St Benildus College

Wellbeing Policy

Staff  ✓  Reviewed
Parents  ✓  Reviewed
Student Council  ✓  Reviewed
Board of Management  November 2018  Ratified
**St Benildus College Mission Statement**

Wellbeing has been central to St Benildus College for many years. The Junior Cycle Wellbeing Programme gave us the opportunity to reflect on the good work that is happening and to consider further methods to support our students.

The Mission Statement of the College places the students’ holistic development at the core of our aims:

*St Benildus College provides a Catholic, LaSallian education rooted in a tradition which prepares young people for college and for life. The school seeks to educate students spiritually, academically, physically and socially through the promotion of Christian values, teaching the broad, prescribed academic programmes as well as a wide range of student activities under the guidance of a caring, dedicated management, staff and administration.*

**Designing the Programme**

The voices of all partners in education are informing the design and contents of our Wellbeing Programme. St Benildus College has been looking after the wellbeing of its students long before there was an official need for a wellbeing programme. Teachers’ voices have positively shaped the Wellbeing programme. The process of consultation and curriculum planning has included staff consultations, the Guidance Department, the LS Department, Year Heads and Senior Management.

Students have been consulted through the Student Council and further consultation will be carried out through conducting Wellbeing student focus groups. Discussion with the Parents’ Association has taken place and further consultation is planned to review the current programme. It is envisaged that the Wellbeing programme 2018 will achieve synergy and a cohesive approach to Wellbeing.

Our Wellbeing programme aims to foster happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to St Benildus College. We have embraced a whole-school approach and aligned the design and planning for our Wellbeing programme with School Self-Evaluation, School Policies and Practice. Our Wellbeing programme is anchored in the following subject areas: SPHE, PE, CSPE, Guidance and other Units of Learning.

**Aims**
There are 6 key indicators of Wellbeing. These indicators are the focus of the wellbeing programme in St Benildus College.

Wellbeing contributes directly to students’ physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience. Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community. 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.

**Scope of the Wellbeing Policy**

- Explore current and future avenues for fostering happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to St Benildus College.
- Reflect on how we are currently addressing the area of Wellbeing in our school through curricular and extra-curricular provision.
- Comply with DES Circular 0015/2017 which mandates 300 hours of Wellbeing to be included on the timetable over the 3 year cycle from September 2017 and building to 400 hours of Wellbeing by 2020.
- Consider the voices of key stakeholders, namely staff, parents, students, trustees and Board of Management. Engage in an extensive process of consultation to ensure that the voices and input of the whole school community are valued. This will foster positive buy-in, ownership and empowerment in the context of curricular reform and change management.
• Demonstrate an awareness of our unique school context, our characteristic spirit and the values underpinning our mission statement.

• Adopt an open, transparent and consultative approach to the implementation of a Wellbeing Programme. We are cognisant of the necessity to constantly plan, review and reflect, three premises also inherent in School Self Evaluation (SSE).

• Support the consultation process and use feedback to inform the curricular plan for Wellbeing. Explore the full spectrum of innovative curricular possibilities for Wellbeing, aligned to the identified subject areas, PE, SPHE, CSPE, Guidance and other units of work.

• Build staff capacity through the provision of CPD and planning time for Wellbeing during the consultation, implementation and review phases.

St Benildus Wellbeing Programme 2018-2021

Wellbeing Curriculum Plan

Wellbeing in the Context of the Framework for Junior Cycle

The Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2017, p.44) state that when planning a 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.

The vision for Junior Cycle places students at the centre of all endeavours

“Junior cycle places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives”, (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.6).

Wellbeing is one of the eight principles underpinning the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)
The learning at the core of junior cycle is described in twenty-four statements of learning. They are central to planning for, the students’ experience of, and the evaluation of the school’s junior cycle programme” (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.).

The purpose of learning statements:
- To ensure a rich educational experience for students.
- Learning that has both breadth and depth and is varied.
- To enable development of the key skills.
- To give access to a varied curriculum of knowledge.

The following Statements of Learning are particularly applicable to Wellbeing:
- 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).
First Years are timetabled for 4 Wellbeing classes per week - PE x 2, CSPE x 1, SPHE x 1.

Second Years are timetabled for 5 Wellbeing classes per week - PE x 2, CSPE x 1, SPHE x 1, Wellbeing Learning Units x 1 (Option Band of 5 Rotating Learning Units x 6 weeks each).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PE</th>
<th>SPHE</th>
<th>CSPE</th>
<th>Other Units of Learning</th>
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<td>3rd Year</td>
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Units of Learning for 2018-2019:
Wellbeing Learning Units x 1 class (Option Band of 5 Rotating Learning Units x 6 weeks each) will include a selection of the following units:

**Module 1: Internet Safety**
Students learn to be connected through the use of technology. They are made aware of both the positive and negative use of technology and how to use technology responsibly.

