



Patrician Secondary School

*Wellbeing Policy*

### **Mission Statement:**

"The Patrician Secondary School as a Christian Community commits itself to the development of all of its members in an environment of **co-operation** and **mutual respect**."

### **Vision:**

"While" The Patrician Secondary School "acknowledges the importance of academic excellence, it strives to contribute to all aspects of each individual pupil's development - **emotional, spiritual, social, cultural, aesthetic, creative, moral**." The wellbeing of the whole school community is at the heart of our school's ethos and mission statement.

### **Achieving our Vision:**

We aim to achieve our vision through:

- Use of the School Self-Evaluation process developing and implementing policies and procedures to support student wellbeing.
- 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.
- Ensuring student wellbeing is central to teaching practices and student learning.
- Raising awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing.
- Embedding the four key areas of wellbeing promotion in our school by 2023 — Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Policy & Planning, Relationships & Partnerships.
- School wide inclusion of wellbeing in subject and programme plans.

### **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. Patrician Secondary School is committed to promoting the emotional and social wellbeing of all and 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**

- Am I a confident and skilled participant in physical activity?
- How physically active am I?

**RESPONSIBLE**

- Do I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others?
- Do I make healthy eating choices?
- Do I know where my safety is at risk and do I make right choices?

**CONNECTED**

- Do I feel connected to my school, my friends, my community and the wider world?
- Do I appreciate that my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts?

**RESILIENT**

- Do I believe that I have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges?
- Do I know where I can go for help?
- Do I believe that with effort I can achieve?

**RESPECTED**

- Do I feel that I am listened to and valued?
- Do I have positive relationships with my friends, my peers and my teachers?
- Do I show care and respect for others?

**AWARE**

- Am I aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can I make sense of them?
- Am I aware of what my personal values are and do I think through my decisions?
- Do I understand what helps me to learn and how I can improve?

## Scope and Structure of our Wellbeing Policy:

The scope of this policy covers the four aspects of wellbeing in the Patrician Secondary School as detailed in the DES Wellbeing guidelines (p.26) below

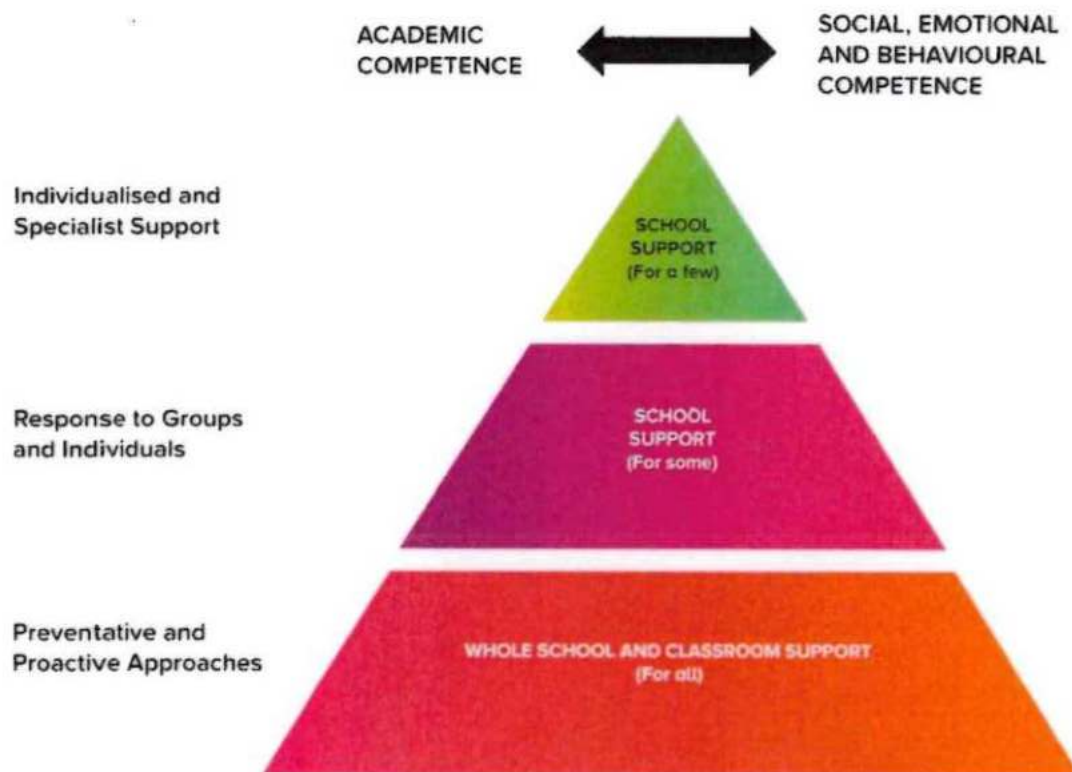
- (a) School Culture
- (b) Curriculum
- (c) Relationships
- (d) Policy and Planning



