



Comeragh College

Wellbeing Policy



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Thiobraid Árann
*Tipperary Education and
Training Board*

Policy Area	Schools
Document Reference number	COM/W.BEING/055/1
Version	1
Document Drafted by	Comeragh College
Date previous version adopted by TETB	9 th June 2020
Date Reviewed/Amended by School	May, 2021
Date Reviewed/Ratified by Senior Management Team – CE and Directors	28 th June, 2021
Date noted/to be noted by TETB	7 th September, 2021
Date of Withdrawal of Obsolete Document	28 th June, 2021 Document Ref. No. COM/W.BEING/055/0 Version No. 1

Wellbeing Policy

This document was prepared by the Wellbeing Team on behalf of, and in consultation with, the Comeragh College Staff, Students, Parents and Board of Management.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Comeragh College we aim to provide a quality education for life in an innovative, responsive, and caring learning environment. In our school, students can attain the highest standards of excellence, academically and in all other aspects of their school activities.

VISION OF THE SCHOOL

Comeragh College is a college of Tipperary ETB. The school is a multi-denominational school.

- We have the highest ambitions and expectations in all aspects of school life and strive to nurture these qualities in every student.
- Our young people are treated as individuals and we are strongly committed to equality of opportunity.

We want all students to fulfil their potential both academically and socially so that they leave here with the widest range of choices open to them in a changing society.

Achieving our Vision

We aim to achieve our vision through:

1. Use of the DEIS 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. Raising awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing.
4. Embedding the four key areas of wellbeing promotion in our school by 2023 – Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Policy and Planning, Relationships and Partnerships.

RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) highlights the necessity for a new area of learning at junior cycle, Wellbeing. The necessity for the introduction of Wellbeing into post primary education has been long overdue. This policy has been introduced to ensure the school is responding adequately to the changing and diverse needs of each of our pupils. There are already evident similarities between our own mission statement and the definition of 'Student Wellbeing' as outlined in the NCCA guidelines.

'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). Comeragh College 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.



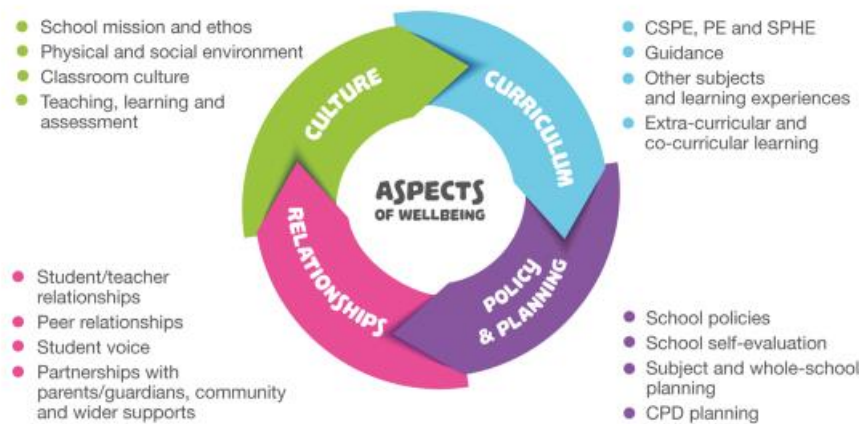
STRUCTURE OF THE POLICY

Junior Cycle Wellbeing

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 and 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 aspects of wellbeing promotion and in setting goals for improvement. The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice is available to download (www.jct.ie)

THE FOUR ASPECTS OF WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS



(Junior Cycle Wellbeing updated Guidelines, NCCA, 2021)

Within Comeragh College’s 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 school wide community.

Wellbeing – An Overview

Wellbeing is described as the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy. In Comeragh 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 aim to provide a quality education for life in an innovative, responsive and caring learning environment. In our school, students can attain the highest standards of excellence, academically and in all other aspects of their school activities.”

The wellbeing in a school starts with the frontline staff and there is a commitment in Comeragh College 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, and 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

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, the curricular, the wellbeing team and student voice.

- From September 2017 wellbeing will require a minimum of 300 hours timetabled engagement and up to 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.

At Comeragh College we believe that 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.

Wellbeing at Comeragh College will extend across the three Junior Cycle years from First to Third Year.

Although there is a strong framework already in place with regards to Wellbeing, we hope to raise further awareness of its necessity by highlighting the importance of Wellbeing on the school timetable.

“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)

The Principles of Junior Cycle Education

Wellbeing is one of the eight principles underpinning the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA):

1. Engagement and Participation
2. Learning to Learn
3. Choice and flexibility
4. Quality
5. Wellbeing
6. Inclusive Education
7. Creativity and Innovation
8. Continuity and Development



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 student’s experience of, and the evaluation of the school’s junior cycle programme”.

(Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015)

The purpose of the statement 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.