**Module 2: Drama**
Students are connected to each other through their performances. They learn to respect each other and they are active throughout the module. Finally, the students learn resilience as they learn confidence performing in front of their peers.

**Module 3: Environmental Studies**
Students learn to respect the world around them. They gain awareness of how they affect their local, national and international environment through the choices they make in their day to day lives.

**Module 4: Art Therapy**
The students connect to themselves through their art and they learn to express themselves which allows students to build resilience. They also learn to respect each other’s efforts and appreciate the time and effort that goes into individual expressions.
Module 5: Nutrition

Students learn to think responsibly about the food that they are eating and how it affects their bodies. They are given awareness of a healthy diet and how to respect themselves.

This rotation is reflected in the 2018-2019 timetable below.

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<th>2.4</th>
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<td>Art Therapy</td>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Drama</td>
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<td>Art Therapy</td>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Internet Safety</td>
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Module 1: Online Safety

Scheme of Work

Week 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Wellbeing and technology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Positive effects</td>
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<td>- Negative effects</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Introduce Cyberbullying</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What it is</td>
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<td>- Examples</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td><strong>Class 1</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th><strong>Class 1</strong></th>
<th>The role of the Smart Phone in today’s society</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Advantages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Disadvantages</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Class 2</strong></td>
<td>Better connected than ever before but perhaps more lonely?</td>
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<td>- Social interaction lost due to technology</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th><strong>Class 1</strong></th>
<th>Internet/Screen addiction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Live Online survey</td>
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<td>- An appropriate amount of time to spend?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Class 2</strong></td>
<td>Am I addicted?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Questionnaire</td>
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<td>- Mark and Score</td>
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<th><strong>Class 1</strong></th>
<th>Cyber Security</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Threats to data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>Phishing attacks</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- examples</td>
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<td>- secure, strong passwords</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Cloud Storage</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Advantages and Disadvantages</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>Design Online Safety Poster</th>
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**Module 2: Drama**

**Scheme of Work**

**Week 1:**
5 minute breathing techniques and stretches
Warm up games- Zip Zap Boing, follow the leader, concentration circle
Group freeze frames and then students will get into groups of 4/5. Each group is given a title and they need to create 3 freeze frames that link and perform to the class. The class must guess the title they have been given.

**Week 2:**
5 min breathing and stretches
Warm up games: Zip zap going, garden statues
Pre performance prep: what are you doing? This game is an introduction of mime and every one in a circle has to mime an action and the rest of the circle has to guess.
In groups of 4/5 they are given fairy tale to react key moments through mime.

**Week 3:**
5 mins breathing and stretches
Warm up games: mime race, body shapes in groups
Pre performance prep: establishing setting- while group has to walk around the area. When I say 3..2..1...freeze, students must listen to the location given and pretend they are a character there, e.g. concert, classroom, circus...
Improvisation in groups. A location is given and the students have to come up with a short improvisation

**Week 4:**
Breathing and stretches
Warm up games
Pre performance prep: character work- students are given situations and characters in pairs and they have to improvise the conversation as those characters
Introduction to short scripts in pairs, 3’s or 4’s. Establish characters and figure out what way they walk, talk and if there are certain gestures that they require

**Week 5:**
Breathing and stretches
Pre performance work: walking around the room the students must listen to certain characteristics and act out the appropriate action or movement
Script work: establish location and staging. Movements on stage and props if needed. Trying to learn a few lines so not to be dependent on the script
Some groups will have the opportunity to perform and peer assessment will take place

**Week 6:**
Warm up and stretches
Working on scripts and getting ready for performance to class.
Performance of all groupings and discussion at the end at how they felt during the performance.

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**Module 3: Environmental Studies**

**Scheme of Work**
The environmental studies module for second year students runs as a 7 week course. The main aim of the module is to challenge the thoughts of the students and prompt realisation of how they affect their local, national and international environment through the choices they make in their day to day lives. Each class takes place on Monday from 9:05 – 9:50.

**Week 1:**
Introduction to the course, I provide the layout of the classes, run through class rules and explain the main reasons why this is a very important and topical subject matter in today's climate. In the first class we delve into and discuss the impact and effects of “Single-Use Plastics”. This being a topic of much conversation and across media outlets a lot of the students have a prior knowledge of the topic.

**Week 2 & 3:**
In the second and third class I introduce the students to the global problem that plastics are causing. I chose a Sky News documentary “A Plastic Tide” to show this. It is a great documentary showing different problem's associated in different areas around the world. Through discussion with the students it seemed to broaden their outlook on the problem and they began to realise the enormity of the problem.

