



Patrician Presentation Secondary School

Fethard, Co. Tipperary
Email: ppssadmin@gmail .com

Telephone: (052) 6131572
Fax: (052) 6132939



"Our mission is to encourage all pupils to reach their potential in a caring and Christian environment"

Wellbeing Policy 2024



Signed:

Date

15/5/23

Date for review March 21st 2025

This plan should be read in conjunction with:

1. Our Child Protection Policy.
2. Our SPHE and RSE Policy.
3. Our Pastoral Care Policy
4. The Whole School Guidance Plan

Table of contents

Introduction	5
Mission Statement	5
Rationale for the Policy	5
The Structure of the Wellbeing Policy	7
Indicators of Wellbeing	8
Wellbeing within the curriculum	10
The Principles of Junior Cycle Education	11
24 Statements of Learning	11
Key Skills of Junior Cycle	12
Whole School Approach to Wellbeing	14
Wellbeing within Curricular Subjects	20
Other Areas of Wellbeing	20
Timetable for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle	21



Mission statement

To encourage all pupils to reach their potential in a caring and Christian environment"

WELLBEING



Introduction

Patrician Presentation Secondary School is situated in the town of Fethard, Co. Tipperary. It has 249 students of mixed gender as of 2023. It provides education for students from the town and the surrounding area between Clonmel and Killenaule.

Mission statement

“Our mission is to encourage all pupils to reach their potential in a caring and Christian environment”

Patrician Presentation secondary school is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School under the patronage of Le Chéile, whose charter feeds strongly into the mission statement and ethos of the school. Both the charter of the patrons and the mission statement are rooted in Christianity, care, and the holistic education of the student.

Rational for the policy

In the context of the school mission statement and ethos outlined above it is clear that we must strive to ensure a clear focus is had on wellbeing as part of the students’ school experience. In Patrician Presentation we view the support of wellbeing as a foundational

element of holistic education of our students and the basis for a rich learning experience as well as the formation of a well-rounded and happy student. Hence, the emphases on the role of the whole school community in the wellbeing programme. This is a whole school policy which therefore feeds into every aspect of learning and school activities.

In conjunction with our own vision as a school to ensure the wellbeing of our students, *The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015)* highlights the necessity for a new area of learning at junior cycle; Wellbeing. This policy has been introduced to ensure the school is responding adequately to the changing and diverse needs of each of our pupils. It is our belief that the NCCA aims in relation to wellbeing feed into and coincide strongly with our own mission statement, charter of our patrons and ethos as a school.

‘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.’
(NCCA, 2017)



Education and Wellbeing are inextricably linked. ESRI research has found that *‘children with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social and school wellbeing had higher levels of academic achievement subsequently (at ages 11, 14, and 16)’* (Smyth, E. 2015). Within our Wellbeing programme at Patrician Presentation our vision is to enable students to

build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and to their community.