This policy aims to make visible our ongoing efforts to enhance student Wellbeing. It aims to outline our curricular offerings which have at its core student Wellbeing. Moreover, this policy aims to outline our informal supports which allow a holistic approach to enhancing our school communities wellbeing.

In structuring many of the individual processes in our school we are mindful of the NEPS Continuum of Support provision as a framework, as it provides a clear guide to understanding the different levels of support and/or interventions in any given process and as such provides a useful guide to provision in our school. The model as seen below, suggests a continuum of support from 'School Support for All', 'Support for Some', to 'School Support for a few'.





## **Section 1: Culture**

At Patrician Secondary School, we adopt a school-wide approach to promoting wellbeing for the school community, as reflected in many of our policies and procedures. Our Mission Statement permeates our school life, policies and procedures.

Our school culture aims to:

- (i) maintain a safe environment that is conducive to wellbeing, preventing or minimising factors that negatively impact on wellbeing,
- (2) promote an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing across the whole school community.

### ***Classroom Culture:***

We endeavour to ensure that our classes enjoy positive teacher-student relationships, and the caring atmosphere and positive relationships are at the core of how we go about our business in our school. Respecting the dignity of every person is central to our Mission Statement. Some of the core skills and aspects of wellbeing that Patrician Secondary instils in its students are :

- ❖ Understanding how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts
- ❖ Feeling confident in themselves and having the coping skills to deal with life's

challenges

- ❖ Knowing where they can go for help – Student support team/staff/Tutor/YearHead
- ❖ Showing care and respect for others
- ❖ Having positive relationships with friends, peers, and staff members
- ❖ Feeling listened to and valued
- ❖ Knowing when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices
- ❖ Being physically active

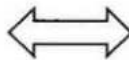
### *Teaching, Learning & Assessment:*

**Use of a variety of learning & teaching methodologies and strategies:** Mindful of the mixed ability settings in most classes, staff utilise a variety of teaching approaches and methodologies to maintain student engagement and maximise learning and achievement. Patrician Secondary has adopted the Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach to formative assessment. Its purpose is to use the whole process of assessment to help learners improve their learning. It is formative because its intention is to form, shape or guide the next steps in learning.

The Patrician Secondary school holds three TeachMeets a year which focus on teaching strategies including UDL to cater for all students within the classroom. Our ethos of our school has always highlighted the importance of all pupils having needs including the need to feel a sense of belonging, the need to feel safe, the need to communicate and to be communicated with and the need to be respected and valued. With this in mind, as a school we would have covered the whole school approach of the Continuum of Support.

### **A Continuum of Support**

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS**



**SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL &  
BEHAVIOURAL  
COMPETENCE**



The school promotes the moral, social, emotional, cultural, intellectual and physical development of all learners that is central to the development of an inclusive ethos. The more complex physiological, social and emotional needs pupils bring to school that are additional to their learning needs within school. This model encourages the flexible provision of early interventions and the implementation of targeted interventions to address students' priority academic, emotional and social needs.

In class support and team teaching are methods of teaching styles which have been integrated into the Patrician Secondary School, in addition to withdrawal of small groups of students and support on a one to one basis. This follows our Continuum of Support.

The Patrician Secondary School supports the following provisions

- Subject support
- Project support for Exam students
- Learning support
- Social Skills
- Behaviour Support
- Reading Programmes & Speech & Language Support
- Numeracy Support
- Literacy Support
- Sensory Support/Physical Sensory Support

Emphasis has also been placed in recent years on the integration of ICT into teaching and learning in the school. **Mixed ability class grouping:** apart from the banding of core subjects; English, Irish and Maths to allow for uptake at differentiated levels. This serves to promote a sense of democracy and a sense of community in all classes. In keeping with best practice, staff sees this structure as central to the promotion of student self-esteem.