**Week 4:**
We begin every class with a discussion of the previous classes and refresher their minds. In week 4 we look a bit more into possible solutions. I give them the opportunity to think in pairs and groups to think creatively of they might address certain problems. It is interesting to see what they believe are the biggest problems and how they think they could solve them. I show them the plan to clean the world’s oceans of plastic by Boyan Slat, a Dutch environmental activist.

**Week 5 & 6:**
Week 5 and 6 we look at the Irish context and the students get a more in depth look at the problems and solutions that is going around them. We use the RTÉ television series “Eco-Eye” to address issues that are found in Ireland. The students can be sometimes shocked at what they see and through class discussion they develop the idea of responsibility of the world around them. In the following lesson we discuss ways of creating awareness in our College community and how we can address the issue. The students participate in a walking debate to get them active and moving in the class. They are able to voice their own views while respecting other people’s opinions.

**Week 7:**
This is the last lesson in the module and it is a chance for the students to give their feedback on the module. They create a list of what they enjoyed, learned, would like to know more of, and what would they change for the next group. This allows me to tailor the module to the student’s interests. After the feedback, students create electronic or handmade posters to create awareness in the school of environmental problems and what can be done.

**Key Skills of the JCPA**
“Key skills will be embedded in the learning outcomes of every junior cycle subject and short course” (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.15). Key skills help learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to face the many challenges in today’s world. They also support students in learning how to learn and take responsibility for their own learning.
The 8 key skills for the JCPA have been considered in the making of our wellbeing programme and each skill is addressed in our programme.

**MANAGING MYSELF**
- Knowing myself
- Making considered decisions
- Setting and achieving personal goals
- Being able to reflect on my own learning
- Using digital technology to manage myself and my learning

**STAYING WELL**
- 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

**COMMUNICATING**
- Listening and expressing myself
- Using language
- Using numbers and data
- Performing and presenting
- Discussing and debating
- Using digital technology to communicate

**BEING CREATIVE**
- Imagining
- Exploring options and alternatives
- Implementing ideas and taking action
- Learning creatively
- Stimulating creativity using digital technology

**WORKING WITH OTHERS**
- Developing good relationships and dealing with conflict
- Co-operating
- Respecting difference
- Contributing to making the world a better place
- Learning with others
- Working with others through digital technology

**MANAGING INFORMATION AND THINKING**
- Being curious
- Gathering, recording, organising, and evaluating information and data
- Thinking creatively and critically
- Reflecting on and evaluating my learning
- Using digital technology to access, manage and share content

**Our School Context and the Four Aspects of Wellbeing**
Relationships

St Benildus College is an all-boys Catholic Voluntary Secondary School, founded by the Lasallian Order and under the trusteeship of Le Chéile. We fully subscribe to the strong religious ethos which permeates the very fabric of our school. Caring and compassionate inter-personal relationships are fostered with students, staff, parents and the wider school community. We value the importance of a holistic education and nurturing our students to reach their full potential, celebrating moments of success and encouraging all students to grow and develop as individuals with unique talents and a strong sense of self-worth.

Respectful and caring relationships between staff and students are evident in daily interactions and in the classroom. Children and young people, their parents and other external partners are actively involved in wellbeing promotion within the school community through the Parents’ Association, the Student Council, staff meetings, subject/department meetings, extracurricular meetings, United Through sports Day and Rás Benildus to name a few.

There are structures in place designed to support the wellbeing of our students. We have a very strong pastoral care system, with clear channels of support for students’ wellbeing, including Year Heads, three Guidance Counsellors, a Student Support Team and the Principal and Deputy Principals. Students know where to get support and how to access the ‘care’ structures in the school. Students feel safe, secure and respected in St Benildus College. There is a positive discipline policy where discipline issues are resolved with care, respect and consistency. Weekly meetings are timetabled for the Student Support Team and the Management / LS and Guidance Team. We recognise the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to children and young people, and signposting them to internal or external pathways for support when needed.

Curriculum

St Benildus has a reputation for academic excellence and fostering the unique talents of all students. Student learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked, students learn best when their wellbeing is optimised and they develop a strong sense of wellbeing when they experience success in learning. We have a highly dedicated teaching staff with huge expertise, all of whom are committed to maintaining excellence in teaching and learning. All staff contribute to promoting a caring and inclusive environment within the school that is supportive of student wellbeing. Children and young people experience positive, high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, which provides opportunities for success for all. Children and young people access curricular activities to promote their physical, social and emotional competence to enhance their overall wellbeing.
Daily monitoring of attendance occurs, and contact is made with parents regularly to ensure that the needs of each student is being met or if there is concern over attendance. Students who may be of concern about completing school are given a lot of support through the guidance department, parental contact with year head and individual meetings. A transition plan is in place to help first year students integrate into post primary school. This includes daily visits to each class by the year head, a transition plan that is carried out by the SPHE teachers in September and an afternoon of activities to help students get to know each other. Further transition planning occurs in Transition Year before entering into Fifth Year. This is part of the guidance module and helps students prepare for the challenge of the Leaving Certificate and the adjustment to a faster pace.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum to afford students’ opportunities to achieve success in accordance with their talents, aptitudes and interests. We are an inclusive school and support many students with additional needs. We offer Junior Certificate, an optional TY programme, the established Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP).

