises on the potential to experience learning and new challenges in the outdoor environment and wider community.

Because it is the responsibility of every teacher to contribute to learning and development in this area, all staff are expected to be proactive in:

- Promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure and which respects and develops children's rights and wellbeing
- Establishing open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where young people will feel that they're listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives
- Modelling behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others
- Using learning and teaching methods which promote engaged and successful learning.

Promoting the wellbeing of teachers

'Wellbeing in school starts with the staff. They are in this front line of the work and it is hard for them to be genuinely motivated to promote emotional and social wellbeing of others if they feel uncared for and burnt out themselves'.⁴¹

Many teachers are already committed to supporting the well-becoming and wellbeing of their students. This is evident in a number of places where pastoral care provision, class tutors and year heads work to ensure that young people receive the support and attention that they need to succeed in school, where teachers have high expectations for students, where teachers plan to actively engage students in their learning, look for and act on feedback from students about what helps them to learn and where assessment approaches which support and encourage students to improve their learning are the norm.

Teachers will require professional development to ensure that they have a deep conceptual understanding of wellbeing and they are confident in using the pedagogical approaches that are known to support and build students' wellbeing. Teachers also need to be mindful of how their personal understanding and values influence how they care for their own wellbeing and that of their students. In this context it is true that 'we teach who we are'.⁴² Ultimately, it is important for schools that teachers have a positive perception of the wellbeing programme and understand how they can contribute to it and enable students to have a positive experience as they learn *about* wellbeing and *for* wellbeing across the whole curriculum. Initiatives such as the National Workplace Wellbeing Day are worth considering to ensure an ongoing focus on supporting teachers and their wellbeing⁴³.

Assessment and student wellbeing

Students' experience of assessment impacts on their wellbeing.

While many young people are happy and enjoying school, some struggle with the volume of assessment. They could benefit from schools reviewing their assessment practices and involving students more directly in decision making.⁴⁴

Assessment change is an important feature of the junior cycle developments. This change reflects a substantial body of research showing that the greatest benefits for student learning occur when they

⁴¹ What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools?:Partnership for Well-being and Mental Health in Schools, page 6 (2015)

⁴² Parker J Palmer, *The Heart of the Teacher*, p 15, (1997)

⁴³ <http://www.nhfireland.ie/wellbeing>

⁴⁴ *Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School*, Feb 2015, New Zealand Education Review Office <http://ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Wellbeing-for-Young-People-s-Success-at-Secondary-School-February-2015>

receive quality feedback that helps them to understand how their learning can be improved. This helps students feel more engaged in the learning process, more in control of their learning and confident in their ability to improve.

Ongoing assessment practice in junior cycle is designed to ensure that students receive quality feedback about what they are learning, how they are learning and what they need to do to improve. These assessment approaches help to ensure that students have a positive sense of themselves as learners and a strong sense of their own self-efficacy and capacity to improve. Support for teachers in developing their ongoing assessment practices is available in the *NCCA Assessment Toolkit*, including material on developing learning intentions and success criteria, effective questioning and formative feedback, and on how to help students to reflect on their learning.

The ESRI longitudinal research found that students show a preference for the practical and ‘hands-on’ in how assessment is carried out⁴⁵. The Classroom-Based Assessments in the new junior cycle provide students with options on the subject of the assessment including practical and ‘hands-on’ tasks. This may help to ensure that students are fully engaged and have a positive experience as they complete them in the familiar context of their classroom.

In planning to support student wellbeing, it is important to consider the volume of assessment activities that students are faced with. This can act as a considerable source of stress, especially when assessment is almost exclusively associated with testing, marking and grading.

School policies

Schools policies provide the compass by which the school navigates its way. A review of the range of policy areas quickly reveals that many of them relate directly to student wellbeing – the behaviour policy, homework policy, relationship and sexuality education policy, internet safety policy, anti-bullying policy, dignity in the workplace policy, health promotion policy, child protection policy, and critical incident policy being those which have greatest relevance. The policy that school leaders tend to identify as being most

⁴⁵ ESRI research into the experience of students in the third year of junior cycle and in transition to senior cycle: Summary and commentary. (September 2007).

important for student wellbeing is the behaviour policy.⁴⁶ Research has found that in schools where student wellbeing is optimised, supportive rather than punitive approaches to behaviour are adopted. There is a wide range of positive behaviour strategies that can be adopted in schools.

When school policies are reviewed through the lens of student wellbeing, it prompts questions such as:

- How are school policies written? Is the language accessible? Is it punitive or positive in tone?
- How are they developed? Are they developed by a couple of people or in partnership with the whole school community? Do students have a voice?
- How are they shared? Are they explained and made accessible to all? Are they linked to a shared set of values?
- How are they enacted? Are they put into practice with fairness and compassion?

Policy development, in support of wellbeing, should be a collaborative, inclusive and democratic process. Regular review of their impact and effectiveness through the lens of student wellbeing is also important.

*In a school setting, feeling connected to the school and valued within the school community will impact on a student's ability to learn and reach their potential, as well as impact on their health and well-being. The setting wherein meaningful participation is encouraged also benefits because **policies and plans worked on collaboratively might be easier to implement and are much more likely to meet the needs of the whole school community.***⁴⁷

Student support systems

Young people in junior cycle have a wide range of social, emotional, behavioural and learning needs. It is useful in the context of planning a whole school approach to wellbeing to think of students as needing different levels and kinds of support to experience wellbeing, as outlined in *A Continuum of Support for*

⁴⁶ As reported in a consultation meeting with School Principals, October 19th 2015

⁴⁷ *Schools for Health in Ireland, Post Primary Coordinator's Guide*, HSE, p.14 <http://www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HPM00838.pdf>

*Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers*⁴⁸ and *Well-being in Post-Primary School: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*.⁴⁹

In this sense, wellbeing as a whole school endeavour takes into account the particular needs of students at these three levels.

1. School support for **all** is a focus which recognises that all students have wellbeing needs and even those who might appear to engage with school and their education with relative ease also need to be supported in achieving the outcomes of wellbeing. It has also been the experience of National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) that where school support for **all** is the focus, all students benefit including those students who may be experiencing particular difficulties.
2. At the second level, there are **some** students who may be at risk of developing difficulties, who require additional support and encouragement to support them in their wellbeing.
3. Finally there are **a few** young people who have more complex and enduring needs and may require support from external agencies, which support and compliment the work of the school.

In every school, there are groups of students who require particular consideration to ensure that wellbeing is fully inclusive. For example, research shows that children with special needs, especially those with emotional-behavioural or learning difficulties, are significantly more negative about themselves than their peers.

*'Children with SEN see themselves as more anxious, less happy, less confident as learners, more critical of their physical appearance, less popular with their peers and more poorly behaved. These differences are sizable, ranging from one sixth to almost half of a standard deviation. Differences are particularly large in relation to academic self-image.'*⁵⁰

Opportunities for staff to consider how best they can care for the wellbeing of all students in their classes and in the school environment are vital. Opportunities for conversations between students and the pastoral care/student support team can help ensure that the school is supporting their wellbeing both at a

⁴⁸ *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers*. National Educational Psychological Service, DES (2010)

http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/neps_post_primary_continuum_teacher_guide.pdf

⁴⁹ *Well-being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*. DES (2013), pp 14-15

⁵⁰ Dr Emer Smyth, *Wellbeing and School Experiences among 9- and 13-Year-Olds: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study*, ESRI/NCCA, 2015, p v

whole school level and through the wellbeing programme and curriculum it provides. It can also ensure greater ownership, commitment and shared responsibility for policy implementation⁵¹.

Student support systems, such as peer support, buddy systems, mentoring, school chaplaincy, year head and tutor systems, breakfast or lunch clubs, homework clubs and school societies can also contribute greatly to student wellbeing.

Guidance counsellors, pastoral care and student support teams⁵², critical incident management teams, behavioural support teams, home/school liaison teachers and SPHE teachers play an important role in building support systems that take account of the needs of all students and their wellbeing.

Students can experience certain aspects of health and wellbeing through focused school-based programmes developed by statutory and voluntary agencies such as the Health Promoting School programme (HPS), the Active School Flag (ASF) initiative, the Green School, and other initiatives. These provide important opportunities for students to work together on projects designed to enhance their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

Links and partnerships with health professionals, educational psychologists, community and sporting organisations and others can provide important complementary expertise and support too. One example of a link that schools have found particularly useful is access to National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) and the *Responding to Critical Incidences: Guidelines for Schools* when schools experience a critical incident.⁵³

⁵¹ *Well-being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*, pg. 25, NEPS, DES.DOH, HSE (2013)

⁵² *Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools*, National Educational Psychological Service, DES (2014)

⁵³ [Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines for Schools](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_critical_incidents_guidelines_schools.pdf) DES https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_critical_incidents_guidelines_schools.pdf (Accessed March, 21st, 2016)

Partnerships with parents and carers

The home is the first place where children learn about and experience wellbeing. We know that proactive partnerships with parents and carers are key to providing a meaningful Wellbeing programme in the school. Where parents are engaged most successfully by schools the following features of culture and practice are evident:

- Good relationships – Parents feel welcome and part of the school, staff are accessible, approachable and responsive and offer non-judgemental support.
- Communication – a range of methods are used to offer parents clear information about health and wellbeing and the progress their child is making. Parents are then better equipped to support their children’s learning and wellbeing at home.
- Shared understanding and values – the schools involves parents in discussions to agree priorities for wellbeing and share responsibilities.
- Skills recognised – the school recognises the experience and skills parents can offer to support improvement in wellbeing outcomes.

