



Coachford College

Wellbeing Policy

1. General

Mission Statement

We are a community

Together we share mutual respect in a positive environment

We develop individual potential in all fields

1.1 Scope

This document was prepared by the Wellbeing Committee on behalf of, and in consultation with, the Coachford College staff, students, parents/guardians and Board of Management.

This policy impacts upon the entire school community.

1.2 Context

This Policy has been developed in line with our school ethos, Mission Statement and characteristic spirit, and is informed by the requirements of the Education Act (1998) Education Welfare Act (2000), A Whole School Guidance Framework (NCGE, 2017), Programme Recognition Framework: Guidance Counselling (DESk, 2016), Framework for Junior Cycle (DESk, 2015), Guidelines for Wellbeing at Junior Cycle (NCCA, 2016 and 2021), Looking at our School: A Quality Framework 2016-2020 (DESk, 2016), School Self-Evaluation Guidelines 2016-2020 (DESk, 2016), Digital Strategy for Schools (DESk, 2015), and the NEPS Continuum of Support. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement/Risk Assessment, Safety Statement, Special Educational Needs Policy, Appropriate Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, Blended Learning Plan, School Outings Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, School Uniform Policy, No Smoking Policy, Substance Abuse Policy, Data Protection Policy (CETB), Dignity in the Workplace Charter, Policy on Relationships and Sexuality and Social Media Policy (CETB). The school's Mission Statement sets out the school's vision for the encouragement of the pursuit of excellence and the creation of an environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement in a community in which mutual respect is shared in a positive environment, with wellbeing at its core.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 Objective of the Wellbeing Policy

‘The goal of wellbeing is human flourishing, and flourishing rests on the following: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment’ (Framework for Junior Cycle, DESk, 2015).

This Policy aims to:

1. Provide for the wellbeing of all students underpinning the school Mission Statement;
2. Highlight the central importance of Workplace Wellbeing;
3. Implement the curriculum, policies, procedures, culture, ethos and the activities which seek to support and develop the wellbeing of the students in Coachford College, guided by the Principles and Key Skills of Junior Cycle, and in keeping with the requirements of the 24 Junior Cycle Statements of Learning;
4. To implement the requirements set out in relevant Junior Cycle circulars and in the guidance documents set out in 1.2 above;
5. To recognise the interplay between positive experience of school life, student achievement and long term wellbeing;
6. To offer a structured approach to supporting our young people through the creation of a multiplicity of opportunities both within and outside the classroom focused on learning for and about wellbeing;
7. To cultivate and foster respectful and caring relationships between staff and students, students and students, and staff and parents/guardians;
8. To ensure that appropriate structures are in place to support the wellbeing of students;
9. To harness the expertise of the staff and outside agencies to support and respond to needs of students;
10. To provide an umbrella policy which outlines a structure that links a series of other policies which relate to wellbeing.

1.3.2 Whole School Aims

1. To promote and develop a culture and environment which is respectful of the needs and wellbeing of all members of the school community;
2. To develop and implement policies and procedures to support staff and student wellbeing;
3. To ensure that learning for and about wellbeing is central to teaching practices and student learning, and
4. To raise awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing and student support.

2. Wellbeing Overview

Wellbeing is described as the state of being comfortable, healthy, resilient and happy. In Coachford College we believe that wellbeing enables our school community to achieve a balanced life. The wellbeing of the students and staff is a core priority as espoused in the school's Mission Statement. Coachford College seeks to promote a caring and positive school community where everyone is valued as unique. Coachford College is committed to the promotion of physical, emotional and social wellbeing for all, and to the creation of a respectful atmosphere between all members of the school community, its volunteers and visitors.

