

WELLBEING POLICY



WE SEEK TO PROMOTE A CARING AND
COMMITTED SCHOOL COMMUNITY
WHICH WILL FACILITATE THE EDUCATION OF
OUR STUDENTS
AND WHERE EACH INDIVIDUAL IS VALUED AS A
UNIQUE HUMAN BEING.

“IS AR SCÁTH A CHÉILE A MHAIRIMID”

WELLBEING POLICY

THIS DOCUMENT IS PREPARED BY THE WELLBEING COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF, AND IN CONSULTATION WITH, THE BORRISOKANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STAFF, STUDENTS, PARENTS AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

OUR VISION

The Wellbeing Committee **aims** to lead the school community in the creation of an environment where;

"Borrisokane Community College students want to come to school because they feel safe, connected, supported, cared about and challenged. They will leave Borrisokane Community College proud, resilient, respected and respectful of others, able to be responsible for their actions and capable of building positive relationships with a range of people."

We hope to build on and reinforce the results of recent whole school PASS testing which indicated that the vast majority of students feel connected to the school community.

STRUCTURE OF THE POLICY

The philosophy of this policy is based on the Junior Cycle Wellbeing guidelines the aim of which 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 framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new area of learning at junior cycle called Wellbeing. Wellbeing will cross the three years of junior cycle and build on substantial work already taking place in schools in support of students' wellbeing. This area of learning will make the school's culture, ethos, and commitment to wellbeing visible to students. It will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It will enable students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and to their community. The junior cycle Wellbeing programme will begin with 300 hours of timetabled engagement in 2017 and build up to 400 hours by 2020 as the new junior cycle is implemented fully in schools.

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023 was launched by the Minister for Education and Skills in July 2018.

The policy includes a set of Statements of Effective Practice in relation to wellbeing promotion within the school system. The statements will support schools in reviewing their current provision in each of the four key areas of wellbeing promotion and in setting goals for improvement. The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice is available to download <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy-statement-and-framework-for-practice-2018%E2%80%932023.pdf>

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

We aim to achieve our vision through;

1. Use of the School Self-Evaluation process developing and implementing policies and procedures to support student wellbeing.
2. Building on the good work already happening in our school to ensure that best practice of whole-school wellbeing promotion is embedded across the system.
3. A multicomponent whole school preventative approach to the promotion of wellbeing with interventions at both universal and targeted levels
4. Ensuring student wellbeing is central to teaching practices and student learning.
5. Raising awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing.
6. Embedding the four key areas of wellbeing promotion in our school by 2023 – Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Policy& Planning, Relationships & Partnerships.
7. School wide inclusion of wellbeing in subject and programme plans.

WELLBEING-AN OVERVIEW

Wellbeing is described as the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy. In Borrisokane Community College we also believe that wellbeing is a balancing process between skills/resources and challenges.

Our priority is the contentment and wellbeing of our students as outlined in our mission statement. “We seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being”.

The wellbeing in a school starts with the frontline staff and there is a commitment in Borrisokane CC to promote the emotional and social wellbeing of all. It is the goal of the College to create a mutually respectful atmosphere between all individuals involved within our school including management, teachers, staff members, students, parents, & visitors. We recognise the importance of students having one good adult role model in their lives and seek to provide this within our school community.

CURRICULAR PROVISION

- From September 2017 wellbeing will require a minimum of 300 hours timetabled engagement and 400 hours by 2020.
- All subject planning will include Wellbeing and teachers should embed wellbeing into their curriculum and ensure it is visible to students.

- Wellbeing will be further embedded into the school curriculum through three key subject areas which are; CSPE, SPHE, PE and guidance related learning.
- Wellbeing is inclusive of all and some students are offered Level 2 priority learning units including wellbeing.

WELLBEING INDICATORS

There are six indicators central to wellbeing;

1. Active
2. Responsible
3. Connected
4. Resilient
5. Respected
6. Aware

From September 2017 a poster displaying these indicators has been displayed in all classrooms.

WELLFEST WEEK

- The aim of the annual Wellfest week is to create awareness around all elements of health including being active, making healthy food choices and looking after your mental health. This week adds to the positive atmosphere of the school. Ultimately, it seeks to highlight what keeps us well, content and whole.