**Culture & Environment**

St Benildus College caters for more than 700 young men from 1st Year through to 6th Year. The 25 acre college campus has extensive academic, sporting and recreational facilities which benefit the students. The unique traditions of our LaSallian heritage inspire our educational mission, which is to foster the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of each student. Academic achievement is stressed but participation in artistic and sporting activities is also strongly encouraged. The Irish language has a firm and secure place in the life of the school and many facets of Irish life, language and literature are studied and enjoyed.

The characteristic spirit of our school is tangible through our warm, caring and Christian ethos. We constantly strive to instil a sense of school connectedness and promote a positive school culture which is holistic, respectful, spiritual, academic and affirming. Our focus is on the holistic development of each of our students and the qualities of politeness, confidence and self-esteem are core aspects of the educational programme here in the College. Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. Many systems are in place so that the voice of the child/young person, teacher and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and ethos. There is a positive approach to discipline where issues are resolved with care, respect and consistency. These include the Student Council, the Mentor System, the Guidance team, the Year Heads, the Senior Management, extracurricular activities and the general rapport between all members of the school community.
The philosophy of St. Benildus College is to foster the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of each pupil. Through an innovative and flexible curriculum, a broad inclusive education is provided in an atmosphere of mutual respect and co-operation.

Extracurricular activities are an important part of life in St Benildus College. All activities provide our students with the opportunity to develop their different interests and abilities. In a safe, well-supervised environment, we support the student as an individual and encourage each student to forge new friendships, hone skills, discover new talents and challenge both body and mind. We also nurture an interest in sport among our pupils. The College prioritises enjoyment in all forms of physical activity, as we recognise the importance of happiness in the enrichment of the complete educational experience.

Extracurricular activities provide an excellent opportunity for students to learn leadership skills, teamwork, friendship, develop confidence and an awareness of the importance of lifelong activity and health. It offers the opportunity for each person to achieve his own unique potential. We are very proud to provide opportunities to all students irrespective of ability, through our full range of activities in the College.

Moreover, the outreach possibilities of sporting activity are constantly explored. Our students are linked with Special Olympics, ‘Run 4 Life’, local sporting clubs, Rás Benildus, and the promotion and organisation of sports in local primary schools. We’re particularly proud of the ongoing participation of all of our students in the Run for Life initiative. Special qualities of leadership, benevolence and social awareness are fostered through this student-led initiative, which has since 2002, raised more than €500,000 for various charities in Ireland.

Amongst the sports offered to our students are:
- Athletics
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Chess
- Gaelic Football
- Gym Club
- Hurling
- Rugby
- Soccer
Table Tennis
Golf

Other extracurricular activities include:

- Charity work and fundraising
- Creative writing
- Debating
- Drama
- European Comenius Project
- Gaisce (The President’s Award)
- Music
- Student Council
- Quiz Teams

**Policy and Planning**

The students’ wellbeing is at the core of the school and the school endeavours to incorporate wellbeing promotion into whole school policies and practices. Consultation with staff, children and young people, and parents/carers is undertaken when developing and reviewing and updating school policies. Policies are made available to staff, children and young people, parents/carers and relevant partners. All teaching and non-teaching staff have access to policies and procedures. The school has an established system for gathering information on children and young people at points of transition and uses the Education Passport (NCCA) for children and young people transitioning to post primary school. Family and child/young person confidentiality is respected at all times and staff follow school guidelines for the appropriate sharing of confidential information. Records about individual children and young people are stored securely. The school has a system in place for gathering information on levels of school risk factors such as bullying; absenteeism; truancy and disruptive behaviour. The school adheres to DES circular on the use of programmes and/or external speakers. At post primary level, the whole school Guidance Plan sets out how Student Support Teams will operate. The school identifies and participates in specific national or local initiatives for wellbeing promotion.

**Conclusion**

The 2018 Wellbeing Guidelines place a strong emphasis on the role that Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), Physical Education (PE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), guidance and other units of learning can play in supporting learning about wellbeing and learning for wellbeing. 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. The wellbeing of our students is at the heart of our school.