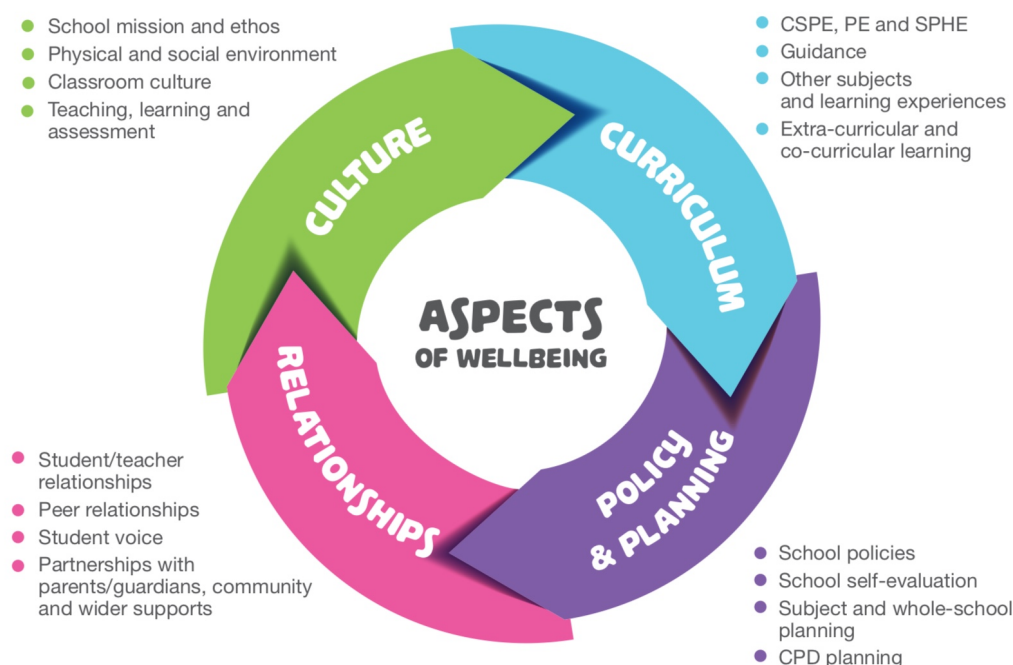
2.1. School Self-Evaluation and Wellbeing

Central to Coachford College's SSE process is the review, planning and implementation of strategies to build student wellbeing and confidence by fostering a growth mind set in students, enhancing their feelings of confidence in their learning abilities.

2.2 Whole School Vision

At Coachford College the wellbeing of the school community is of utmost importance. The school's environment of care and support is both formal and informal. This Policy aims to make visible the school's ongoing efforts to enhance Wellbeing. It aims to outline the school's planning of Curriculum, Culture, Relationships, Policy and Planning, all of which

have wellbeing at their core. Moreover, this policy aims to outline the school's informal supports which are aimed at enhancing wellbeing in accordance with the school's Mission Statement.



(Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, NCCA, 2016 and updated in 2021)

Coachford College endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment to enhance its students' self-esteem whilst offering students a change to understand themselves better, allowing them to develop their own individual potential.

2.3 Learning for and about Wellbeing: Curricular Provision

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new area of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. Wellbeing crosses the three years of Junior Cycle and builds on the substantial work already taking place at the schools in support of students' wellbeing. This area of learning makes the school's culture and ethos and commitment to wellbeing visible to students. It includes learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It enables students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and to their community.

Coachford College provides 400 hours of curricular Wellbeing to all students in keeping with the requirements of the Framework for Junior Cycle (DESk, 2015) and Guidelines for Wellbeing at Junior Cycle (NCCA, 2016 and 2021), through the key subject areas of Civic Social and Political Education, Social Personal and Health Education, Physical Education, Digital Learning and Guidance-related Learning. NCCA Short Courses are followed in SPHE, CSPE and PE.

The NCCA RSE curricular requirements are met at Senior Cycle.

The 24 Junior Cycle Statements of Learning, along with the 8 Principles of Junior Cycle, are central to planning for students' experience at Coachford College. The following Statements of Learning, relate explicitly to Wellbeing, and are central to informing school planning, policy and curriculum. They are:

- 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 and motivation to live sustainably (SOL 10);
- The student takes action to safeguard and promote his/her 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).

All subject planning incorporates wellbeing and teachers embed wellbeing into specifications and curricula and ensure it is visible to students.