Planning

At present, all schools engage in School Self Evaluation (SSE) and some schools are involved in the Health Promoting Schools’ Initiative. These planning processes are mutually supportive and provide useful guidelines for schools as to how they might approach planning for wellbeing in junior cycle. Both recommend that planning should be a collaborative, reflective, inclusive process. The SSE process enables schools:

1. To take the initiative in improving the quality of education that they provide for their students
2. To affirm and build on what is working well
3. To identify areas in need of development and to decide on actions that should be taken to bring about improvements in those areas
4. To report to the school community about the strengths in the work of the school and its priorities for improvement and development.

Schools can use the questions set out for SSE to reflect on how they are currently providing for wellbeing in junior cycle.⁵⁴

- What are we currently doing?
- Why are we doing it?
- How well are we doing?
- What evidence do we have?
- How can we find out more?
- What are our strengths?
- What are our areas for improvement?
- How can we improve?

These questions can be framed using the agreed understanding and definition of wellbeing and the indicators for Wellbeing set out in the following section. Individual schools are best placed to decide what the particular foci should be for their Wellbeing programme and how best they can deploy the resources available to them to plan the programme for their particular students. Planning and review is an ongoing process as schools are constantly strengthening their capacity to provide a meaningful junior cycle Wellbeing programme.

⁵⁴ School Self-Evaluation: Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools. DES Inspectorate (2012)
https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/sse_guidelines_post_primary.pdf

Section 4: Wellbeing and the curriculum

A dedicated wellbeing curriculum in junior cycle aims to ensure that all students engage in important learning about wellbeing through key curriculum areas. For this reason up to 400 hours will be available for learning in the area of Wellbeing in junior cycle beginning with a minimum of 300 hours of timetabled engagement from 2017 and moving to the full complement of time as the new junior cycle is fully implemented in schools.

Within a new junior cycle, schools now have more autonomy to plan a junior cycle programme around a selection of subjects, short courses and other learning experiences that meets their students' needs and interests. When planning a junior cycle programme, the starting point must be the shared vision and values of the school alongside consideration of the principles and statements of learning set out in the *Framework for Junior Cycle* (2015).

A junior cycle programme that builds the foundations for wellbeing:

- Is broad and balanced
- Provides choice
- Has meaning and relevance
- Is enjoyable and engaging
- Provides opportunities to experience challenge and success
- Equips students with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to develop as learners and build positive relationships.

While all teachers in all subjects can support student learning about and for wellbeing, wellbeing is enhanced when it is embedded in the curriculum and visible to students within specific allocated time. Explicitly planning for wellbeing in the curriculum and assigning it space on the timetable communicates to students, parents and teachers that this area of learning is important – it makes the school's concern with wellbeing visible and confirms for students in a very recognisable way that their wellbeing matters. Physical Education (PE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) provide key opportunities for learning about and for wellbeing.

Physical Education provides all students with enjoyable and worthwhile learning opportunities where they develop their confidence and competence to participate and perform in a range of physical activities. Students in junior cycle are at an important stage of their lives where they are making their own decisions about if and how they will include physical activity as part of their lifestyle. Learning in physical education is designed to ensure that students appreciate the importance of participation in regular moderate physical activity not only for their physical wellbeing, but also for their psychological and social wellbeing. By providing a broad and balanced range of activities, physical education aims to build students' motivation and commitment to participate in regular, enjoyable and health enhancing physical activity.

Education for physical and mental health should not be seen as separate but rather as an opportunity to make connections between lifestyle choices such as regular exercise, healthy eating, stress management and relaxation and positive mental health.

SPHE provides opportunities for teaching and learning directly related to health and wellbeing. Through the use of experiential methodologies, including group work, SPHE aims to develop students' positive sense of themselves and their physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing. It also aims to build the student's capacity to develop and maintain healthy relationships. Through studying aspects of SPHE, students have time to focus on developing personal and social skills including self-management, communication, coping and problem solving.

Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) is an integral part of junior cycle SPHE and the wellbeing curriculum. Its aim is to help young people to

Acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework⁵⁵.

At this age, students are exposed to a lot of information about sex, sexuality and relationships from a variety of sources. RSE provides the context within which students can learn about the physical, social and emotional and moral issues related to relationships, sexual health, sexuality and gender identity

⁵⁵ http://www.sess.ie/sites/default/files/rse_policy_guidelines_0.pdf

including where to source reliable information. Schools are required to teach RSE as part of SPHE in each year of the Junior Cycle SPHE programme.⁵⁶

CSPE can contribute to a wellbeing programme in a number of important ways. CSPE helps students understand how their wellbeing and that of others is connected through a human rights and human development framework. It is important for students to understand that wellbeing is not singularly about your personal, emotional and physical health. CSPE can help students develop a more holistic and ecological understanding of wellbeing as they become aware of the relationship between individual wellness and the wellbeing of others and of the environment. CSPE also prompts students to consider the many social, political, cultural and economic factors that affect individual and collective wellbeing. For example, as students can reflect on the wider socio-ecological factors that influence people's choices and behaviours relating to health, physical activity and overall wellbeing. Furthermore, aspects of CSPE provide opportunities for students to grow in confidence and empowerment as they discover how they are connected to a wider community working to help build a better community. Through active citizenship students develop resilience and a sense of agency as they participate in actions to promote their own well-being and that of other people and society as a whole.

Guidance

While PE, SPHE and CSPE are central to a school's Wellbeing programme, schools can also choose to include other areas in their provision for wellbeing. In the *Framework for Junior Cycle* it is suggested that guidance provision may be included in the hours available for wellbeing *in recognition of the unique contribution that guidance can make to the promotion of students' wellbeing*.⁵⁷ Under the Education Act, Section 9C (1998)⁵⁸, schools are required to provide students with access to appropriate guidance to assist them with their educational and career choices.

Schools are best placed to decide how they can include Guidance in their junior cycle Wellbeing programme. Provision can be made in a variety of ways: through a dedicated short course, through units and/or as part of related subjects. The Guidance Counsellor will have an important role in designing a range of learning experiences that encompass the three separate but interlinked areas of personal and

⁵⁶ Circulars M4/95, M20/96, M22/00, M11/03 and M27/2008 refer, all of which are available at www.education.ie. These circulars require schools to develop a Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy and programme, and to implement them for all students from First Year to Sixth Year.

⁵⁷ DES, *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*, p.22

⁵⁸ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/section/9/enacted/en/html>

social development, educational guidance and career guidance. In some cases, other teachers can be involved in its implementation.

Guidance aims to assist students to:

- Develop self-awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities and the knowledge and skills for living and learning
- Explore possibilities and opportunities
- Grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves
- Make informed choices for their lives and to follow on those choices.

A continuum model of support might be applied to the school's guidance programme in junior cycle. In applying the continuum, the guidance programme can meet the needs of students through whole class teaching and learning, smaller groups and/or one-to-one sessions with individual students who require particular support. For the purposes of these guidelines however, the focus is on the role of the school guidance programme in supporting wellbeing for all students in junior cycle.

First year students

The ESRI study *Moving Up* (2004), on the experiences of first year students embarking on post-primary education, highlights some of the challenges faced by young people.

*Moving into second-level education evokes contradictory emotions among students; they are excited about going to a new school but nervous about what lies ahead of them. The primary and second-level sectors are distinctive in their organisation and structure, requiring students to adapt to a very different setting on making the transition. Students in first year have several teachers rather than one, and, in many cases, are moving to a larger school with a longer school day. Their relations with their teachers and peers are also different; having more teachers often means a more formal relationship with school staff and many students are required to build new friendship networks.*⁵⁹

A guidance programme designed to focus on the particular personal and social needs of children making the transition into post-primary schooling could help ensure that students have the knowledge, understanding and skills to engage with their learning and in school life. Every child has an Education

⁵⁹ *Moving up: The experiences of First Year Students in Post-Primary Education*. ESRI 2004

Passport⁶⁰ as they transfer into post-primary education. It includes their 6th class report, a personal profile and a profile completed by the parents/guardians. This information could be used to inform learning activities aimed at developing the personal and social skills that students need to fully engage and flourish in post-primary education. This learning can happen as part of SPHE or as a separate unit. It might be supported by information nights for parents of first year students. Particular support, individual and/or group, could be provided for the small number of students who have particular educational, social and/or emotional needs which, if left unaddressed, will stand between them and their learning.

Second year students

While the *Framework for Junior Cycle* is designed to improve the quality of students' learning experiences across junior cycle, it is noteworthy that the ESRI research *Pathways through Junior Cycle* (2006) found that a significant group of students in second year were drifting or disengaging from their learning. Learning in Guidance in second year could help students stay connected to school by providing a space for structured conversations and reflection on their learning. Learning opportunities designed to develop self-management and personal organization skills, including goal setting, study skills, coping skills and reflection skills could be included. Students could also be made aware of the relevance of their learning in different subjects to everyday life and the world of work. In addition, there could be a focus on building students' confidence in their ability to achieve, and on encouraging them to take greater responsibility for their learning.

Third year students

The ESRI research into the experiences of students in the third year of junior cycle (2007) points to the importance of students receiving accurate and up-to-date information about educational and career pathways at this stage in their education. The transition into senior cycle can be challenging for many students as they are making important decisions on participation in a Transition Year programme, on subject choices for senior cycle, and on possible future careers.

Indicators of Wellbeing

As schools design their Wellbeing programme it is important that they have the flexibility to develop one that suits their students and their local context. It is equally important that all schools are working towards a shared vision and set of indicators which describe what is important for young people and their

⁶⁰ http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary-Education/Assessment/Report_Card_Templates/Transfer/6th-Class-Report-Card.html (Accessed 31st March, 2016)

wellbeing. On this basis, six indicators – **Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected** and **Aware** have been identified as central to wellbeing. These indicators make what is important explicit for students, teachers, parents and the wider school community. Each indicator has a small number of descriptors. The indicators and their brief descriptors can be used in a number of ways:

- To review current provision for learning in wellbeing
- To plan teaching and learning within a school’s Wellbeing programme
- To plan conversations about how the school’s Wellbeing programme might best support young people’s wellbeing and well-becoming with stakeholders including students, parents and teachers
- To scaffold conversations with students about learning in the Wellbeing programme
- To frame the student’s self-assessment about their learning in wellbeing
- To report on learning in wellbeing.

Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I a confident and able participant in physical activity? • Am I physically active every day?
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others? • Do I make healthy eating choices? • Do I take responsibility for my learning?
Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I feel connected to my school, my community and the wider world? • Do I appreciate that my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts?
Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I believe that I have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges? • Do I know where I can go for help? • Do I believe that with effort I can achieve?
Respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I feel that I am listened to and valued? • Do I have positive relationships with my friends, my peers and my teachers? • Do I show care and respect for others?
Aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can I make sense of them? • Am I aware of what my personal values are and do I think through my decisions? • Do I understand what helps me to learn and how I can improve?

Appendix 1 sets out how the learning outcomes in the NCCA developed short courses for CSPE, PE and SPHE can contribute to the six indicators of wellbeing.

Other areas of learning can also make an important contribution to the six wellbeing indicators. For example, the creative arts can enhance social skills, self-esteem, self-control, perseverance and emotional intelligence; technology education can provide digital tools for improving our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and religious education can support students in their search for meaning and purpose in life.

Developing Wellbeing programmes

There are a number of steps that a school needs to take in developing their Wellbeing programme.

Step one: Invite members of the school community who are well placed and interested in supporting the planning and development of the Wellbeing programme in junior cycle to form a group. This team should comprise representatives from school management, SPHE, CSPE and PE teachers, representatives of the Care team, students, and those from the wider school community with a particular interest in student wellbeing

Step two: Organise a workshop to engage the whole staff in reflecting on their understanding of wellbeing in order to build a common vision of wellbeing for their students (See Appendix 3).

Step three: Schools reflect on the following questions:

- What are we already doing that promotes students' wellbeing in junior cycle? How well are we doing this and how do we know? What contribution do the different subjects and areas of learning make to our students' learning in and for wellbeing?

The Wellbeing indicators should be used in this exercise.

Step four: Having looked at wellbeing in junior cycle at the whole school level, the next task is for the team to focus on planning for the 300-400 hundred hours of dedicated time for wellbeing as specified in the *Framework for Junior Cycle*. In their work the team considers the particular needs of their students, the unique context of the school and the resources available.

The team is informed by the following planning principles.

Planning principles

- **A collaborative approach to planning for Wellbeing:** The whole school community should be involved, including school management, teachers, students, parents and the wider school community. A once-off planning meeting is insufficient in supporting the planning, implementation and review of the school's Wellbeing programme.
- **A consultative approach to planning for Wellbeing:** Guided by an ethic of care, the school should undertake a consultation process with all the stakeholders to find out what is working well and what needs attention in relation to wellbeing in junior cycle. This may also involve acknowledging practices that contribute to students' experience of ill-being. The guidance provided in the Health Promoting School Framework⁶¹ will be useful in setting up this process.
- **Flexibility to respond to students' needs and context:** The local context and the particular needs of the students in the school should be a central consideration in developing a meaningful, relevant and flexible programme. Engaging students in conversations about their wellbeing will help in the development and implementation of a Wellbeing programme that responds to their expressed needs rather than their assumed needs.
- **Mapping of local community resources:** It is essential that schools identify the range of services available locally and generate a map of relevant contacts and networks within the community that can contribute towards the promotion of their students' wellbeing. Many schools will have created these links through their engagement in the Health Promoting School (HPS) process and the Active School Flag (ASF) process as developing strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community is a central part of these initiatives.
- **Adapting to change and to new and emerging circumstances:** Regular review and evaluation should take place once the programme has been developed.
- **Linking planning for wellbeing with whole school planning and other planning processes:** For example, schools might consider adapting the Mental Health Promotion: Self-evaluation questionnaire for this purpose⁶²

In order to ensure quality provision in SPHE, PE, and CSPE, the following should be considered:

⁶¹ Schools for Health in Ireland: Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School HSE, DES, SHE (2015)

⁶² Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention(2013) DES, DOH

- Regular collaborative planning between PE, SPHE and CSPE teachers is needed to ensure that there is a shared vision, coherent approach and opportunities for collegial support across the three areas. Opportunities to use team teaching should also be fully explored.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that learning in PE, SPHE and CSPE is inclusive and is cognisant of the particular needs of different groups of students such as newcomers to Ireland, students with special educational needs, LGBT students, and students experiencing difficulties.
- The Wellbeing indicators should inform all planning.
- Active, experiential teaching and learning methods should be used to support maximum student engagement.
- Classes should be timetabled to allow for quality learning and teaching, i.e. double periods where appropriate, and always in physical education.
- Students should be consulted about their learning in and across these three areas to allow for more informed and effective planning.
- When planning for teaching and learning, opportunities for ongoing assessment should be identified so that there are opportunities for formative feedback in support of students' learning. Summative assessment should be used to provide evidence of students' overall learning at a point in time.
- Students' progress in PE, SPHE and CSPE should be reported on regularly alongside other subjects in junior cycle. Further guidelines on assessment and reporting are provided in the next section of these guidelines.

In Physical Education, the following should be considered:

- A broad and balanced programme should be planned to support student engagement and progress. Only qualified physical education teachers are in position to teach such a programme.
- Given the nature of learning in PE, the minimum amount of time required to provide a quality experience is two successive class periods. This allocation allows time for students to change into and out of their PE gear without encroaching on time spent in the PE class and/or other classes.

In CSPE and SPHE, the following should be considered:

- Teachers should be assigned to these subjects with their prior knowledge. When teachers are assigned who have an interest and commitment to this area, they are more likely to provide a broad and balanced experience of learning particularly in SPHE where the difficult and more challenging areas could be avoided.
- Teachers assigned to SPHE and CSPE should have an understanding of and familiarity with the active, experiential methods associated with education in this area.
- In the majority of cases, teachers are completing initial teacher education without a qualification in CSPE or SPHE. In both of these areas, teachers should be facilitated in attending ongoing continuing professional development opportunities, thereby developing the school's professional capacity in these areas.
- It is important that learning experiences are designed around topics and issues of particular interest and relevance to students.

In SPHE, the teacher

- Should be familiar with the school's SPHE and RSE policies, particularly with regard to some of the sensitive issues that may arise when teaching aspects of RSE.
- Is responsible for ensuring that the classroom is a safe environment for all students. In the event of students needing support beyond the SPHE class, the teacher should be familiar with the pastoral and counselling supports available within and beyond the school.

Learning outcomes for a Wellbeing programme

The sample Wellbeing programmes presented later in this section draw upon an analysis of the learning outcomes of the new short courses in CSPE, PE and SPHE and how they relate to each other and to the six indicators of Wellbeing – Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Aware (See Appendix 2). They also reflect the guidance-related learning outcomes for a Wellbeing programme set out on page 34.

The analysis or tagging exercise (presented in Appendix 1) is used to demonstrate the extent to which the learning outcomes for CSPE, PE and SPHE contribute directly to the indicators of Wellbeing in junior cycle. Overall, there is a notable convergence and congruence between the learning outcomes across the three areas and the six indicators of Wellbeing. This is unsurprising because, as part of the development process for the three courses, there was widespread consultation with education partners to ensure that they addressed important, relevant and meaningful learning for young people in CSPE, PE and SPHE. Care was also taken to ensure that unnecessary overlap between learning outcomes for the three courses was avoided.

The tagging presented in Appendix 1 also throws light on different possibilities for Wellbeing programmes that combine learning outcomes across the courses with other learning outcomes from areas such as guidance to contribute to meeting the full range of student needs in the area of wellbeing. For example, learning outcomes in PE Strand 1 *Physical activity for health and wellbeing* and SPHE Strand 1 *Who am I?* could be combined to focus on learning related to the importance of regular physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle. Learning outcomes from CSPE Strand 1 *Human dignity – the basis for human rights* and SPHE Strand 2 *Minding my self and others* could be combined to address learning about rights and needs, the importance of respectful and inclusive behaviour, and ways of addressing bullying behaviour.

Curriculum for a Wellbeing programme

Once a school has considered the particular needs of their students in junior cycle, the unique context of the school and the resources available, there are a wide range of curriculum options available for consideration. These include:

- Existing courses, e.g. Junior Cycle Physical Education⁶³, SPHE Junior Cycle Curriculum⁶⁴, CSPE syllabus⁶⁵
- NCCA developed short courses in SPHE, CSPE and PE
- School developed short courses in these areas
- Shorter units based on learning outcomes selected from NCCA short courses
- Guidance-related learning

⁶³ http://jcpe.ie/index.php?option=com_mtree&task=listcats&cat_id=43&Itemid=

⁶⁴ <http://www.sphe.ie/downloads/RESOURCES/SPHE%20JUNIOR%20CYCLE%20SYLLABUS.pdf>

⁶⁵ https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/Syllabuses-Guidelines/jc_civics_sy.pdf

- Pastoral care/tutor time
- School initiatives, e.g. school retreats, awareness days, Young Social Innovators, Young Environmentalist Award, Active School Flag, etc.
- School provided courses in religious education
- Courses and units developed by outside agencies and organisations.

The existing courses in PE, SPHE and CSPE are familiar to teachers and may represent a good starting point for planning learning in each of these areas. The NCCA developed short courses also merit consideration. These are fully up-to-date and are the result of widespread consultation with education partners to ensure that the courses address important, relevant and meaningful learning for young people in PE, SPHE and CSPE. Care was taken to avoid unnecessary overlap between learning outcomes for the three courses. They also include assessment advice both for ongoing assessment and summative assessment. These short courses therefore provide excellent building blocks, individually or collectively, for a school's Wellbeing programme.