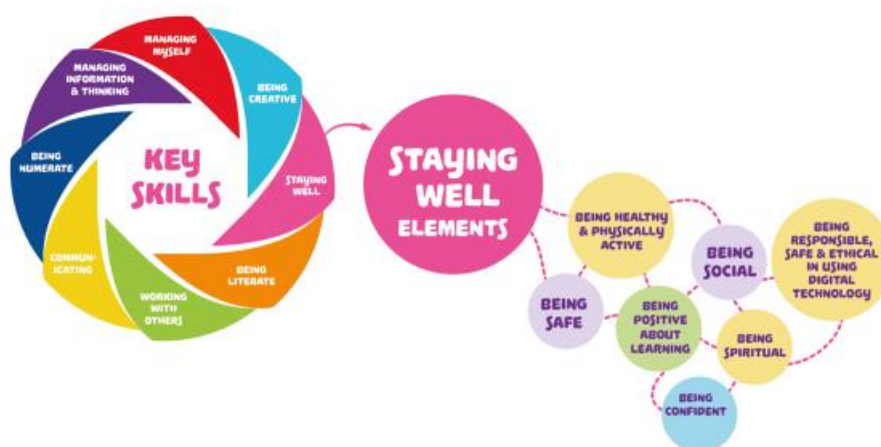
The following Statements of Learning (SOL) are particularly applicable to Wellbeing:

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 at 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*)



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 in Comeragh College that through our curriculum students will develop the skills and sense of connectedness with their own self, their peers, their teachers, their school and their community.

SCHOOL-WIDE WELLBEING

School-wide wellbeing is evident in the following areas:

Wellbeing Week

The aim of the annual wellbeing week (Active and Friendship week) is to create awareness around mental health, the nature of bullying and the various forms it can take and promote health and wellbeing, as well as adding to the positive atmosphere of the school. Ultimately it seeks to highlight what keeps us well, content, and whole.

Health Promoting School

The school is a key setting for health promotion. Comeragh College is working toward becoming a “Health Promoting School”. A HPS supports a school wide approach to promoting health and wellbeing. 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 evaluation of the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS) reports the following outcomes:

- Improved staff well-being
- Better learning outcomes for students
- A more co-ordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs
- Increased students’ 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

Extra and Co-Curricular Activities

The extensive options include Choir, sporting activities (basketball, hurling, football, ladies’ football, athletics and soccer), Model United Nations, YSI, BT Young Scientist.

The school offers many extra-curricular activities and students get involved in after-school or lunch time activities which help them grow in self-confidence and very much enhance their sense of wellbeing. Staff who are involved in these activities do so on a voluntary basis.

- Music plays an important role in Comeragh College with musical instruments, the music room and the option to join the school choir available to all students. Various school ceremonies, school open nights and the annual graduation service also gives students the opportunity to display their talents.
- 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 annual Comeragh College Christmas Market and other enterprise initiatives students are facilitated in planning, setting up and running their own enterprise project 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 sale and marketing campaign and liaising directly with customers and the media.
- Subject related weeks such as Seachtain na Gaeilge, Maths week, Language week and Science week 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 various 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.

The following activities also contribute to wellbeing:

- Wellbeing Week
- Anti-Bullying Week
- School Merit system - JCSP
- School-Wide Merit System - Tutor, Annual Awards - academic and year-based awards (May)
- JCSP Awards
- Alert Programme
- FRIENDS for Life
- Preparation for the World of Work
- Tutors
- Study Skills
- School Guidance
- College Awareness Week
- Check & Connect
- Reverse integration reach through the ASD programme and facility
- Induction programmes
- Transitioning programmes
- 'Positive Thought for the Day'
- Guest speakers
- Mental Health Week
- Amber Flag
- Mindfulness Project
- Comeragh College News & announcement over intercom
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Erasmus

Links with other policies

- All school policies should relate directly to wellbeing and will be updated accordingly in the future.

School Policies

School policies are developed with staff, parents/guardians, students and the Board of Management. The following school policies are related to Wellbeing and are reviewed regularly:

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Strategy
- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection
- Internet/Device Acceptable Usage Policy
- SEN
- Student Support Policy
- SPHE/RSE

Guidance Related Learning

Guidance in schools refers to a range of learning experience 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. School wide guidance related learning can be delivered by all staff.

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. "Comeragh College aims to provide a quality education for life in an innovative, responsive and caring learning environment. In our school, students can attain the highest standards of excellence, academically and in all other aspects of their school activities". 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 have focused on the area of respect and highlighted this with the introduction of our Respect Charter in all classrooms.

- R – Respond to others with kindness
- E – Establish friendships with 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

SEN Coordinator

The SENCO works as part of the whole school approach to Wellbeing. Members of the SEN team (class teachers, BFL teacher) collaborate with the relevant stakeholders including students, parents/guardians, classroom teachers, guidance and the student support team, year head and management, with a view to reduce barriers and facilitate students to achieve their potential. The SNAs act in a care and support role, supporting the health and safety of the student, while aiming to foster independence.

Student Support Team

This comprises of the Home School Liaison Office and the School Completion project worker. 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 of ALL - At this level we adopt a school wide approach. We have a series of policies and procedures that promote wellbeing for all members of the school community. Processes on this level aimed at (1) 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) and FRIENDS through NEPs. 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.