2.3.1 Guidance-related Learning

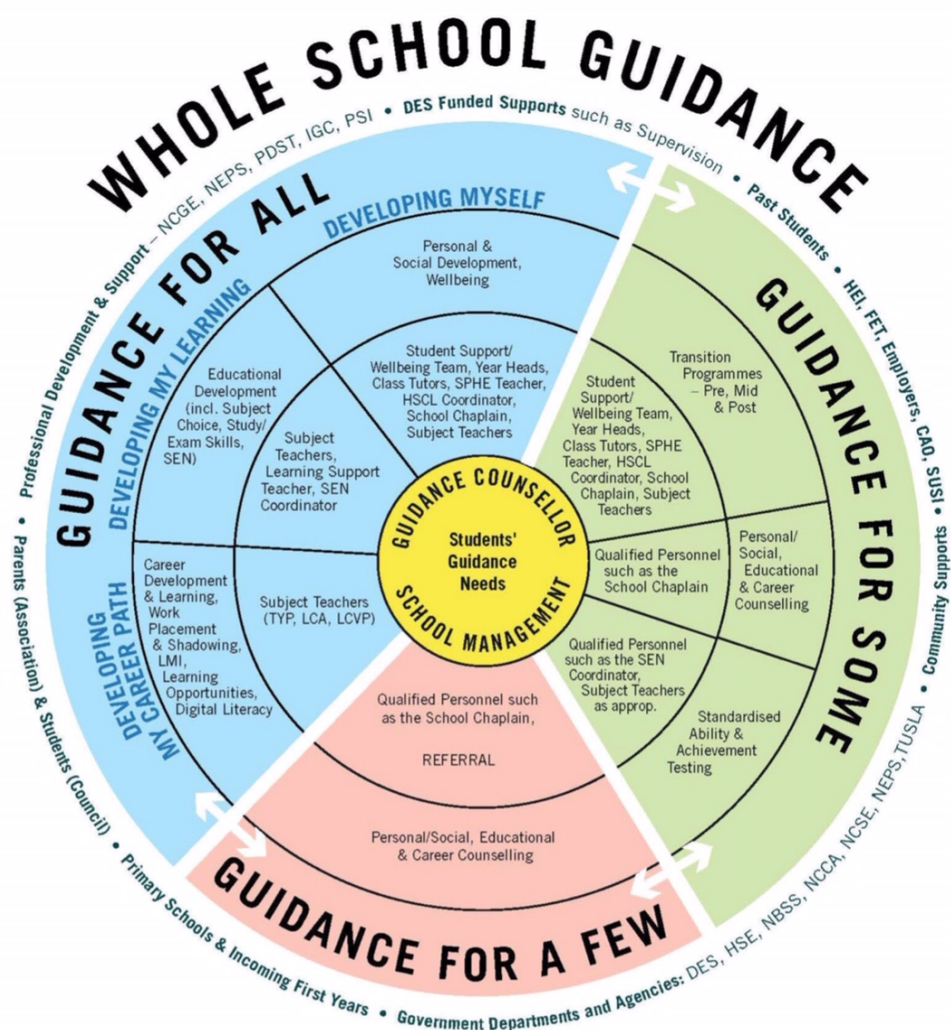
Guidance in school refers to a range of learning experiences for students. It aims to develop their capacity for the self-management of their personal, social, educational and

occupational life choices. Guidance aims to nurture the personal development of each student so they may grow towards their potential and therefore contribute to a better school community and in the future a better society.

Guidance may be divided into three areas:

- Educational Guidance;
- Career Guidance,
- Personal Guidance.

Whole school Guidance-related learning is provided in the curriculum and in conjunction with SPHE. Guidance by its nature is delivered by all teachers in Coachford College. The Guidance Counsellor leads, co-ordinates and delivers the school guidance programme in collaboration with the school leadership team, teachers and key stakeholders in response to the Guidance needs of the students. Coachford College has adopted the Continuum of Support model for the whole school guidance programme.