Learning in short courses can also contribute to a school's Wellbeing programme. The following are some examples of relevant learning outcomes that could be included in a Wellbeing programme, from the NCCA Philosophy and Digital Media Literacy short courses.

Digital Media Literacy short course

Students should be able to:

- 1.1 Describe how they use digital technologies, communication tools and the internet in their lives
- 1.2 Illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of using digital technologies, communication tools and the internet
- 1.3 Debate the ethical and legal issues around downloading music and video content from the internet
- 1.4 Demonstrate an understanding of respectful use of digital media texts including concepts of copyright, fair use, plagiarism and intellectual property ownership
- 1.5 Discuss their personal safety concerns when using digital technologies, communication tools and the internet

- 1.6 Create a charter of online rights and responsibilities for the class
- 1.7 Describe appropriate responses to potentially harmful situations
- 2.7 Present information about a topic that is relevant to their lives in graphic format
- 3.6 Give examples of how digital media texts can support citizenship and inform decision-making

Philosophy short course

Students should participate in discussion by being able to:

- 1.1 Listen carefully, critically and respectfully to other points of view
- 1.2 Seek out different ideas and information in order to reach a more informed position (e.g. provide examples, counter-examples, define meanings, find criteria, build on others' ideas, see connections)
- 1.3 Ask relevant and probing questions
- 1.4 Present a coherent argument and be able to justify it
- 1.5 Express emotion in appropriate ways
- 1.6 Help others to feel included in the group
- 1.7 Reflect on how they have participated in the learning
- 1.8 Think about their thinking
- 1.16 Identify questions that are common (shared by everybody), central (help us understand ourselves and our world) and contestable (the subject of argument and competing understandings)
- 1.17 Identify some 'big questions' which they would like to explore as part of this course
- 1.18 Participate in exploring these questions in a community of enquiry
- 2.1 Contribute to creating a critical, creative, collaborative and caring community of enquiry.

Where a school has established strong practice in an area of wellbeing, they may decide to develop their own short courses using the NCCA Guidelines for short courses⁶⁶. This can be a very worthwhile process which allows the school to focus specifically on its particular needs and interests. However, developing a

⁶⁶ <http://juniorcycle.ie/Planning/Short-Course-Development>

100 hour short course is demanding and time consuming and, in the first instance, the option of using existing off-the-shelf courses may prove the best one to take.

Where a school chooses to include a unit-based approach using selected learning outcomes, these should be chosen from the NCCA short courses. Care should be taken to include learning outcomes which address the important themes of the short course(s). This is best achieved by selecting learning outcomes from each of the strands of the short course in question. When selecting learning outcomes, it is important that the more challenging and/or less popular areas are not omitted, e.g. in SPHE, topics related to Relationships and Sexuality Education, or loss and bereavement, in PE, activities such as dance and adventure education and in CSPE, learning about democratic structures.

It is envisaged that guidance-related learning will be included as one of the building blocks in a school's Wellbeing programme. This will help to ensure that students gain the knowledge, skills and dispositions which are the focus of the three interlinked aspects of guidance education – personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance.

When planning for **guidance** related learning, the following learning outcomes might be considered:

- Recognise their own ways of learning and their learning habits, interests, strengths and weaknesses
- Identify the factors that cause blocks or barriers to learning and ways to overcome them
- Set learning goals and evaluate their progress towards achieving those goals
- Develop study skills and study plans
- Recognise and value opportunities for learning within and beyond the school
- Make considered decisions on choice of subjects, including how the subjects might relate to further study and the world of work.

Schools may also choose to include other subjects and/or short courses as building blocks in the Wellbeing programme. Linkages can be made with Art, Music, Home Economics, and Religious Education, to name but a few related subjects. As mentioned above, links with other short courses can also be made, for example with Philosophy, Digital Media Literacy and Performing Arts. The rationale for the inclusion of

any learning in wellbeing should be made explicit. The learning outcomes to be addressed and the ways in which students' learning will be assessed should be planned for using the planning template in Appendix 7.

A school can also combine learning outcomes from two or more of the courses that it chooses to include in its Wellbeing programme. This approach could work particularly well where a thematic approach is being adopted similar to that in Sample Programme 2. This approach should use the planning template on Appendix 3 to generate a programme that will appeal to the students and support their learning in wellbeing. Schools can also add other learning outcomes not included in the three courses that are important to students' learning in the particular wellbeing-related theme being addressed, e.g. outcomes which address learning in support of a positive transition to post-primary school such as learning how to learn, self-management skills, metacognitive skills, educational and vocational guidance.

Visiting speakers and once off events can be used very effectively to compliment learning in the schools' Wellbeing programme. However it is important to note that national and international research has consistently shown that the classroom teacher is best placed to work sensitively and consistently with students⁶⁷. Once-off isolated events have been shown to be ineffective. This is also true for the use of scare tactics. With careful planning it is possible to ensure that students experience the maximum benefit from experiences provided by outside speakers and events, particularly when their learning is linked to learning before and after the event. Information and guidelines on the best use of visiting speakers is available in Circular 0023/2010⁶⁸ and in Section 7 of the SPHE handbook.

Optional wellbeing-related initiatives can contribute enormously to the students' experience of wellbeing. However, these often engage only a small number of students rather than a whole class group. Therefore these learning experiences should not be counted as part of the Wellbeing programme.

Seven sample Wellbeing programmes are presented in the following pages. These are designed to illustrate different ways in which schools could configure a programme. There are many other possibilities within and beyond each programme, so these examples should be seen as illustrative.

⁶⁷ Wellbeing in post-primary schools: Guidelines for Mental Health and Suicide Promotion, (2013) pg 22

⁶⁸ <http://www.sphe.ie/downloads/Circulars/DES%20CIRCULAR-0023%20APRIL%202010.pdf>

Allocating time

Learning in CSPE, PE and SPHE is viewed as fundamental to learning in wellbeing. Introducing a Wellbeing programme should not result in students experiencing *less* time in PE, SPHE or CSPE than under current provision. For this reason, there is a minimum threshold of time which should be provided in each area. This minimum is set out as follows:

- PE – 135 hours spread across 1st, 2nd and 3rd year (i.e. the most common current allocation provided by schools – two class periods per week)
- SPHE – 70 hours spread across 1st, 2nd and 3rd year (the same time allocation as required by the current junior cycle framework for SPHE, including RSE)
- CSPE - 70 hours spread across 1st, 2nd and 3rd year

In setting out this minima, schools have the flexibility to allocate *more* time to these areas in line with their priorities and students' needs. It also creates space for the inclusion of learning outcomes not directly related to PE, SPHE and CSPE, such as learning outcomes related to guidance. In addition it provides space for schools to timetable some of the existing excellent programmes that relate to PE, SPHE and CSPE such as Young Social Innovators, Young Environmentalist, Active School Flag, etc.

The following programmes reflect allocations of time from 300 - 400 hours cognisant of the fact that schools have until September 2020 to allocate the required 400 hours to their Wellbeing programme.

Programme 1

In this Wellbeing programme, the school has allocated the minimum requirement of 300 hours for their Wellbeing programme as a starting point.

This programme is configured as follows:

- Double periods for PE in each of the three years in junior cycle.
- One period for SPHE, focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA SPHE short course. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the SPHE syllabus⁶⁹
- One period for CSPE, focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA CSPE short course. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the CSPE syllabus⁷⁰
- The remaining 25 hours are used to support guidance related learning in first year. In a single period, once a week, students learn the knowledge and skills to manage themselves as more independent learners and to make a positive transition from primary education. Two units are suggested: a *Moving up* unit in the first term and a *Mentoring for Learning* unit in the second and third terms.

The graphic below outlines the main features of the programme.

Approx. 300 hours

Year group	PE (approx. 135 hours)	SPHE (approx. 70 hours)	CSPE (approx. 70 hours)	Guidance related learning (approx. 25 hrs)
First year	PE (double period): Focus on a broad range of skills and experiences	SPHE: One class period in each year of junior cycle.	CSPE: One class period in each year of junior cycle.	First year only: Term 1: 'Moving Up'
Second year	PE (double period): School-developed / NCCA PE short course.			Terms 2 & 3: 'Mentoring for Learning'
Third year	PE (double period): School-developed / NCCA PE short course.			

⁶⁹ <http://www.sphe.ie/downloads/RESOURCES/SPHE%20JUNIOR%20CYCLE%20SYLLABUS.pdf>

⁷⁰ https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/Syllabuses-Guidelines/jc_civics_sy.pdf

Programme 2

In this Wellbeing programme, the school decides to include a particular focus on supporting students to make healthy lifestyle choices about regular physical activity, relaxation, mindfulness and healthy eating. PE and SPHE are offered as stand-alone courses. In addition, the PE and SPHE teachers collaborate on providing learning experiences in support of healthy lifestyle choices. The programme is configured as follows:

- Double periods for PE in each of the three years of junior cycle
- One class period of combined PE/SPHE, focusing on learning outcomes designed to encourage students to include regular physical activity, relaxation, mindfulness and healthy eating choices as part of a healthy lifestyle. These learning outcomes are selected from the NCCA short courses in PE and SPHE, where considerable congruence and compatibility has been identified across the learning outcomes in question.
- One class period for SPHE focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA SPHE short course and guidance related learning. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the SPHE syllabus.
- One period for CSPE focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the CSPE short course. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the CSPE syllabus.

The graphic below outlines the main features of the programme.