Activities include- Poetry competitions, information area with posters in the foyer on health and wellbeing, meditation and yoga classes, positive thoughts presentation, mindfulness coloring competition's, sporting boot camps, SOAR workshops and talks on mental wellness/coping strategies from outside agencies such as St. Patrick's Mental Health Hospital through the Walk in Your Shoes Campaign, funky shoes day and workshops on Health and Wellness from Templemore College of Further Education for example.

ADDITIONAL

- The school is a key setting for health promotion. Borrisokane Community College became a "Health Promoting School" in January 2016. HPS supports a whole school approach to promoting health and well-being. It strives to create an environment where positive relationships are fostered among students, staff, parents, guardians and the wider school community. There is a strong evidence base for engaging in the HPS process. Ongoing evaluations of the ENHPS report the following outcomes:
 - Improved staff well-being
 - Better learning outcomes for students

- A more coordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs
- Increased student self-esteem
- Lowered incidence of bullying
- School environment is safer and more secure
- Better understanding of a school's health aims
- Improved relationships within the school
- More involvement of parents
- Better use of external agencies.
- Music and Drama play an important role in the college with musical instruments, the music room and the option to join the school choir and strings orchestra available to all students. Our annual Christmas Concert/TY night/school service/graduation service also gives students the opportunity to display their talent on an annual basis.
- The ability to plan effectively is a skill, which can be of great practical value to students during their time at school, in their future studies and in the world of work. By encouraging students to get involved in enterprise activities teachers can help them to make informed decisions based on careful research and analysis. Through involvement in the college's Christmas Market and other enterprise initiatives students are facilitated in planning, setting up and running their own enterprise projects as vehicles of learning. It helps students to grasp real life skills associated with running a real enterprise including, working as part of a team, managing production and finances, organising a sales and marketing campaign and liaising directly with customers and the media.
- Subject related weeks help to build positive relationships, improve self-esteem and develop transferable skills. They contribute to the wellbeing of the students by giving them the opportunity to learn in many different ways. By interacting with their classmates and teachers, and by taking part in activities inside and outside the classroom, each student is challenged to problem solve outside of their comfort zone. These weeks promote positive supportive relationships within the school and wider community.
 - Mentoring Programmes such as Cairde and academic mentoring of LCA/exam class students.
 - Transitioning programmes
 - Friendship Café/Seomra Caidrimh
 - Library
 - Alert Programme in conjunction with the NBSS
 - Meditation and Yoga in PE and RE.
 - Rainbows
 - School Counselling Service/College Chaplain/Guidance Counsellor
- Foreign Trips-Annual trips to Holland, Paris, London, Germany and Erasmus projects develop student's intercultural skills and cultural awareness. This allows students to develop their self-confidence and develop their coping skills, independence and self-awareness.
- Check & Connect and Focus In/Out

All of these activities and more incorporate all of the six wellbeing indicators.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

As all school policies are developed and reviewed we refer to the Wellbeing Framework.

GUIDANCE RELATED LEARNING

Guidance in schools refers to a range of learning experiences that helps students to develop self-management skills leading to effective choices and decisions in their lives. It is made up of three areas; personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance. Whole school guidance related learning can be delivered by all staff.

ROLE OF THE YEAR GROUP LEADER OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Monitoring of academic progress.
- Implementation of code of behavior, which helps, provide a safe space for all students in which to develop linking directly to our ethos.
- Liaise with class tutors/mentors with regard to the progress of the students individually and class groups collectively.
- Develop relationships with students, teachers and parents. In 2017/2018 we introduced a whole school mentoring programme where each teacher had contact time with a small group of students once per term. Over the next few years we will continue to review mentoring and embed the programme to support all students.
- Work within student support structures.
- Support a positive work ethic in the year.
- Acknowledgment of achievement through positive feedback.
- Hold assemblies thus providing a forum for students to voice their issues/opinions.