### **Positive relationships:**

Our promotion of positive relationships is based on the recognition of the dignity of each individual and the importance of respectful relationships between teachers, students & parents. Building an emphasis on positivity and on rewarding positive behaviour enhances our school community.

The vision of the Patrician secondary school has always had a special regard for the poor and less privileged- the emotionally and spiritually poor as well as the materially poor. This vision allows us to view our students in an holistic manner and be concerned about academic, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural, aesthetic, creative and moral aspects of our students. The SEN department has always been acutely

aware of the vulnerability and emotional fragility of some of our students. There is a long standing tradition of well being and care in the school and SEN context.

The Student Support Team within the Patrician Secondary School is composed of the Principal, Deputy Principal, the Guidance Counsellors, Wellbeing Coordinator, the SEN Coordinator and the SSE Coordinator, member of the SEN team. The purpose of our Student Support Team is to supplement the work of the class teachers, the Year Heads and the Pastoral Care Coordinator. The SST Team also responds to the needs of individual students which may be brought to their attention by the Principal and members of the teaching staff. This communication is essential for the SEN department as often a number of students that are mentioned at the Student Support Team are often on the higher tier of the Continuum of Support. This team meets once a week.

The needs of the individual students determine the nature of the referrals made by the Student Support Team. In some cases it may be sufficient for a member of the team to speak to an individual student. Other students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor who, in turn, may refer a student to outside agencies such as Educational Psychologist, CAMHs etc depending on the nature of concern. If such a referral is deemed necessary it will only be done in consultation with the students Parents/Guardians and the school Principal shall be informed. Matters discussed at meetings of the team are strictly confidential.

The Student Support Team Coordinator emails a list of the names of the students that were discussed during the meeting in an encrypted email to all teaching staff. No information or details are given. Teachers can talk to any member of the team in relation to any student they are concerned with. Teachers are informed of developments or decisions on a need to know basis.

Sensory breaks are an essential element in our SEN students' development.

Sensory breaks include any activity that stimulates the student's senses: touch, smell, taste, movement, balance, sight and hearing. Sensory activities facilitate exploration and naturally encourage the student to use scientific processes while they play, create, investigate and explore.

There are designated areas for more vulnerable students to have break and lunch times. Room 1 and Room 9 have small tables for students to play games and chat. SNAs supervise these areas. Another classroom is a designated games room where



students can socialise and form friendships. Lockers- Room 1 and Room 9 have a certain number of locker spaces for very vulnerable students to receive appropriate locker support.

The Patrician school community has traditionally a very strong ethos in realising each students' positive potential. This includes well being and mental health . The SEN department collaborates with the Guidance Counsellor to deliver behaviour support groups to 1st, 2nd and two 3rd year groups. These groups offer specialised behaviour programmes incorporating emotional recognition and regulation, sensory regulation and meditation.

The SEN department offers social skills classes to students who need support and guidance with forming and maintaining relationships. Role playing is an important part in enabling students to gain confidence and skills to participate more fully in every day interactions.

To facilitate well being at exam times we offer a separate exam centre for in house exams if appropriate. The new junior cycle framework has introduced well being and indicators to be cognisant of within our SEN context.

## **Section 2: Curriculum:**

Students have an opportunity to select from a range of subjects of choice for Junior Cycle and entering Fifth Year. A range of practical subjects are provided in addition to humanities and science subjects. This helps meet the educational needs of a broad spectrum of our student cohort and facilitates motivation and engagement and wellbeing in learning.

We have chosen to strongly prioritise and highlight wellbeing within our school community and this is reflected strongly in our curricular provision. There is a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of CSPE, PE, SPHE, Life Skills and Personal Development as part of the wellbeing programme in Junior Cycle. Staff are afforded opportunities to work collaboratively in planning for these subjects and CPD is actively supported.

Personal Development is an important aspect of the wellbeing curriculum in junior cycle. Our school wished to create a tailor made programme that fulfilled the needs of our student cohort. A team of teachers collaboratively created a programme based on the results of a student survey. Using the junior cycle wellbeing indicators we devised our own programme. Please see below. This programme is reviewed twice a year to ensure it stays relevant to our context.