Approx. 345 hours

Year Group	PE (approx. 135 hours)	Combined PE/SPHE (approx. 70 hours)	SPHE (approx. 70 hours)	CSPE (approx. 70 hours)
First Year	PE (double period): Focus on a broad range of skills and experiences	Combined PE / SPHE: One class period per week each year. Focus on building commitment to physical activity, relaxation, mindfulness and healthy nutritional choices.	SPHE including guidance related learning: One class period per week each year	CSPE: One class period per week each year.
Second Year	PE (double period): School-developed / NCCA PE short course.			
Third Year	PE (double period): School-developed/ NCCA PE short course			

Programme 3

In this Wellbeing programme, the school is moving from the minimum to gradually incorporate additional modules from a diverse range of sources in support of a broad wellbeing programme.

The programme is configured as follows:

- Double periods for PE in each of the three years of junior cycle
- One class period for SPHE focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA SPHE short course. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the SPHE syllabus.
- One period for CSPE focusing on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the CSPE short course. Alternatively, teachers can continue to plan for learning using the CSPE syllabus.
- One class period per week in each of the three years of junior cycle for shorter units.

The graphic below outlines the main features of the programme.

Approx. 345 hours

Year Group	PE (approx. 135 hours)	SPHE (approx. 70 hours)	CSPE (approx. 70 hours)
First Year	PE (double period): Focus on a broad range of skills and experiences	SPHE: One class period per week each year.	CSPE: One class period per week each year.
Second Year	PE (double period): School-developed / NCCA PE short course.		
Third Year	PE (double period): School-developed / NCCA PE short course.		
Plus rotating units - One period per week X 3 years = 70 hours			

UNITS First year	Term 1: 'Moving Up' (Single period x 10 weeks)	Term 2: 'Mentoring for Learning' (Single period x 10 weeks)	'The Web We Want' ⁷¹ and 'Up2Us' ⁷² (Single period x 10 weeks)
UNITS Second year	'Mentoring for Learning' (Single period x 10 weeks)	'Young Social Innovator' (Single period x 10 weeks)	'Lockers' ⁷³ (Single period x 10 weeks)
UNITS Third year	Managing my learning through eportfolio (Single period x 10 weeks)	Managing myself – coping and relaxation skills (Single period x 10 weeks)	Creativity and wellbeing (incorporating music, drama and/or art) (Single period x 10 weeks)

⁷¹**The Web We Want: Young and Online. Activities for young people by young people**
<http://www.webwise.ie/teachers/web-we-want-2/>

⁷²**Up2Us** Anti-bullying kit for junior cycle SPHE <http://www.webwise.ie/teachers/get-the-sid2014-anti-bullying-kit-3/>

⁷³**Lockers** (a teaching resources for junior cycle on the sharing of explicit images)
[http://www.webwise.ie/lockers temp](http://www.webwise.ie/lockers_temp)

Programme 4

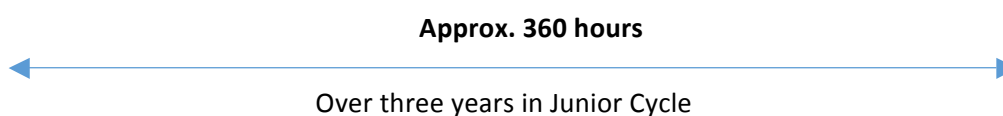
In this Wellbeing programme, the school develops a programme that strongly reflects the school's ethos of social justice, inclusion and equality. In this context, learning in CSPE is seen as particularly important for students' learning about, and experience of, wellbeing. Students are offered learning experiences designed to develop students' sense of agency and citizenship. Across the three years, students study CSPE for two periods per week. Ideally these should be offered as a double period to support the active learning approaches and links with the community which are central to learning in CSPE. In addition to studying the NCCA short course in CSPE, students participate in additional initiatives, such as the Green Schools, Young Environmentalist Award, Localise community service, etc.

Students study SPHE as a double class period in first year. A unit on transition, designed to support their successful transfer into post-primary education, is also included.

This programme is configured as follows:

- Double periods for PE in each of the three years of junior cycle.
- CSPE is timetabled for two class periods each year of junior cycle.
- SPHE is timetabled as a double class period in first year and a single one in second and third year.

The graphic below outlines the main features of the programme.



Year group	PE (approx. 135 hours)	SPHE (approx. 90 hours)	CSPE (approx. 135)
First year	PE (double period): Focus on a broad range of skills and experiences.	SPHE: Two class periods per week in first year – focus on guidance-related learning and selected learning outcomes from Strands 1 and 2 of NCCA SPHE short course	CSPE: Two class periods per week each year incorporating NCCA Short Course in CSPE plus other related learning such as Development Education, Global School Flag, Young Social Innovator, etc.
Second year	PE (double period): NCCA PE Short Course	One class period per week in second and third year. Based on learning outcomes selected from strands 2/3/4 of the NCCA SPHE short course.	
Third year	PE (Double period): NCCA PE Short Course		

Programme 5

In this Wellbeing programme, the school has decided to use a thematic approach to learning in wellbeing in first year. The chosen theme is one focused on making the optimum transition from primary education and is called 'Head Start'. All learning in the Wellbeing programme in first year is designed to support the students' positive transition to post-primary education.

The programme is configured as follows:

- A double period of Physical Education in first, second and third year
- The school includes 6 units in first year which contribute to learning related to the theme of 'Transitions'. The units are timetabled for two class periods per week. Each unit lasts for 10 weeks so that students participate in two units at any given time.
- Two periods of SPHE in second year and three periods in third year facilitates the NCCA short course
- Three periods of CSPE in second year and two periods in third year facilitates the NCCA short course.

Approx. 400 hours



Year group				
First year	Physical Education (double period) Focus on fundamental sports skills, team building and health-related physical activity			
First year units - two periods per week 10 weeks for each unit x 1 class period				
	Moving up Web we want Mentoring for learning	Getting involved in your school and local community Healthy eating – Healthy living The Arts and wellbeing		
Second year	PE (double class period) NCCA Physical Education short course	SPHE Short Course (two class periods)	CSPE (three class periods)	

Third year	<p style="text-align: center;">PE</p> <p>(double class period)</p> <p>NCCA Physical Education short course</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SPHE short course</p> <p>(three class periods)</p> <p>NCCA SPHE short course</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CSPE short course</p> <p>(two class periods)</p> <p>NCCA CSPE short course</p>	
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Programme 6

In this Wellbeing programme, CSPE, SPHE and PE are given equal parity in supporting student learning in wellbeing and are allocated similar time over the three years of junior cycle. Learning is addressed in CSPE, PE and SPHE classes and it is also addressed in a variety of units such as those suggested below.

The programme is configured as follows:

- Double periods for PE in each of the three years of junior cycle
- Two periods for SPHE in first year (to incorporate guidance related learning) and a single period in second and third year
- One period for CSPE in each year
- The school also offers a range of units related to CSPE, SPHE and guidance-related learning in one period per week in 10 week blocks in each year of Junior Cycle. Where possible, the school facilitates team teaching for these units.
- Key events within the school calendar which involve all students are also incorporated in this wellbeing programme such as the Sports Day, fun run, learning related to international Human Rights Day, Earth Day or other awareness events.

Approx. 400 hours

Units (approx. 70 hours)	PE (approx. 135 hours)	SPHE (approx. 90 hours)	CSPE (approx. 70 hours)
First year	PE double period Focus on a broad range of skills and experiences.	SPHE: Two class periods Based on learning outcomes selected from Strands 1/2 of NCCA SPHE short course and guidance related learning to support a positive transition from primary education.	CSPE: One class period Focus on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA CSPE short course.
10 week units in Wellbeing relating to CSPE, SPHE, PE and Guidance (One period per week)	Healthy eating – Healthy living	Moving up	My online world
Second year	PE double period NCCA Physical Education Short Course	SPHE: One class period Focus on selected learning outcomes from each strand of NCCA SPHE short course.	CSPE: One class period Focus on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA CSPE short course
10 week units in Wellbeing relating to CSPE, SPHE, PE and Guidance (One period per week)	Active School Flag	Up2Us (anti-bullying) and Web we want (online safety)	Green School Flag or Young Environmentalist Award
Third year	PE double class period NCCA Physical Education Short Course	SPHE: One class period Focus on selected learning outcomes from each strand of NCCA SPHE short course.	CSPE: One class period Focus on selected learning outcomes from each strand of the NCCA CSPE short course
10 week units in Wellbeing relating to CSPE, SPHE, PE and Guidance (One period per week)	Mindfulness	Managing myself and my learning	Young Social Innovators
Over the three years	35 hours of whole school activities and/or class tutor/pastoral care		

Programme 7

This Wellbeing programme is designed to facilitate schools who have moved from 40 minute class periods to one hour classes.

The programme is configured as follows:

- Two one hour periods for PE in each of the three years of junior cycle
- One hour period for SPHE in each of the three years. In this programme, one class per month would be dedicated to guidance-related learning, including mentoring for learning.
- CSPE is provided through rotating units in 10 week blocks for each of the three years. Two of these units address learning in CSPE each year. The students also organise and participate in annual special events to mark International Human Rights Day, Dec 10th.
- The school also offers other wellbeing-related units considered to be of most relevance and interest to the students. These take place each week in 10 week blocks, in each year of junior cycle.