2.3.2 Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning

Mindful of the mixed ability settings in most classes, a variety of teaching approaches and methodologies are utilized to maintain student engagement and maximise learning and achievement. Emphasis is placed on the integration of technology into teaching and learning in the school, with the introduction of Digital Learning as a core Wellbeing subject across the three years of Junior Cycle, and in keeping with the aims and objectives of the school's Blended Learning Plan.

2.3.3 Team Teaching has by now been embedded into teaching and learning at Coachford College. Classes are organised in mixed ability groups apart from the banding of core subjects English, Irish and Maths to allow for uptake at differentiated levels from 2nd Year

onwards. This serves to promote a sense of democracy and a sense of community in all classes. In keeping with best practice, this approach is central to the promotion of student wellbeing and self-esteem.

2.4 Promoting Wellbeing skills in students

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 place and belonging to a wider community.

The **Wellbeing Indicators** as set out in Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2016 and 2021) are as follows – **Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected, and Aware.**



Coachford College aims to enable its students to become skilled in the following ways:

- Develop confidence in and enjoyment of physical activity;
- Be able to act to protect and promote their wellbeing and that of others;

- To develop students' food literacy skills, so that they understand the impact of their food choices on health, the environment and the economy;
- Know when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices;
- Feel connected to their school, friends, community and the wider world;
- Understand how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts;
- Feel confident in themselves and having the coping skills to deal with life's challenges;
- Know where they can go for help – Student Support Team, Staff, Year Head, etc.;
- Believe that, with effort, they can achieve their potential, nurturing a growth mind set among students rather than a fixed mind set;
- Show care and respect for others;
- Have positive relationships with friends, peers, and staff members;
- Feel listened to and valued;
- Be aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and being able to make sense of them;
- Be aware of their personal values, and make informed decisions which they own;
- Be aware of themselves as learners, and know how they can improve.

2.5 Promoting and Supporting Culture of Wellbeing in our School

Coachford College promotes a warm, welcoming, encouraging and positive school culture in the following ways:

- Lunchtime activities which enable students to avail of quiet and reflective time are facilitated.
- The school promotes physical activity, and healthy eating choices.
- Teachers have high expectations for all students.
- There are open, positive, supportive relationships between teachers and students in class and outside.

- A culture of collaboration and cooperation is promoted through day to day teaching, learning and assessment practices.
- Students feel safe, secure and respected in their classrooms.
- Students are encouraged to actively engage in their learning so that they can enjoy being at school.
- Students receive regular formative feedback about their learning and how they can improve.
- Students have regular opportunities to talk about their learning and what helps them to learn.
- Teachers use active methodologies to develop the key skills in their subjects.
- Teaching and learning is differentiated and provides an appropriate challenge to enable all students to engage and experience success.
- Students are aware of who they should turn to if in need of support or if they are aware that another student is potentially at risk. The school's Child Safeguarding Statement is discussed with all students at the commencement of the school year, and again in Wellbeing classes. Child Safeguarding notices are posted in each year group's social area.
- The RSE programme aims to enhance learning in the area of relationships and sexuality in a caring and balanced manner.
- Supportive relationships with parents/guardians are nurtured in order to highlight, monitor, evaluate and promote student wellbeing. Regular feedback on learning is given to parents/guardians and students in keeping with the provision set out in the Reporting Guidelines (NCCA, 2018).
- Measurable targets for individual student wellbeing, in conjunction with students, teachers, SNAs, Year Heads and the Student Support Team through the use of the Domains and Standards set out in Looking at our Schools 2016-2020.
- The school's Critical Incident Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are reviewed annually.
- Wellbeing Programmes such as Love Week, Wellbeing Week, Anti-Bullying Programmes, Online Safety, Drug and Alcohol Awareness are facilitated.