<b>September (5 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Intro to SS - map, locker, journal (review) kahoot
<b>IT Module</b>	<b>2</b>	IT - emails/classroom - step by step
<b>Rating feelings 1-10</b>	<b>3</b>	Typing
<b>Meditation (3 minute meditation/body scan)</b>	<b>4</b>	Classroom
	<b>5</b>	Research (Reflection on term)
<b>October- Halloween (4 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Yoga/Meditation
	<b>2</b>	Mindful Colouring/journaling/gratitude - poster
	<b>3</b>	Nature Walk - linking to IT (videos of findings)
	<b>4</b>	Restorative Practice (Reflection on term)
<b>November -exams (6 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Conflict resolution
	<b>2</b>	How to study - study skills linked to actual subject
	<b>3</b>	How to study - study skills linked to actual subject
	<b>4</b>	Healthy eating - Simple breakfast
	<b>5</b>	Recognising stress & alleviating stress
	<b>6</b>	(Reflection on term)
<b>January - Midterm (5 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Reflection on exams - journal tracker - goals
	<b>2</b>	Other areas of learning - our community
	<b>3</b>	Cooking - lunch - preparation
	<b>4</b>	Cooking - lunch - sandwiches
	<b>5</b>	(Reflection on term)
<b>March - Easter (6 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Skill swap? Within class
	<b>2</b>	Showcase of talents
	<b>3</b>	Skills swap - Tie a tie/sewing/ v IT skills
	<b>4</b>	Skill swap - teachers -
	<b>5</b>	Joe Monaghan - demonstration - dinner?
	<b>6</b>	(Reflection on term)
<b>April - Summer Exams (6 weeks)</b>	<b>1</b>	Cooking Showcase - IT Skills, presentation
	<b>2</b>	Study skills
	<b>3</b>	Preparing for incoming first year - a day in the life of - tips and tricks - meitheal & first years
	<b>4</b>	Preparing for incoming first year - a day in the life of - tips and tricks - meitheal & first years
	<b>5</b>	Preparing for exams - timetables/organisation etc
	<b>6</b>	(Reflection on term) End of year survey/kahoot

We endeavour to provide a Junior Cycle Programme that builds the foundations for wellbeing. We do this through the provision of a programme that is:

- broad and balanced
- provides choice

- has meaning and relevance
- is enjoyable and engaging
- provides opportunities to experience challenge and success

### Junior Cycle Wellbeing Programme/Curriculum

<b><i>Subject</i></b>	<b><i>1st Year</i></b>	<b><i>2nd Year</i></b>	<b><i>3rd Year</i></b>	<b><i>Hours</i></b>
SPHE	33	33	33	100
CSPE	33	33	33	100
Physical Education	33	66	33	132
Personal Development	33			33
Team Building Trip	6	6	6	18
1st Year Retreat	6			6
Wellbeing week	2	2	2	6
Internet Safety Talk	1			1
Start of year activities - 1st year	6			6
Coffee and Connect	1	1	1	3
Assemblies	3	3	3	9
<b>Total Hours</b>				<b>413</b>