Approx. 400 hours

First year	Physical Education Two periods of one hour duration		SPHE (including guidance-related learning) One period of one hour	
	Three x 10 week units of one hour duration			
	Human Rights and Equality	Cyber Citizenship	First Aid	
Second year	Physical Education Two periods of one hour duration		SPHE (including guidance-related learning) One period of one hour	
	Three x 10 week units of one hour duration			
	Saving Planet Earth	Taking leadership in my school and community	Healthy Eating – Healthy Living	
Third year	Physical Education Two periods of one hour duration		SPHE (including guidance-related learning) One period of one hour	
	Three x 10 week units of one hour duration			
	All Different – All Equal: Celebrating Diversity	Exploring human rights through the Creative Arts	Coping Skills	

Section 5: Assessment and reporting

Assessment

The *Framework for Junior Cycle* states that all assessment in junior cycle should have as its primary purpose the support of student learning.⁷⁴ To achieve this, the Framework emphasises the need to broaden the approach to assessment, recognising that *no single assessment event can provide evidence of the full range of student achievement*.⁷⁵ This is especially true in relation to learning in wellbeing where assessment has to take account of the wide range of learning experienced by students. It is also acknowledged that

*Given the sometimes sensitive nature of this area of learning, schools will be given significant flexibility when assessing and reporting on learning in Wellbeing.*⁷⁶

Assessment in wellbeing is not about teachers assessing where the student is situated on the continuum of wellbeing/well-becoming or the child's subjective state of wellbeing. It would be counterproductive for a teacher to make a judgement about a student's wellbeing *per se*, given that student wellbeing depends on a variety of factors and life circumstances which can change quickly and can be context-specific. Therefore the focus of assessment in wellbeing is on gathering evidence of what the child has learned **about** wellbeing. With this in mind, the purpose of assessment in wellbeing is two-fold: to assess what knowledge, skills and dispositions students have gained and to support his/her next steps in learning about wellbeing.

Ongoing assessment

*It is expected that most of the assessment activities in the area of Wellbeing will be classroom based and formative in nature*⁷⁷.

All the curriculum components of a Wellbeing curriculum provide opportunities for ongoing assessment. Ultimately, learning in wellbeing aims to encourage young people to take responsibility for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. Ongoing assessment in wellbeing can provide opportunities for students to do this. It happens when students complete ongoing assignments, engage in self/peer assessment, reflect

⁷⁴ pg. 35

⁷⁵ p. 34

⁷⁶ p. 23

⁷⁷ p. 42

on their learning and set goals for the next steps. The wellbeing indicators provide an overview of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are moving towards achieving in support of their wellbeing. The six indicators – Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware can be used to support ongoing reflection on and self-assessment by students of their overall learning in Wellbeing. Using these indicators, students can reflect on the extent to which they, for example:

- Understand the role of healthy eating and physical activity in contributing to their wellbeing
- Show resilience when planning, managing and participating in individual and group activities
- Take action to protect and promote their own wellbeing and that of others
- Have a sense of care and connection to their school, community or wider world.

Teachers can also assess students' progress through a range of assessment methods such as effective questioning and project work to ascertain what and how students are learning. The NCCA Assessment Toolkit, *Focus of Learning*⁷⁸ includes lots of ideas about ongoing assessment which can be adapted for use in the different areas of the Wellbeing programme.

In situations where schools incorporate the PE, SPHE or CSPE short courses into their Wellbeing programme, the specifications and assessment guidelines for these short courses provide advice on assessment options. Across these short courses, students can undertake assessment that demonstrates their learning in different aspects of wellbeing, e.g. setting physical activity goals in PE, researching different health topics in SPHE, taking action in support of their own rights and the rights of others in CSPE. Where schools develop their own units or short courses or adopt those developed by outside agencies, they can use the assessment approaches included in the NCCA short courses to inform the design of assessment. Reporting at the end of first and second year would include information and feedback on assessments completed as part of their learning in wellbeing. In addition, the Wellbeing indicators can be used to facilitate student self-assessment of their overall learning in wellbeing.

Summative assessment as part of the JCPA

Students' learning in wellbeing will be assessed for summative purposes in two ways:

⁷⁸ NCCA Assessment Toolkit: *Focus on Learning* <http://juniorcycle.ie/Assessment/Focus-on-Learning> (Accessed March, 21st 2016)

- Completing the Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) as part of the PE/SPHE/CSPE short courses or other wellbeing related short courses. The CBAs provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and skills in wellbeing related short courses. In the case of all short courses, there is significant flexibility and choice for students regarding which CBA they might complete and how they might complete it. The results of assessment in these CBAs can be recorded in the short course section of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). Where schools do not include the above short courses in their Wellbeing programme, the results of any summative assessments completed can be included in the school section of the JCPA.
- Students will also complete a synoptic self-assessment of their overall learning in wellbeing at the end of junior cycle, based on the Wellbeing indicators. Here the emphasis is on identifying with young people where and how well they are progressing in terms of their knowledge and understanding, skills and dispositions, identifying their strengths and determining where they feel they need further support. It is expected that students build up a regular practice of reflecting on their learning in wellbeing using the Wellbeing indicators. At the end of junior cycle students would be asked to generate a personal statement about their 'important' learning in the area of Wellbeing. This can be supported by a conversation with their peers and/or their teacher. The personal statement could be generated over time in an electronic format, such as blogging. There will be a space set aside on the JCPA for a comment on wellbeing.

The Wellbeing indicators describe what is important for young people's wellbeing. Using these to guide both the student's ongoing and final assessment in the area of wellbeing will ensure that students have an understanding of what wellbeing means and can articulate their progress in this area. It is envisaged that a student-led approach to assessment is the most appropriate way to build an overall picture of the young person's progress in wellbeing.

Reporting

Learning in Wellbeing will be assessed by the students' teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during junior cycle and in the JCPA.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Framework for Junior Cycle, page 42

Reporting is the process by which assessment information is communicated to help students, parents and teachers make decisions, by providing information about what students know and can do, together with recommendations for their future learning.

The following principles for reporting at junior cycle are relevant to wellbeing as well as to other subjects and short courses. Reporting should:

- Encourage genuine engagement with parents
- Engage with hard-to-reach parents
- Provide opportunities for students through feedback to reflect on their learning and contribute to the reporting process
- Value the professional judgements of teachers
- Use the language of learning
- Be manageable and not take time away from learning and teaching
- Clearly communicate students' learning
- Provide information on a broad range of achievement
- Be sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students and take an inclusive approach.

Reporting on students' learning in wellbeing aims to provide parents with a clear picture about what the students are learning about wellbeing and the skills they are developing to support their wellbeing. Reporting on wellbeing is designed to complement other reporting opportunities including parent-teacher meetings, teacher-student dialogue and other home-school written communications. At the heart of this broad process, all reporting should have as its purpose informed discussions, either orally or written, between teachers, parents and students about how to improve learning.

Reporting on wellbeing will focus on learning and progress in the various parts of the Wellbeing programme rather than on making subjective judgements about the student and their wellbeing. In line with research, the new reporting arrangements are aimed at encouraging students to play a central role as active and motivated participants in both their learning and assessment. In this context, rich reporting on student progress is most likely to occur when it has been developed within the context of regular

dialogue and feedback in class and where students are provided with frequent opportunities to reflect on their own learning. Given the importance of students learning to take responsibility for their own wellbeing, it is important that the student's themselves have an opportunity to contribute to the school report. Students' reflections on their learning framed by the Wellbeing indicators should form the basis for the reporting process.

At the end of junior cycle education, the reporting process will culminate in the awarding of the JCPA to students. The JCPA will report on all elements of assessment, including learning in Wellbeing. The JCPA will include spaces for the results of state examinations students have taken, for results of any short courses the school decides to report on, and for comments on other particular parts of the junior cycle programme offered by the school (including a space for comment on wellbeing). The space for comment on Wellbeing can include both a school comment based on ongoing or summative assessments and a student comment based on synoptic self-assessment.

Appendices





Appendix 1: NCCA short courses and Wellbeing programmes at junior cycle

This tagging exercise is designed to highlight the extent to which the learning outcomes in the short courses for PE, SPHE and CSPE contribute to the outcomes for wellbeing in junior cycle. In very many cases, it is clear that the different learning outcomes contribute to one or more of the outcomes for wellbeing.




























Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I a confident and able participant in physical activity?• Am I physically active every day?
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others?• Do I make healthy eating choices?• Do I take responsibility for my learning?
Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I feel connected to my school, my community and the wider world?• Do I appreciate that my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts?
Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I believe that I have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges?• Do I know where I can go for help?• Do I believe that with effort I can achieve?
Respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I feel that I am listened to and valued?• Do I have positive relationships with my friends, my peers and my teachers?• Do I show care and respect for others?
Aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can I make sense of them?• Am I aware of what my personal values are and do I think through my decisions?• Do I understand what helps me to learn and how I can improve?




























Physical Education Short Course

Strand 1 Physical activity for health and wellbeing		Active	Responsible	Connected	Resilient	Respected	Aware
Students learn about...	Learning outcomes Students should be able to...						
How to monitor and improve their physical fitness Physical activity for all	1.1 set SMART improvement goals informed by their health-related and/or performance-related fitness results and advised by norms for their age and sex	▲	▲		▲		▲
	1.2 apply principles of training within a personalised physical activity programme (minimum duration of six-weeks) designed to improve their health-related and/or performance-related fitness, documenting their progress	▲	▲		▲		▲
	1.3 evaluate their engagement and progress in the programme, providing evidence of progress made and identifying ways they can further develop	▲	▲		▲		▲
	1.4 use a range of measurement techniques to monitor and analyse physical activity levels across a sustained period of time	▲	▲				▲
	1.5 identify a range of strategies to support ongoing participation in health-related physical activity	▲	▲				▲

	<p>1.6 lead physical activities that young people find enjoyable and can undertake to achieve the minimum physical activity recommendations for health.</p>						
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Strand 2 Games		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about two of the games categories.							
Students learn about...	Learning outcomes Students should be able to...						
Invasion games	2.1 use a wide range of movement skills and strategies effectively to enhance their performance						
Striking and fielding games	2.2 take responsibility for improving their own performance based on personal strengths and developmental needs						
	2.3 modify activities to promote inclusion and enjoyment in a safe manner						
Divided court games	2.4 demonstrate activities to enhance their health-related and/or performance-related fitness for the particular game, including warm-up and cool down						
	2.5 respond, individually and as part of a team to different games' scenarios.						