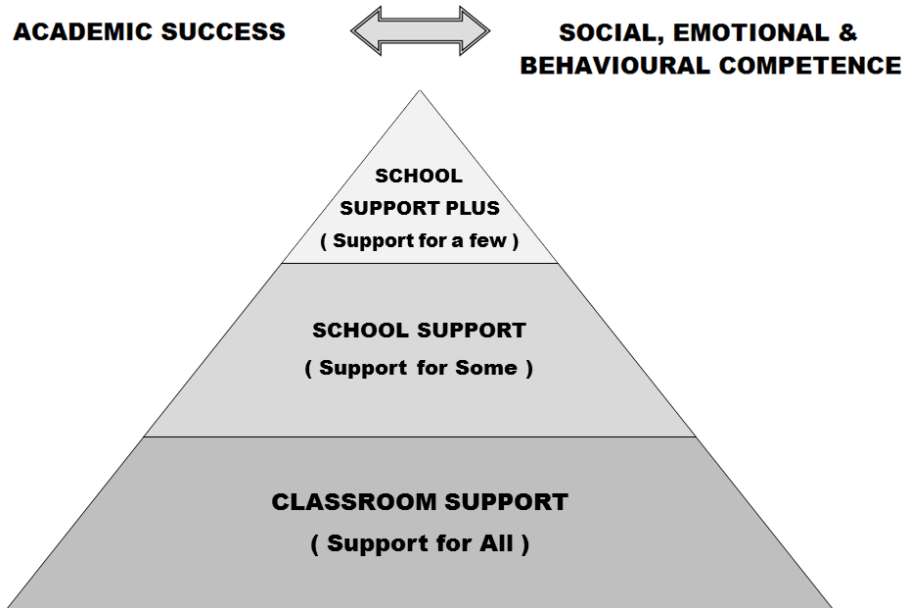
PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE WELLBEING OF OUR STUDENTS

Our staff sees its role as supporting and developing student potential in keeping with our mission statement, we seek to promote a caring and committed school community where each individual is valued as a unique human being. Staff at the school aspire to develop the whole person, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural and physical. All relationships in our school are built on the central tenet of respect. To launch our wellbeing policy, we focused on the area of respect and highlighted this with the re-introduction of our respect charter in all classrooms.

- R – Respond to others with kindness
- E – Establish friendships with all classmates
- S - Share responsibilities
- P – Prepare for class
- E – Expect the best of yourself
- C – Co-operate with others
- T – Talk appropriately to peers and adults

STUDENT SUPPORT

Once concerns are identified, information is then gathered and a plan is created and reviewed in line with NEPs continuum of support. The support offered is broken into 3 categories as outlined below.



SUPPORT FOR ALL

At this level we adopt a whole school approach. We have a series of policies and procedures that promote wellbeing for all members of the school community. Processes on this level aim at (i) the establishment of a safe environment that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing, (2) promotion of an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing (3) early identification and intervention in the cases of challenge

SUPPORT FOR SOME

There is a more focused approach adopted with a number of identifiable groups of young people who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour. These structures seek to provide a more targeted support structure to promote and scaffold wellbeing for these identified groups. A recent addition in this area is the Alert programme, supported by the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS). Our student support team, SEN team and management team also contribute to supporting students in this area.

SUPPORT FOR A FEW

This support focuses on putting in place interventions for young people with more complex and enduring needs. Work with this group of students is structured under the development of an ISP (Individual Student Profile/Plan) and IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan). The details of the development

of these plans are outlined in the SEN policy of the school. In some cases, students under the care of the student support team will also have a student support file.

STAFF WELLBEING

Staff at Borrisokane Community College work in a supported environment. Undoubtedly, the nature of the role, in seeking to develop the whole person is hugely demanding. At Board of Management meetings, the principal's report keeps the board informed of the work of staff. This is formally affirmed at staff gatherings, through the agreed report and through contact from the principal, deputy principal and Chair of the Board with individual members of staff.

The College has been recently upgraded to include more modern staff facilities and workrooms as well as subject relevant technology and software that is up to date. Teacher based classrooms are in the majority and this has led to improved working conditions for staff. Our staff room is well equipped and provides a communal space for staff. There is a separate staff workroom area available.