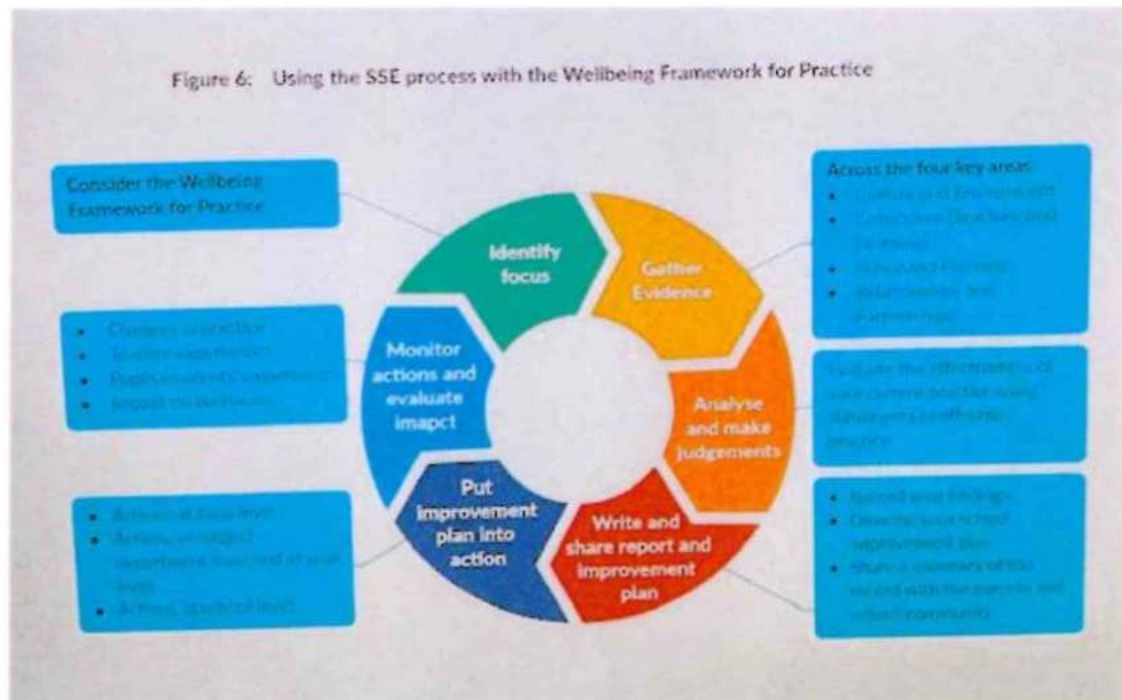
### **Section 3: Policy & Planning**

We have a number of policies in place that establish and promote a safe environment that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing. These include our:

- Code of Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguard Statement
- Acceptable User Policy (Computers, Mobile Devices and Internet)
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Guidance Policy
- SEN Policy
- P.E.D Policy



**School Self Evaluation :** In accordance with Circular 0056/2022 - 2023-2026: The school will be focusing on the National Wellbeing goals as outlined in the Wellbeing framework above. The school will use the SSE process to identify a focus, gather evidence and formulate a plan. We will monitor and review our plan and evaluate the impact of our initiative.

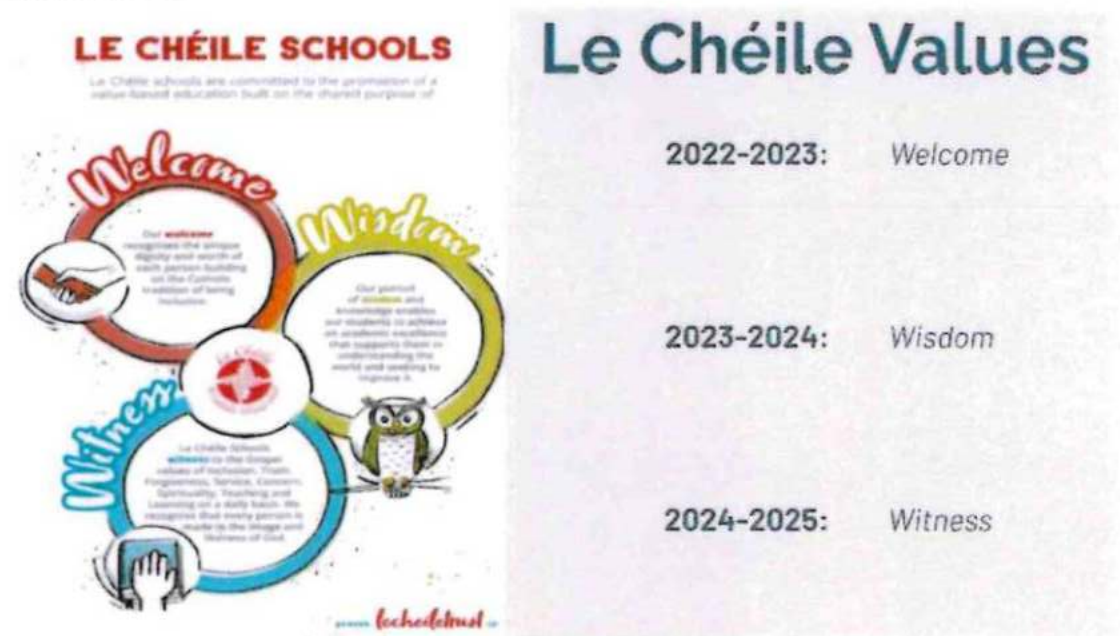


For the year 2022/23 we are focusing on the impact of Covid on the wellbeing of students. We have created student, staff and parent focus groups. Using the SSE process we are identifying our focus and will implement an initiative, monitor and evaluate the results of this initiative.