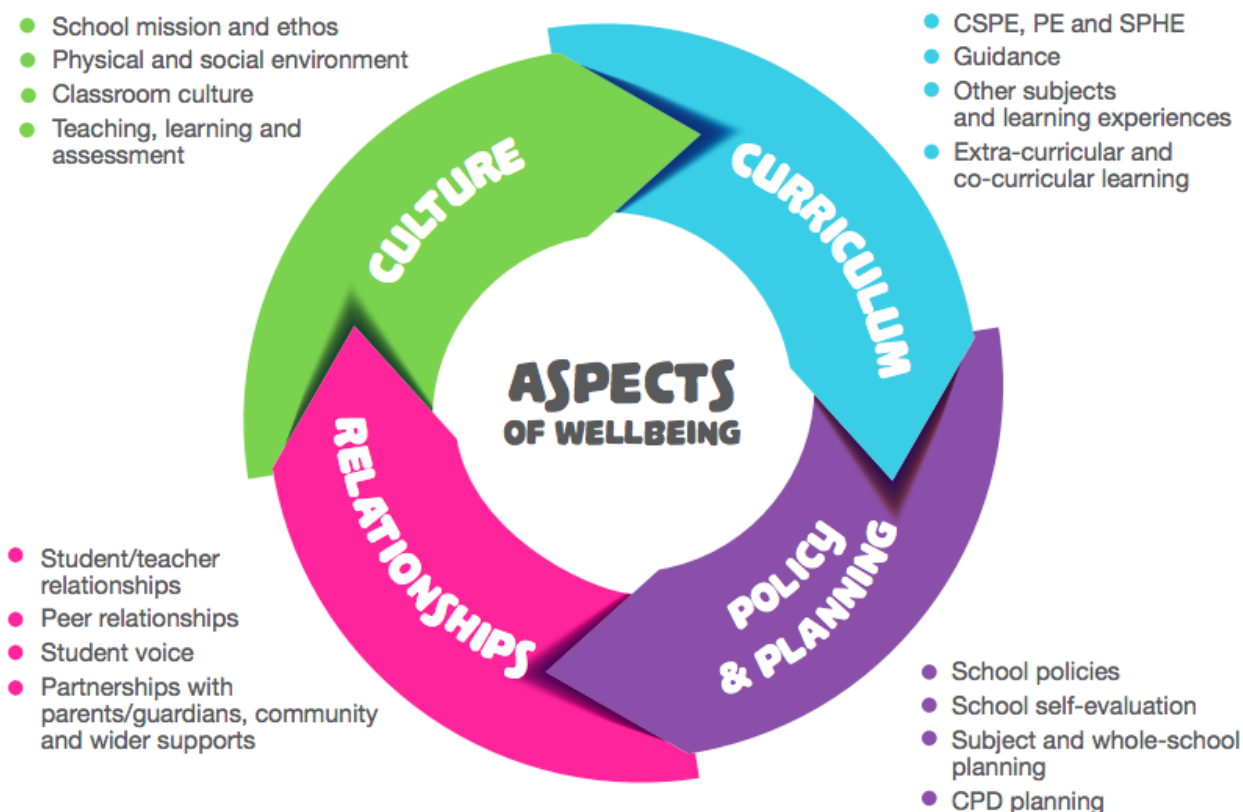
Patrician Presentation Secondary School will endeavour to facilitate the holistic development of each of our students using the six indicators of Wellbeing as the focal point of our actions: Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient and Respected and Aware.

The Structure of the Wellbeing Policy

The foundation of this policy is based on the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines and Wellbeing indicators, the aim of which is to support schools in planning and developing a consistent Wellbeing programme. Within our policy we hope to enhance and develop our understanding, practice and curricula for Wellbeing already existing in school. Through the focus on four aspects of Wellbeing in our school

– School Culture, Relationships, Policy & Planning and Curriculum we aim to establish a Wellbeing policy which encompasses the whole school community.

The Four Aspects of Wellbeing in Schools



(Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, NCCA, 2017; Figure 6, page 26)

Indicators of Wellbeing

Planning for Wellbeing involves consideration of these aspects: culture, relationships, policy and planning and the curriculum. This policy looks at ways in which a whole-school community can contribute to building the kind of culture, relationships and policies

that support student Wellbeing as well as the curriculum adopted to best support this. These four aspects coincide with the four areas of action recommended in *the Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (2013)* and with *Schools for Health in Ireland: Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School*. As stated previously, Patrician Presentation Secondary School will endeavour to facilitate the holistic development of each of our students using the six indicators of Wellbeing. These 6 indicators can be seen below.

Indicators of Wellbeing (*Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, NCCA, 2017; page 44*)