2.6 Activities aimed at the promotion of Wellbeing

The wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities facilitated for students at Coachford College, aimed to promote wellbeing, include the following:

2.6.1 Co-Curricular activities

- Dance Off
- Poetry Competitions
- Maths Week
- Seachtain na Gaeilge
- French Week
- Spanish Week
- Quizzes (Science, Maths, Irish, etc.)
- Debating
- Love Week, Anti Bullying Week, etc.
- After School Study
- Transition Year School Trips
- Wellbeing Initiatives for various year groups to help with exam pressures, etc.
- Full School Attendance Recognition

2.6.2 Extra-Curricular Activities/Clubs/Societies

- Gaelic Football 1st Year, 2nd Year Junior & Senior
- Hurling 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior & Senior
- Camogie 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior (2), Senior (2)
- Ladies Football 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior (2) & Senior
- Ladies Basketball 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior & Senior
- Fitness Programmes
- Athletics
- Volleyball
- Road Bowling
- Equestrian
- Rowing
- Outdoor Education
- Robotics

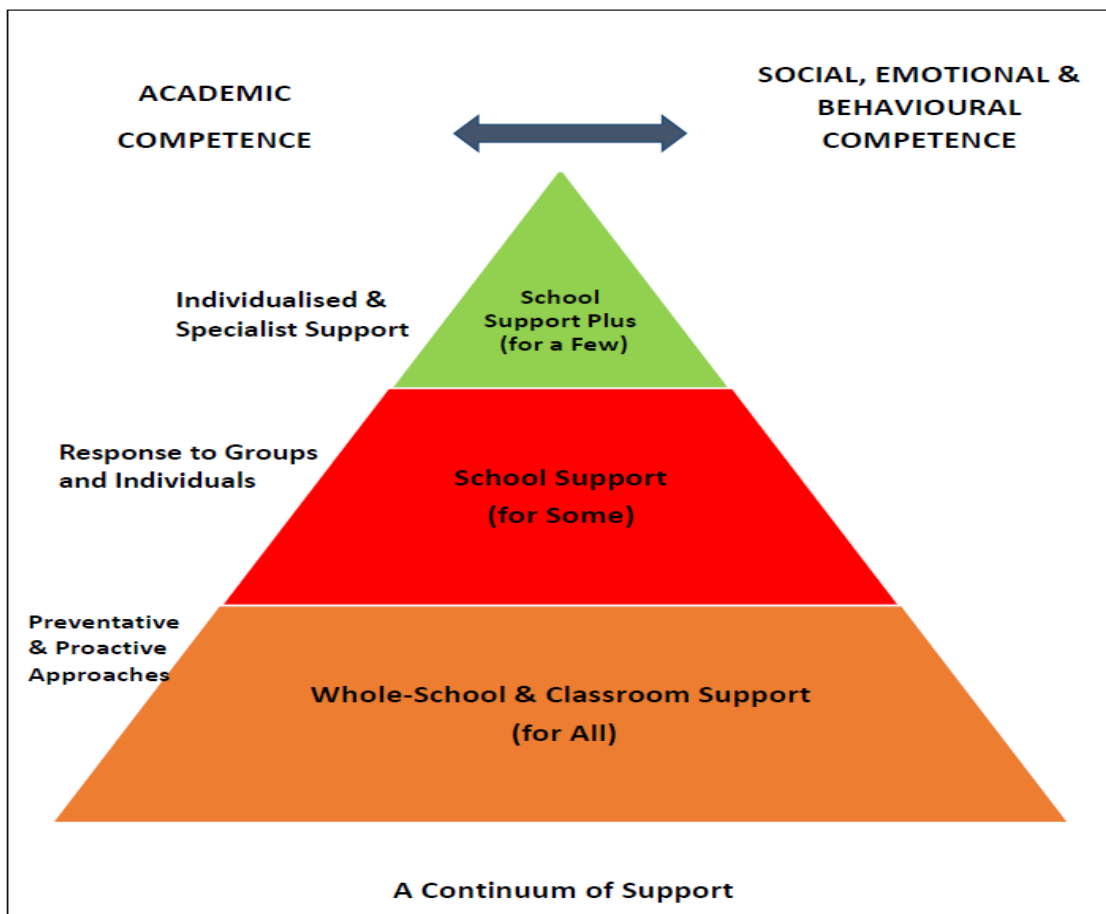
- Coding
- Library
- Green Schools
- Scifest
- Young Scientist
- School Bank
- Camera Club
- School Choir
- Buddy Mentoring Programmes
- Student Council

2.6.3 Social Events

- Christmas Concerts
- Christmas events, e.g. Quiz
- Leaving Certificate Graduation Ceremony
- Awards Ceremonies
- Graduation Dance

These lists are by no means exhaustive.