### *School Focus and Planning :*

Our school has decided to adopt our Le Chéile patron focus of Welcome, Wisdom and Witness.



These values dovetail naturally into our planning for Wellbeing.

### *Subject and Whole School Planning:*

#### **Whole School aims:**

- Developing and implementing policies and procedures to support student wellbeing (e.g.NEPS Continuum of Support)
- Ensuring student wellbeing is central to teaching practices and student learning
- Raising awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing

Examples of Whole School Initiatives that support Wellbeing are:

- Activism, inclusion and equality club – Inclusion week.
- Student Council - Inclusion officer & Wellbeing Officer.
- Internet safety talks with 1<sup>st</sup> year TY and 5<sup>th</sup> year students.

Particular emphasis on Social Media and Cyberbullying. Talk also

for parents, booklet also for parents.

- PASS testing for all students in Junior Cycle.
- Inclusion flag on display in the front of our school & mural on our wall at the entrance to the school.
- All incoming first years are interviewed by the senior management team when they are in 6<sup>th</sup> class. Any concerns are noted and used when planning first year classes.
- Mentoring programme for 6<sup>th</sup> year students – Meitheal Leaders.
- SST meetings (weekly).
- School trips for all year groups. Organised sports and fun activities for each year group.
- School motto "Ní neart go cur le chéile" is clearly visible throughout the school and on our school jerseys.
- Safe spaces for vulnerable students.
- Assemblies for Students and Parents.
- Referral systems.
- Green Schools Committee
- Hidden Heroes awards – (where a staff member sees a student doing something positive e.g. helping a first year, the student is given a hidden hero award).
- School Show
- 2nd Yr. School Tour
- After school Study
- Credits awarded for excellent effort in class.
- Ambassador school for Cycle against Suicide. Host school in 2016. Promoting positive Mental Health in our school community

and our local community.

- Year Head and Tutor system.
- Time-out system
- Breakfast Club
- Voluntary Homework Club for 1st years
- Wellbeing Week

#### **Subject Aims:**

- All subject departments are required to formulate a wellbeing plan and integrate this in to their lessons
- Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Learning - Through the volunteerism and hard work of our staff, our students are offered a wide and varied programme of co-curricular activities which serve to involve the students in extension activities and stimulate positive teacher-student relationships. These include:
  - LCA team building exercises and bonding in Killinthomas Woods, Rathangan.
  - TY Respect workshops with Mr Doran, TY Coordinator and Guidance Counsellor.

#### **Guidance and Wellbeing:**

Guidance in schools refers to a range of learning experiences that helps students to develop selfmanagement 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 teaching staff, as outlined in the Whole School Guidance Plan.

The Junior Cycle encourages schools to consider the wellbeing of the student as a whole and through the promotion of wellbeing the student will be better able to cope with the pressures of school life. The NCCA states that "Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical being, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community." Wellbeing is delivered to Junior Classes and Career Guidance and wellbeing is delivered through the SPHE programme. Wellbeing is delivered through a specific Life Skills class in Senior Cycle, also the indicators of wellbeing are promoted in all aspects of the students' educational experience both as junior students as well as senior and as such form an important element of the whole-school guidance programme

#### **CPD:**

Staff CPD on Differentiation has been provided, as well as other courses on ADHD and Dyslexia. Staff are well-equipped and supported in differentiating for students of different academic abilities in teaching, learning and assessment so that all students experience inclusion in the learning experience. The SEN Policy is in operation, as is the Assessment Policy which provides guidance for teachers in this area.

## **Section 4: Relationships**

### *Student/Teacher Relationships:*

Patrician Secondary School recognises that true wellbeing can only be assured through the promotion and development of positive, nurturing and respectful relationships within our school community. We strive to achieve this in the following ways:

- Ensuring that student-teacher relationships are friendly, caring and respectful
- Making sure that staff are fully aware that they may be the one adult that a student turns to for support and help during a difficult time
- Fully informing students as to where to get support and how to access the care structures in the school
- Resolving behaviour issues with care, respect and consistency
- Ensuring that there is a shared vision and understanding of what student wellbeing means which emphasises strengths and capacities
- Encouraging students to show respect, care and concern for each other so that they feel safe and supported amongst their peers

### *Peer Relationships:*

Building positive relationships is a key facet of the development of students in our school and this is embodied in our mission statement below.