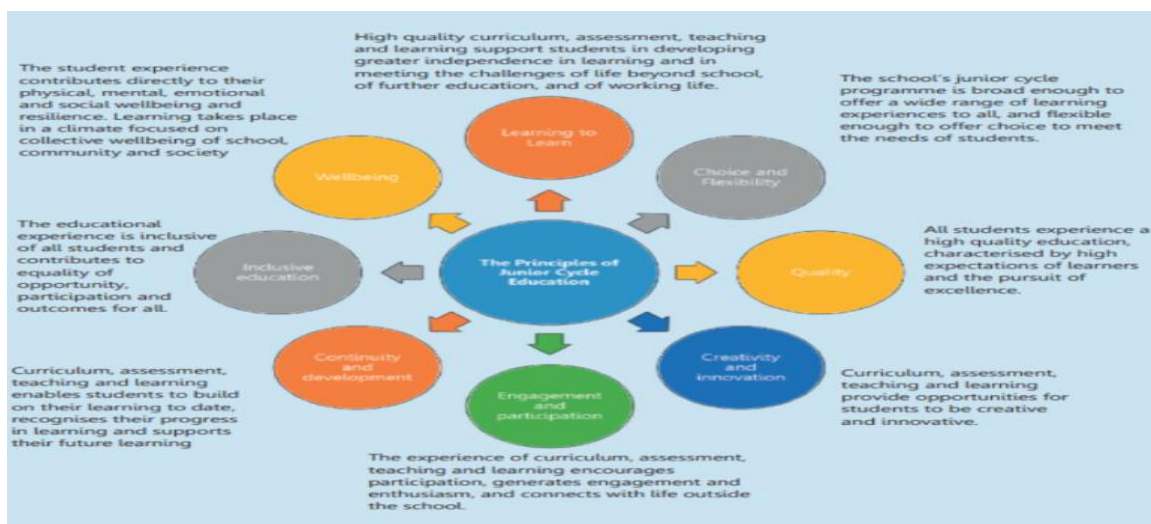


Wellbeing Within the Curriculum

Wellbeing, as one of the core principles of the junior cycle extends across the three junior cycle years from 1st to 3rd year. While the principle of wellbeing may not be a core principle as per NCCA guidelines within the leaving cert cycle, we as a school are very cognisant of the need for wellbeing among our *whole* student population regardless of year group. However this policy focuses predominantly on wellbeing within the junior cycle as wellbeing is very much embedded into the principles of the junior cycle, 24 statements of learning and the key skills of the junior cycle.

“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, page 6)



The Principles of Junior Cycle Education

Wellbeing is one of the eight principles underpinning the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). The principle of wellbeing states that students experience contributes directly to their physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience. Learning takes place in a climate focused on collective wellbeing of school, community and society.

24 Statements of learning

“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, page 12)

The purposes of the Statements of Learning are:

- 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 (SOL) are particularly applicable to Wellbeing:

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

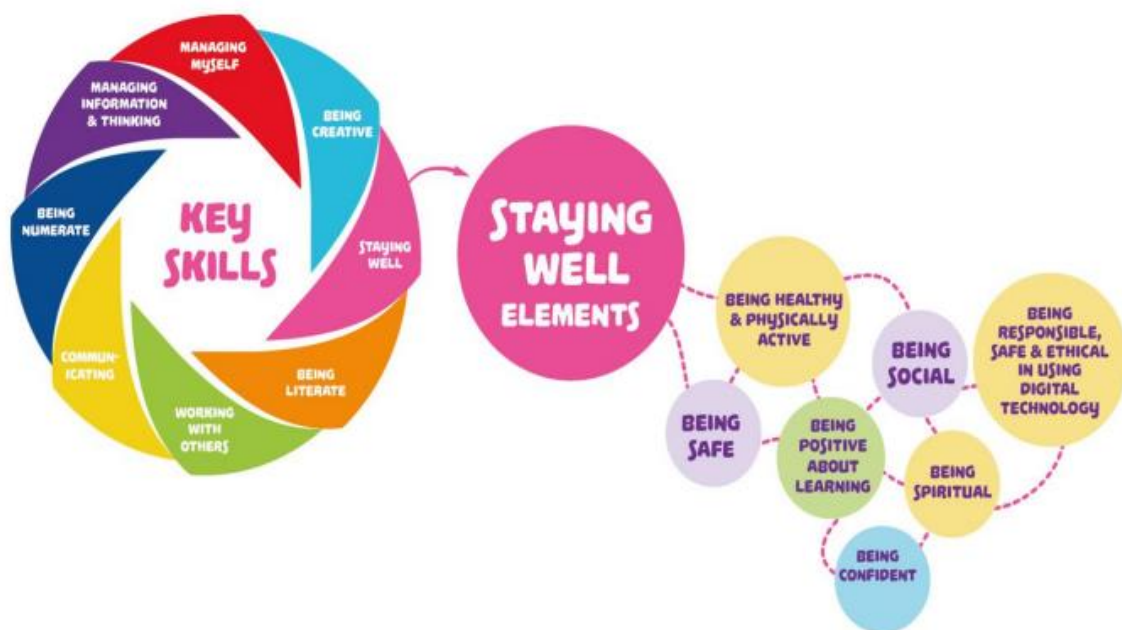
Key skills of Junior Cycle

Learners need a wide range of skills to help them face the many challenges presented to them in today's world. They develop specific skills in their subjects and other courses. But there is also a more general set of skills that are needed to support learners in their personal, social and work lives. These are referred to as the key skills of junior cycle. As learners develop each of the key skills in an integrated way they will also become better learners. The six key skills of junior cycle are Managing Myself, Staying Well, Communicating, Being Creative, Working with Others, and Managing Information and

Thinking. Working with digital technology also forms part of each of the skills.