Strand 3 Individual and team challenges		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about...	Students should be able to ...						
Orienteering and team challenges	3.1 use orienteering strategies and map reading skills to complete a variety of orienteering events safely and confidently showing respect for the environment						
	3.2 contribute to team challenges that require co-operation and problem-solving skills to achieve a common goal						
	3.3 reflect on their personal contribution and their team's effectiveness in completing a group challenge						
Aquatics /Athletics	3.4 perform competently and confidently in a range of swimming strokes						
	3.5 respond appropriately to a range of water safety scenarios						
	3.6 take responsibility for improving their own performance, based on personal strengths and developmental needs						











Strand 4 Dance and gymnastics		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about either gymnastics or dance in this strand.							
Students learn about...	Students should be able to ...						
Creating a sequence of movement	4.1 create a dance on their own or with others, incorporating a selected dance style and a variety of choreographic techniques and suitable props and music						
	Or						
	4.2 create a sequence of movement or routine based on a gymnastic theme (on their own or with others), incorporating a variety of compositional techniques and gymnastics skills						
Reflecting on performance	4.3 refine their performance based on a critique of a video of their performance and/or feedback from others						
Performing	4.4 perform the dance/gymnastics sequence of movement for an audience incorporating appropriate music and/or props						
	4.5 reflect on their experience of creating and participating in a performance						

SPHE Short Course

Strand 1 Who am I?		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about...	Learning outcomes Students should be able to...						
How I see myself and others	1.1. appreciate the importance of building their own self-esteem and that of others		▲	▲		▲	▲
	1.2. welcome individual difference based on an appreciation of their own uniqueness		▲			▲	▲
Being an adolescent	1.3. participate in informed discussions about the impact of physical, emotional, psychological and social development in adolescence		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
	1.4. recognise how sexuality and gender identity is part of what it means to be human and has biological, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲








Self-management	<p>1.5. identify short, medium and long-term personal goals and ways in which they might be achieved</p> <p>1.6. apply decision-making skills in a variety of situations</p> <p>1.7. source appropriate and reliable information about health and wellbeing</p>		▲		▲		▲
My rights and the rights of others	<p>1.8. explain how stereotyping can contribute to a person's understanding and experience of rights and wellbeing</p> <p>1.9. appreciate the importance of respectful and inclusive behaviour in promoting a safe environment free from bias and discrimination</p>		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲

Strand 2 Minding myself and others							
Students learn about...	Learning outcomes Students should be able to...	<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Being healthy	2.1. evaluate how diet, physical activity, sleep/rest and hygiene contribute to self-confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing 2.2. critique the impact of the media, advertising and other influences on one's decisions about health and wellbeing 2.3. describe what promotes a sense of belonging in school, at home and in the wider community and their own role in creating an inclusive environment 2.4. distinguish between appropriate care giving and receiving						
Substance use	2.5. demonstrate the personal and social skills to address pressure to smoke, to drink alcohol and/or use other substances 2.6. reflect on the personal, social and legal consequences of their own or others' drug use 2.7. critique information and supports available for young people in relation to substance use						































Respectful communication	<p>2.8. use the skills of active listening and responding appropriately in a variety of contexts</p> <p>2.9. use good communication skills to respond to criticism and conflict</p>						
Anti-bullying	<p>2.10 describe appropriate responses to incidents of bullying</p> <p>2.11 appraise the roles of participants and bystanders in incidents of bullying</p> <p>2.12 review the school's anti-bullying policy and internet safety guidelines explaining the implications for students' behaviour and personal safety</p>						
















Strand 3 Team up		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn	Learning outcomes						

about...	Students should be able to...						
Having a friend and being a friend	<p>1.1 establish what young people value in different relationships and how this changes over time</p> <p>1.2 evaluate attitudes, skills and values that help to make, maintain and end friendships respectfully</p> <p>1.3 recognise their capacity to extend and receive friendship</p>		  	  			  
The relationship spectrum	<p>1.4 explain the different influences on relationships and levels of intimacy</p> <p>1.5 analyse relationship difficulties experienced by young people</p>		 				 
Sexuality, gender identity and sexual health	<p>1.6 describe fertility, conception, pre-natal development and birth, and the particular health considerations for each</p> <p>1.7 explain what it means to take care of their sexual health</p>		  		 	 	  

	1.8 demonstrate assertive communication skills in support of responsible, informed decision making about relationships and sexual health that are age and developmentally appropriate						
	1.9 reflect on the personal and social dimensions of sexual orientation and gender identity						
Media influence on relationships and sexuality	1.10 critically analyse the use of sexual imagery and gender stereotyping in various forms of media						
	1.11 critique the influence of media on their understanding of sexuality and sexual health						

Strand 4 My mental health							
	Learning outcomes	<i>Active</i>	<i>Healthy</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about...	Students should be able to...						

Positive mental health	<p>2.1 explain what it means to have positive mental health</p> <p>2.2 appreciate the importance of talking things over including recognising the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour</p> <p>2.3 practise some relaxation techniques</p>		  		  		  
Mental health and mental ill-health	<p>2.4 participate in an informed discussion about mental health issues experienced by young people and/or their friends and family</p> <p>2.5 appreciate what it means to live with mental ill-health</p> <p>2.6 critique mental health services available to young people locally</p> <p>2.7 explain the significance of substance use for one's mental health</p>		   	  	 	 	  
Dealing with tough times	<p>2.8 practise a range of strategies for building resilience</p> <p>2.9 use coping skills for managing life's challenges</p>		 		 		 

Loss and bereavement	2.10	explain the wide range of life events where they might experience loss and bereavement						
	2.11	outline the personal, social, emotional and physical responses to loss and bereavement						
	2.12	compare how loss and bereavement are portrayed in a variety of contexts and cultures						
	2.13	describe how they might care for themselves and be supportive of others in times of loss or bereavement						

CSPE Short Course
















Strand 1 Rights and responsibilities							
Students learn about...	Learning Outcomes Students should be able to...	Active*	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Human dignity – the basis for human rights	1.1 discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities 1.2 create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected 1.3 create a hierarchy of their needs, wants and rights 1.4 assemble a ‘basic needs basket’ representing the needs of a family living in Ireland (not just their economic needs). 1.5 access and interpret numerical data showing local and global distribution of basic resources and patterns of inequalities.		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
				▲	▲	▲	
			▲	▲		▲	▲
				▲		▲	

Human rights instruments	1.6	share stories of individuals or groups who inspire them because of their work for human rights						
	1.7	create a timeline tracing the origin of the concept of human rights, showing five or more key dates, events, people and documents						
	1.8	communicate their understanding of how the UNDHR, UNCRC and ECHR ⁸⁰ applies to their lives, in terms of both their rights and their responsibilities						
	1.9	identify examples of social, cultural, language, economic, civic, religious, environmental and political rights						
	1.10	outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights						
	1.11	show an appreciation of their responsibility to promote and defend their individual human rights and those of others						
	1.12	reflect on what has been learned in this strand.						

* Students' citizenship action projects may involve physical activity within or beyond the school

⁸⁰ United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

Strand 2 Global citizenship		<i>Active</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Connected</i>	<i>Resilient</i>	<i>Respected</i>	<i>Aware</i>
Students learn about...	Learning Outcomes Students should be able to...						
Sustainability	2.1 communicate how they are connected to and dependent upon eco-systems, people and places, near and far		▲	▲		▲	▲
	2.2 consider a variety of definitions of development and devise their own definition of sustainable development			▲		▲	
	2.3 create a visual representation of data depicting their ecological footprint			▲	▲		
	2.4 discuss three or more sustainable living strategies they can employ in their lives		▲	▲		▲	▲
Local and global development	2.5 examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this			▲		▲	▲ ▲

	2.6 express an informed opinion about the root causes of poverty, both locally and globally						
	2.7 discuss, with evidence, positive and negative effects of development in their local area						
Effecting global change	2.8 identify one person and one institution with power and influence in the world today, explaining their role						
	2.9 analyse one global issue or challenge, under the following headings: causes, consequences, impact on people's lives and possible solutions						
	2.10 evaluate how they can contribute in responding to one challenge currently facing the world						
	2.11 examine a campaign for change in the area of sustainability and assess reasons why it has been successful or not						
	2.12 reflect on what has been learned in this strand						
Strand 3 Exploring democracy		Acti ve	Res pon	Con nect	Resil ient	Res pect	Awa re

Students learn about...	Learning Outcomes Students should be able to...						
The meaning of democracy	<p>3.1 create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence</p> <p>3.2 describe decision-making processes and the roles of different groups in their class/school</p> <p>3.3 compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state</p> <p>3.4 use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles</p> <p>3.5 discuss strengths and weaknesses of the democratic process</p>			<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>		<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p>

<p>The law and the citizen</p>	<p>3.6 identify laws that directly relate to their lives</p> <p>3.7 explain how laws are made, enforced and evolve over time</p> <p>3.8 explain the role and relevance of local, national and international courts</p> <p>3.9 list the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Irish law, with examples</p> <p>3.10 investigate how individuals or groups have used the law to bring about change in society</p>			<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>
<p>The role of the media in a democracy</p>	<p>3.11 debate the pros and cons of media freedom</p> <p>3.12 examine case studies of the use of digital or other media in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a social justice movement ▪ a political election or referendum ▪ a criminal investigation ▪ an environmental movement <p>3.13 reflect on what has been learned in this strand</p>		<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>	<p>▲</p> <p>▲</p> <p>▲</p>