"The Patrician Secondary School as a Christian Community commits itself to the development of all of its members in an environment of **co-operation** and **mutual respect**."

The Anti-Bullying Policy and our Code of Behaviour provide a framework for building and maintaining positive relationships. Each policy has a set of procedures in relation to engaging with some students who have not lived up to the expectations in the codes. Our practices and procedures are designed to be positive and encouraging in the first instance, and sanctions are used where students do not respond to positive efforts. Sanctions are seen by staff in a positive light, as a support for corrective action and a learning opportunity for students who may need to learn clear boundaries and ways of behaving. We are exploring a Restorative Practice model in dealing with discipline issues, and some teachers have already participated in CPD in this area. A calm and structured engagement is used by Year Heads, and other teachers to foster positive and acceptable behaviours.

Restorative practices facilitate an increase in understanding of consequence and aids the rebuilding of relationships following a serious incident or situation. It also offers a framework in which staff can work with sensitivity and with progression with students who require support and structure in moderating their



behaviour and in learning good interpersonal skills.

*Student Participation:*

Student councils give students a voice and the opportunity to work in partnership with management and staff to improve their schools. Students, principals and teachers in schools with democratic and effective student councils report that enormous benefits are gained through the work of student councils. Young people are afforded freedom of expression and appropriate participation in policymaking under both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Ireland's National Children's Strategy. Student councils are provided for in the Education Act, 1998 as a means of students being involved in the affairs of the school.

The Student Council in the Patrician Secondary School endeavours to

- creates a positive school atmosphere;
- creates a caring school environment, which is supportive and inclusive;
- a vehicle for student participation;
- beneficial impact on issues such as discipline, bullying and staff-student relations;
- creates educational opportunities for students;
- provides an interactive learning environment;
- students can develop communication and leadership skills, responsibility and accountability;
- valuable resource to management, teachers and other students.

The Senior and Junior Council is a representative body of our students. The Senior Student Council is composed of a Student Captain and Vice Captain, Arts Officer, Academic Officer, Wellbeing Officer, Inclusion Officer and Sports Captains. These are 6th Year representatives. It also includes 5th year and Transition Year prefects. The senior council holds monthly meetings which focus on current student issues. Responsibilities include charitable community events, Inclusion/StandUp and Wellbeing week. The Council sends a biannual newsletter to the whole school community.

The Junior Council meets at least once a month. It is composed of a Chairperson voted from 3rd year. The Senior council teaches the Junior council how to run meetings with agendas and minutes.

Relationships and partnerships in the Patrician Secondary school are supported through a range of agreed formal and informal structures, such as, student councils, prefect systems, buddy systems, mentoring systems, Meitheal programme assemblies, newsletters, student journals and through teaching and learning.

*Partnerships with Parents/Guardians, Community & Wider Supports:*

The Parents' Association in the school meets at least once a term and consists of elected parents to represent parents' voice in the school. They organise and run our annual Silver Circle draw which raises important funds for the school and are involved in and organise information nights for parents.

The school has worked to establish close and supportive relationships with a broad spectrum of services in order to have the capacity to call on the expert assistance available, e.g. National Education Psychological Services (NEPS), National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO), Education Welfare Officer (EWO), TUSLA – Child and Family Agency, HSE Social Services, Child Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Insync Youth & Family Services, private psychotherapists Kildare region, Garda Liaison Officer.

The expertise and support of these organisations provide rich and valuable learning for our students and helps them to see a bigger picture, career paths and to experience professional supports which may be outside the capacity of the school itself.

The school chaplain visits by invitation and is happy to meet with students and support their faith and spiritual formation. Students are afforded the opportunity to participate in both the John Paul II Programme and the Gaisce Programme and their achievements are recognised by formal awards upon completion. Work Experience in Transition Year and LCA exposes students to various working environments.

Many links have also been formed with local businesses and they have supported the school community by sponsoring sports equipment, clothing and providing bursaries for leaving cert students to help and support them in further education.

**Ratified by the Board of Management on:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed (Proposed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed (Seconded):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed (Principal):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed (Chairperson):** \_\_\_\_\_