“Key skills will be embedded in the learning outcomes of every junior cycle subject and short course”

(Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, page15)



As stated in the latest *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018-2023)*

‘The promotion of wellbeing for all is central to the Department’s mission to enable individuals to achieve their full potential and contribute to Ireland’s social, cultural and economic development.’

As schools play a vital role in the promotion of Wellbeing we hope to highlight the increasing importance of the area by providing a wide

range of approaches and activities which support our students academically, physically, socially, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It is our hope that through our curriculum students will develop the skills and sense of connectedness their own self, their peers, their teachers, their school and their community.

Whole School Approach to Wellbeing

The curricular aspect of our Wellbeing policy has been discussed at length and devised with the student at the centre of learning in mind. A core group was established between members of management, subject teachers and the wellbeing teams. The areas of PE, SPHE, CSPE as well as Pastoral Care, have been identified as area's in which our Wellbeing programme will be embedded heavily. That being said, it is understood that Wellbeing should be embedded across all subject areas.

Whole school wellbeing is evident in the following areas:

1. School policies

The following school policies and methods have been devised with wellbeing in mind.

- Admissions
- Anti bullying

- Attendance
- Code of behaviour
- Data protection
- Child protection
- Critical incident
- SPHE and RSE
- School completion
- Substance misuse
- Pastoral care
- Whole school guidance plan
- Tusla strategy

2. How our catholic ethos supports wellbeing

All students engage in religious education in our school. This provides them with a time to learn, reflect, meditate and enhance spiritual growth: all essential parts of wellbeing.

One of the schools RE teachers, Marie Maher, is a trained retreat provider by way of undertaking the “Shekinah Retreat Course”. All students are provided with at least one retreat per year.

Mass is attended at specific dates throughout the year and the holy orders work closely with the school. One such example of the close working of school and church is by way of the school designing the Christmas crib for the church every year.

We are in the process of developing a wellbeing room that will double up as a prayer room. This space will provide students with a calm area to pray, reflect, meditate and relax

3. Wellbeing Team

A Wellbeing Team consists of 6 members of staff who are teaching SPHE, CSPE and PE, as well as the guidance counsellor and deputy principal. It is hoped to build on this each year.

4. The Student Support Team (SST)

This team is comprised of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, SEN coordinator and HSLO and SCO. The SST works collaboratively to support students with significant social, emotional and circumstantial difficulties. The SST often works with external agencies such as Tusla, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health) in supporting students. The SST works very closely with the wellbeing team.

5. Year Head Structure

The role of the Junior Year Head is essential for junior cycle students in the school. This was identified in the whole school needs analysis and the Post of Responsibility review. The Junior Year Head meets every week with Principal and Deputy Principal. This team works with others e.g. SEN, SST, Guidance Counsellor etc., to focus on the task of

overseeing the welfare of the various year groups so that all students are supported at every level.

6. Class Tutors

Members of teaching staff act as Class Tutors voluntarily. The Tutor is a consistent point of contact for the student for day to day management (e.g. signing journal) but is also there in a pastoral role supporting individual students.

7. Student voice

The school has an active students union where students' can voice their opinions and ideas. The students union meet regularly and relay student opinions and ideas to the principal. Student are also given the opportunity to plan, organise and take part in a yearly school tour. Student voice has contributed to us having a Lego club, dungeons and dragons club, FIFA PlayStation club, darts club, Allies club and board games club. Student voice has also contributed to the range of new subjects we choose to offer over the past 4 years (music, history, politics and society, PE and Chemistry)

8. 1st Year Mentoring program

A cohort of 5th year students act as mentors to first year students every year. This offers 1st years a "buddy approach" and provides a means of support for the new students.

9. School trips

School trips at various times are offered to students. Formal school trips like 4 night trips to Paris are regularly undertaken as are day trips to the UK for soccer games. Shorter trips such as cycling days, surfing days, mountain walks etc. are also regularly undertaken. This allows opportunity for bonding and friendship development within each class group as well as between class/year groups. Transition Year involves many group activities which encourage students to mix and take part in various activities allowing for new experiences. The first year students are brought on a get to know you day to Emerald park in the June preceding their entrance into secondary school. This helps them make friends before entering secondary school and to alleviate any stress they have associated with meeting new peers.