Appendix 2: How the Wellbeing indicators link to the Statements of Learning and the *Staying Well* Key Skill in the *Framework for Junior Cycle*

Curriculum Links	Links to Statements of Learning	Links to Key Skill – Staying Well
PE/SPHE	<p>Active</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active (12) takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (8) 	<p>Active</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in regular physical activity and recognize its benefits develop positive relationships find enjoyment and fun in learning
SPHE/PE	<p>Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices (13) takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (8) 	<p>Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make informed choices in relation to food, personal care and lifestyle identify the likely consequences of risky and unhealthy behaviours recognise when personal safety is threatened & respond appropriately
CSPE SPHE PE	<p>Connected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts (7) takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (8) has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making (5) 	<p>Connected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in actions that make a positive contribution to my school, community and wider world recognize my rights and responsibilities as a local and global citizen respect life, in all its diversity, and know that life has meaning and purpose feel positive about myself
PE, CSPE, and SPHE	<p>Resilient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> brings an idea from conception to realization (23) 	<p>Resilient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use a range of coping strategies to deal with problems and stress learn from my mistakes and move on stick with things and work them through until I succeed recognize and celebrate my achievements
PE, CSPE and SPHE	<p>Respected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making (5) takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (8) 	<p>Respected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make decisions based on the common good contribute to decision-making within the class and group communicate my opinions and beliefs with confidence stand apart from the crowd when needed develops positive relationships
PE, CSPE and SPHE	<p>Aware</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an awareness of personal values an understanding of the process of moral decision making (5) takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (8) 	<p>Aware</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate care and respect for myself and other people feel positive about myself practice relaxation and mindfulness techniques

Appendix 3: Getting started – Suggested outline for a workshop with staff (1hr 20 min)

Topic	Time needed	Useful resources
<p>1. Agree the aim and learning outcomes for the workshop e.g. Aim – to begin the process of planning a wellbeing programme for our junior cycle students</p> <p>e.g. Learning outcomes – to come to a shared understanding of what we mean by ‘wellbeing’ and to identify the ways in we already promote student wellbeing and ways we can do it better.</p>	5 min.	
<p>2. What’s our understanding of ‘wellbeing’?</p> <p>Conduct a brainstorm on what the word ‘wellbeing’ means using a flip chart. Note as many aspects as possible at this point.</p> <p>Notice if there is a dominance of words that associate wellbeing with subjective feelings (happiness, confidence, etc.) and consider if there are other factors, as well as psychological/emotional factors, that impact on wellbeing.</p> <p>Draw attention to the range of responses and highlight the fact that wellbeing is multifaceted, is a dynamic process with ups and downs, and that we are all on a continuum between ill-being and wellbeing. Conclude this discussion by asking participants to form small groups and agree a definition of wellbeing.</p> <p>Consider how the different definitions resonate or not with the definition of Wellbeing included in the Guidelines.</p>	30 min.	<p>Introduction to the guidelines on Wellbeing, especially the section entitled ‘Towards an understanding of wellbeing’</p> <p>Definition of Wellbeing in the Guidelines</p>
<p>3. To what extent is Wellbeing a central consideration in this school? Should it have a greater importance? How and Why?</p>	10 min.	<p>Ref to research and Nell Nodding’s idea of placing caring at the heart of all education.</p>

<p>4. How are our students supported in learning <i>about</i> wellbeing and <i>for</i> wellbeing? Working in small groups, read through the six Wellbeing indicators and then discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which wellbeing indicators are we doing well in supporting? What examples/evidence do we have? ▪ Which wellbeing indicators need our attention? ▪ What one/two changes can we all agree to address this wellbeing indicator more consciously and effectively? <p>Take feedback</p>	<p>30 min.</p>	<p>Ref to page 7 of Guidelines – learning <i>about</i> and <i>for</i> wellbeing</p> <p>Provide a copy of the Wellbeing Indicators for each person</p>
<p>5.Next steps Possible next steps might include consulting with students, mapping out current curriculum provision and extra-curricular support for wellbeing, identifying supports and resources within the local community, etc.</p>	<p>5 min.</p>	

Appendix 4: Using the Wellbeing indicators to review school practice

The six indicators of Wellbeing identify what is important for young people's wellbeing in junior cycle. Each school has flexibility to plan their own Wellbeing programme to achieve these outcomes.

The following questions may be helpful in supporting the whole staff in reflecting on current practice and how each person contributes to developing these indicators.

	In my teaching and my relationships with students, how do I support my students in learning to:	Yes	To some extent	Not yet
Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be confident and able participants in physical activity? be physically active every day 			
Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be able to take action to protect and promote their wellbeing and that of others make healthy eating choices have positive relationships with their peers and teachers 			
Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel connected to their school, community and the wider world understand how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts 			
Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel confident in themselves and have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges know where they can go for help believe that with effort they can achieve 			
Respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> show care and respect for others feel listened to and valued 			
Aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can make sense of them be aware of their personal values and can think through my decisions be aware of themselves as learners and know how they can improve 			

Reflecting on this exercise consider:

Which wellbeing indicators do you feel you are most supporting?	
Which wellbeing indicators needs your attention?	
What one/two changes will you make to address these indicators more consciously and effectively?	
What surprised you doing this exercise?	

Appendix 5: Using Wellbeing indicators to support student self-assessment

The following questions may be helpful in supporting students in assessing how they are developing their learning about wellbeing and for wellbeing. In using this, or other self-assessment tools, it is important to stress to students that wellbeing is a process and a life-long journey and may never be fully realised. The purpose of this tool is to support learning, by prompting students to reflect on where they are on the journey towards wellbeing and areas of wellbeing that they can improve. It can also provide an opportunity to open up a conversation about wellbeing with a teacher, a peer or parent/guardian.

	Day to day	Yes	To some extent	Not yet
Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I am a confident and able participant in physical activity ▪ I take part in physical activity every day 			
Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others ▪ I can make healthy eating choices ▪ I have positive relationships with my peers and teachers 			
Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I feel connected to my school, community and the wider world ▪ I understand how my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts 			
Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I feel confident in myself and have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges ▪ I know where I can go for help ▪ I believe that with effort I can achieve 			
Respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I show care and respect for others ▪ I feel listened to and valued 			
Aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I am aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and I can make sense of them ▪ I am aware of my personal values and can think through my decisions ▪ I am aware of how I learn best and know how I can improve 			
Reflecting on this exercise				
Three things I'm doing well to support my wellbeing				
Three things I plan to do that will help me				

Appendix 6:

Student Focus Group on developing a Wellbeing programme

Explain to the students that the purpose of the session is to hear students' ideas and suggestions for the new area of learning, Wellbeing in junior cycle.

This focus group can include representatives from across the school cohort, from junior cycle only or a discrete class group.

Introduction: (Full group activity)

Brainstorm 'What really matters for young people's wellbeing?'

Think, pair, share activity:

Individually, consider the following?

What can school do to support students and their wellbeing? Their learning about wellbeing?

Pair up and identify the three most important ideas.

Pair up with another pair, share what both groups have identified and agree the two most important suggestions.

Feedback:

Take feedback from the group and record the different ideas on flip chart. Take care not to repeat ideas.

Invite students to rank order the ideas where 1 is the most important idea. Everyone has two votes. They cast their two votes, giving their first one to the most important. (This can be done using two different colour stickers).

Learning in Wellbeing.

Complete the following sentence:

To support their wellbeing, young people in junior cycle need to learn.....

Record the different ideas. Invite suggestions about which subject areas might best support this kind of learning.

To finish:

The one big idea from today that I would like to be considered is.....

Appendix 7: Template to support schools planning Units of study related to wellbeing

1. Title of Unit	
2. Aim of the Unit	
3. Duration of Unit and time-table requirements (e.g. 10 weeks x 40 mins per week)	
4. Learning outcomes	
At the end of this Unit students will be able to...	
5. How this Unit contributes to the Wellbeing outcomes	
	Contribution of module
Active	
Healthy	
Connected	
Resilient	
Respected	
Aware	
6. Assessment (How students will show evidence of their learning)	
7. Teaching approaches	
8. Useful resources, web links and community links	

Appendix 8: Parent Focus Group on developing a Wellbeing programme

Parent focus group on developing a Wellbeing Programme in Junior Cycle

Explain to the parents the purpose of the session is to hear their ideas and suggestions for the new area of learning, Wellbeing in junior cycle.

This focus group should include can parent representatives from across the school cohort.

Introduction: (Full group activity)

Brainstorm 'What really matters for young people's wellbeing?'

Think, pair, share activity:

Individually, consider the following?

What can school do to supports students and their wellbeing? Their learning about wellbeing?

Pair up and identify the three most important ideas.

Pair up with another pair, share what both groups have identified and agree the two most important suggestions.

Feedback:

Take feedback from the group and record the different ideas on flip chart. Take care not to repeat ideas.

Invite parents to rank order the ideas where 1 is the most important idea. Everyone has two votes. They cast their two votes, giving their first one to the most important. (This can be done using two different colour stickers).

Wellbeing indicator:

The wellbeing indicators describe the skills and dispositions that a programme in Wellbeing is designed to develop in young people in junior cycle.

Individually, rank order the indicators where 1 is the most important in your opinion.

In threes, discuss your rankings with the other two parents. Agree which indicators you really welcome and which indicator will require the most support and how this might happen in the school.

Learning in Wellbeing.

In small groups, consider the following question:

When you think about your child or young people of junior cycle age, what do they need to learn about and be able to do in support of their wellbeing? How can this school plan for this kind of learning? Each group identify the three most important ideas and record them on the flipchart.

Invite each group to share one of their big ideas and these should be recorded.

To finish: The one big idea from today that I would like be considered is.....