We have procedures to:

- Allow staff to refer students
- Notify staff, as appropriate, to the needs of students
- Ensure that students are aware of the work of the student support team

See the Student Support team policy for more on this area.

Staff Wellbeing

Staff at Comeragh 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. Management place great value on teachers' contributions in our school.

Teacher based classrooms are in the majority and this has led to improved working conditions for staff. School management work collaboratively with the whole staff. Management respect the professional commitment of each staff member. Management is understanding of the complex pressures which may come to bear on all members of staff from time and respond with compassion.

Staff members are encouraged and supported to take on new roles, gain further qualifications and attend relevant CPD courses. Comeragh 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 use of online resources, as well as participation in programmes such as the Teaching & Learning for the 21st Century (TL21), ATS2020 and Erasmus +. Staff are encouraged to contribute to meeting agendas and during meetings. Staff are asked to give feedback and vote using online surveys regularly. The school wide email system, Microsoft TEAMS 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 organises events periodically throughout the year to enhance personal relationships between staff members.

Teachers are supported in their role by fellow teachers, assistant principals (AP1 and AP2) and the Deputy Principal and Principal. Systems of reporting are in place to allow for reporting of issues. It is acknowledged that support is reciprocal; while school management support staff, staff also support management. As part of TETB's commitment to the wellbeing of our staff, a confidential Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is in place for staff. The EAS is available to support employees in resolving personal or work-related concerns, which are having an adverse effect on their physical and emotional wellbeing, their job, their relationships or their health and wellbeing. For more information please visit [Employee Assistance Service \(EAS\) - Tipperary Education & Training Board \(etb.ie\)](https://www.etb.ie/employee-assistance-service)

Role of Student Director

Each Student Director has responsibility for a particular year group.

This role came into being following the school-wide review of the school's needs and priorities (CL 03 2013). She/he consults regularly with the subject teachers and tutors to identify and support students with particular issues. The Director meets with the students regularly and will contact and meet with parents/guardians if and when necessary.

- Monitoring of academic progress.
- Implementation of code of behaviour which helps provide a safe space for all students.
- Liaise with class tutors regarding the progress of the students individually and class groups collectively.
- Work within student support structures.
- Support a positive work ethic in the year.
- Acknowledgement of achievement through positive feedback.

Tutor

Members of teaching staff act as Class Tutors. Role of "Significant other" The tutors is a consistent point of contact for the students for day-to-day management but is also there in a student support

role supporting individual students. This is done in collaboration with the Student Directors and management.

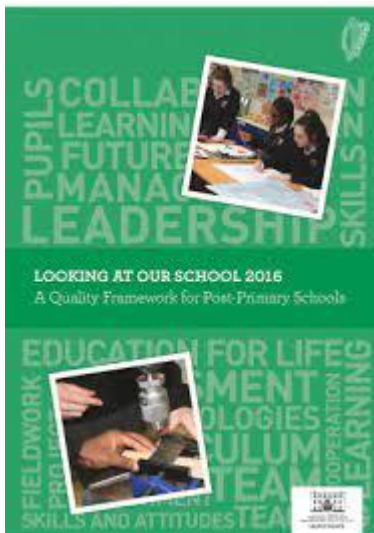
- Supports the student's engagement with the school code of positive behaviour on a regular basis.
- Follows up absenteeism and log notes.
- Encourages regular attendance and punctuality.
- Has access to information on students.
- Promotes class spirit and encourages students to engage in all aspects of school life.
- Meets with Student Directors regularly.
- Passes information to subject teachers when necessary.

Student Voice

Student involvement and leadership is an essential part of wellbeing in our school community. Student involvement is encouraged in many areas. One such area is the Student Council. The Student Council meets on a regular basis and considers issues that affect the student population. It allows students a voice to bring any concerns that may arise to the wider school community.

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.



LAOS (Looking at our School, 2016)

The LAOS document takes a holistic view of learning and of the learner. Students' well-being is intrinsic to this holistic view of learning, both as an outcome of learning and as an enabler of learning.

It recognises the crucial role of schools in promoting and nurturing student’s well-being through their practices in the key areas of school environment, curriculum, policies and partnerships.

Wellbeing Hours – 400 Hours

1st Year	Periods per week	Minutes per week	Hours per year
PE	2	80	
SPHE	1	40	
CSPE	1	40	
Digital Learning	1	40	
Preparation for World of Work	1	40	
Additional 6 hrs for the tutor in the year where needed.		240m	136 hrs

2nd Year	Periods per week	Minutes per week	Hours per year
PE	2	80	
SPHE	1	40	
CSPE	1	40	
Digital Learning	1	40	
Preparation for World of Work	1	40	
		240m	132 hrs

3rd Year	Periods per week	Minutes per week	Hours per year
PE	2	80	
SPHE	1	40	
CSPE	1	40	
Digital Learning	1	40	
Preparation for World of Work	1	40	
		240m	132 hrs

Policy Reviewed

Chairperson of the Board of Management: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____