10. Sports Day

This is held once a year in May. It involves various sporting activities - individual and group. Most activities are for fun to encourage all to take part. Physical activity is a very important part of wellbeing. Transition years organise this event and the day is finished with 6th years students playing teachers in a soccer game.

11. Christmas show

The school has regularly hosted Christmas shows. Students audition and are chosen to sing/play music/dance for the rest of the school and the community at large. This whole school event is always full of fun and promotes wellbeing for all.

12. Extra-curricular activities

Football, soccer, hurling, camogie, volleyball are played within the school and much of the student population take part. Added to this, every lunch time there are board games/draughts played by the junior years. Green schools offer the opportunity for students to make a difference in relation to global warming and looking after the environment. These activities provide for and ensure a sense of community and belonging to the students within the school.

13. Colour run: to show and support diversity in our school we engage in a fun colour run where the student's council organised students to run a track and they throw different colours at them. It is a fun day for all which helps highlight the diversity of all our students.

14. Fancy Dress: We have a fancy-dress day coming up to Halloween which is a fun day for all. Everyone takes part, including the staff and prizes are given to the most outlandish costume.

15. Wellness week: Wellness week is an important part of the school year. Wellness week incorporates many items such as Yoga, meditation, cooking, secret gift giving, Reading, Guest speakers, games etc.

15. Transition from Primary to Secondary School Supports

- **September** Taster days are offered to pupils from the surrounding feeder primary schools. The 5th and 6th class students get samples of art, maths magic, science, woodwork, home economics and PE. They also get a chance to meet some of the teachers they will have when they join the school.
- **Mid October:** Open Night
- **November:** Submission of enrolment forms
- **February:** Entrance Assessment day
- **May:** A transition booklet is given to students with teacher profile pictures and information about the school and what to expect upon entering PPSS. A virtual tour of the school is uploaded on our website.
- **Late May:** Division of students into class groups
- **Summer camp** Get to know you trip to Emerald park

- **Late August:** Induction day and a bonding trip
- **September:** Gradual introduction of homework. Support is given by the school's guidance counsellor and SEN coordinator in the areas of time management, book and locker management, problem solving scenarios, relationship building, etc
- **Meetings with parents:** Throughout the process as necessary and appropriate. Surveys of student and parent experiences of transitioning are held each October which is reported to the parents and BOM and informs future practice.

Wellbeing with the Curricular Subjects

As per with Circular 0015/2017, all junior cycle students are required to have 400 Curricular Hours minimum for Wellbeing at the end of their 3 year junior cycle programme.

We have chosen to implement these wellbeing hours into the subjects of SPHE, CSPE, PE as well as Pastoral care.

Other Areas of Wellbeing: At the beginning of the year we rendered it of utmost importance to spend time helping the 1st year students settle into school. We called this time "Managing my school time efficiently". Four hours will be spent with the guidance counsellor and SEN coordinator to help students

manage themselves in terms of sorting their books, learning to read their timetable, efficient use of their lockers etc.

Timetable for Junior Cycle to Include 400 Ours of Wellbeing

1st, 2nd and 3rd years					
Subjects	First Year Periods per week	Second Year Periods per week	Third Year Periods per week	Minimum Total Hours Required	Hours Allocated
English	3	3	3	240	300
Irish	3	3	3	240	300
Maths	3	3	3	240	300
History	2	2	2	200	200
Geography	2	2	2	200	200
Business studies	2	2	2	200	200
French or Music	2	2	2	200	200
Science	2	2	2	200	200
Religion (Non-examinable)	2	2	2	200	200
Option 1: HE or WW or TG or Art	2	2	2	200	200
Option 2: Art or TG or WW or HE	2	2	2	200	200
Wellbeing 1 - PE	1	1	1		100
Wellbeing 2 – SPHE	1	1	1		100
Wellbeing 3 - CSPE	1	1	1		100
Managing my school time	16	0	0		16
Colour Run and School Walk	5	5	5		15
Sports day and wellness week	10	10	10		30
Retreat	6	6	6		18
School trip	15	15	15		45
Total wellbeing				400	424