School management work collaboratively with the whole staff. Management respect the professional commitment of each staff member and regard them as colleagues and friends. Management is understanding of the complex pressures which may come to bear on all members of staff from time to time and respond with compassion. Staff members are encouraged and supported to take on new roles, gain further qualifications or attend relevant CPD courses.

Borrisokane Community College promotes a culture of collaborative collegiality locally, nationally and internationally. This is achieved through regular subject department meetings, whole staff meetings, staff planning committees and an online network of resources on Sharepoint, as well as participation in programmes such as the Learning School Project and Erasmus+.The whole school email system and digital school calendar are used regularly to ensure all staff are aware of important events and opportunities.

The school has a staff social committee which organise events periodically throughout the year to enhance personal relationships between staff members. Carecall is available to all teachers, provided by the ETB, as well as individual union related supports that staff can avail of.

POLICY PROTOCOL

All elements of this policy are reviewed periodically, through informal student feedback on the speakers, programmes and activities, by questionnaires and small group discussions. The policy document will be formally reviewed on a regular basis from the time of ratification.

Ratified by the Board of Management: June 10th 2019

Appendix 1:

WORK TO DATE

Wellbeing Committee Work to Date as of March 2017:

At the beginning of the new academic year 2016/17 a committee of 6 interested teachers was established to focus on the area of student wellbeing. The following is a breakdown of work completed and action points identified, as well as future aims:

Activities undertaken;

Planning session with PDST mentor - Bríd Kennedy

Identification of policy focus and discussion of pre-existing policies and initiatives to be linked in.

Agreement of structure of policy as well as multiple drafts, reviewed and agreed on at regular meetings.

SSE 6 step process followed

A random sample of students from each year group was surveyed to investigate areas of wellbeing in need of further attention.

Results of this were reviewed and summarised before being taken to a focus group of student council members to gain more in depth feedback.

Similarly, an online survey was distributed to all staff members to gauge opinion on wellbeing in the school from their perspective.

Both sets of results and the focus group feedback were taken into account in deciding an area of action for this academic year.

Email to all staff to inform them of area of action and invite feedback.

Also liaised with teachers of SPHE/religion and care team members in finalising the area of action to ensure cohesion of efforts.

Re-introduction of Respect charter, copies for classrooms and highlight at roll call.

Going forward;

- School commitment to Wellbeing visible to students, developing a culture of well-becoming
- Students to be involved in decisions which affect them as much as possible
- More positive wellbeing means more positive cognitive outcomes
- Holiday related posters in different languages and from different traditions
- Continued drafting of Wellbeing policy, specifically the Evaluation and Conclusion sections
- PASS test results from all students to be analysed once available.
- Committee to present an update on the Wellbeing policy at whole staff meeting – April 5th
- The committee going forward aims to comprise representatives in line with the wellbeing guidelines.

Work carried out by the Wellbeing Committee in 2018/2019:

- Updated Wellbeing policy
- Wellbeing in Subject Department Plans (staff reminded at final staff meeting)
- Focus areas: Policy and Planning, Relationships
- Wellbeing Promotion Indicators for Success being met:

Policy & Planning

- Schools and centres for education use a Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process to develop, implement and review wellbeing promotion.
- Schools and centres for education incorporate wellbeing promotion into whole school policies and practices.

Relationships & Partnerships

- Children and young people, their parents and other external partners are actively involved in wellbeing promotion within the school community.
- All adults in schools and centres for education have an increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to children and young people, and signposting them to internal or external pathways for support when needed.

- Wellbeing Tree at Christmas
- Time-Out/Take 5 for your Mental Health Presentation
- No phone day (in line with Internet Safety Day)
- Staff Wellbeing Activity - 1 hour of Croke Park - Walk/Pilates/Sport/Personal Planning Time
- Staff Room Treat Days
- Motivational quotes for teachers put up in prominent areas
- Chocolates and motivational quotes given to teachers as a token of appreciation
- Student Wellbeing: Coffee Morning 6th years
- Mindfulness Workshops at lunch – Trudy
- Lollipops given to students – Good Luck gesture for exam students
- Staff Lotto-final day and staff feedback will be sought for staff lotto once a month next year