3. Continuum of Support



(National Educational Psychological Service)

3. 1 Support for All

Coachford College adopts a whole-school approach to wellbeing, and has in place a series of policies and procedures which aim to:

1. Create a safe environment which helps students that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing;
2. Promote an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing;
3. Support early identification and intervention in the cases of challenge. These steps are reflected in various school policies such as the Appropriate Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, etc. and are supported by the school's commitment to quality teaching and learning, broad curricular provision, learning supports, and a whole school approach to assessment, feedback and reporting.

3.2 Support for Some

There is a more focused approach adopted with several 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.

Supports which are available include a proactive Student Support Team who employ a range of different supports and interventions ranging from individual counselling to a comprehensive referral system, as follows:

- SEN individual support and team teaching;
- Guidance Counselling;
- Chaplaincy;
- Year Head, etc.

3.3 Support for a Few

Coachford College has support in place which focuses on interventions for young people with more complex and enduring needs. Work with this group of students is structured under the development of a Care Plan which may include assisting in the development of student skills in the areas of self-esteem, resilience, self-care and overall positive self-development. In some cases, students under the care of the Student Support Team may be referred for additional support of outside agencies.

4. Relationships and Wellbeing

Coachford College recognises that true wellbeing can only be assured through the promotion and development of positive, nurturing and respectful relationships within the school community. Coachford College strives to achieve this in the following ways:

- Ensuring that student-teacher relationships are friendly, caring and respectful;
- Building an emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour enhances the whole school community;
- Ensuring that Student Voice has a central place in all school planning and review, and that students' views are not only heard but acted upon;
- Ensuring that staff members are aware that they may be the one good adult to whom a student turns to for support and help during a difficult time. In turn always being cognizant of providing support to staff when they are dealing with vulnerable

students and ensuring that staff members know who they can turn to when they need advice and support;

- Just like when there are difficult times in students' lives, equally there are times when staff are vulnerable and experiencing their own life challenges. Coachford College aims to create a community which is compassionate and considerate of each other's feelings, non-judgemental and always cognizant that we never know exactly what our colleagues may be going through at any given time. This compassion cascades throughout the school community;
- 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.
- Providing forums for students so that their voices may be heard and they are involved in making decisions about their life in school;
- Actively encouraging student voice, providing appropriate platforms for student feedback and ensuring that students know that their feedback is valued and, where appropriate, acted upon;
- Ensuring that parents/guardians feel welcome, respected, and listened to as partners in the education of their children;
- Sharing information with parents/guardians, as appropriate, with a view to supporting them in supporting their child's wellbeing;
- Maintaining strong links with the local community;
- Wellbeing is reflected strongly in our curricular provision: There is a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of CSPE, PE, SPHE, Digital Learning and Guidance as part of the Wellbeing programme at Junior Cycle.
- Teachers are supported in working collaboratively in the planning for these subjects, and Continuous Professional Learning is actively supported.

- Curricular provision is informed by feedback from students, parents/guardians, teachers who have collectively and collaboratively compiled the **identified needs** which in turn inform the school's Wellbeing Plan.
- The Parents' Council provides an important forum for feedback from parents/guardians, and has a key voice in the planning of school curriculum and policy.

5. Workplace Wellbeing

The staff of Coachford College work in an environment of collegiality and support. Teaching support and ancillary staff work in an ever-changing environment educationally, socially and culturally. Coachford College actively seeks to maintain its integral identity of cohesiveness, friendship and respect for one another in an ever-changing environment. Coachford College recognises the value of investing in all its staff, aiming to inspire trust and encourage collaboration, in keeping with the school's mission statement and that of Cork Education and Training Board. We are guided by Looking at our Schools 2016-20 and the school's Dignity in the Workplace Charter in the following ways:

- Staff members are encouraged and supported to take on new roles and to embrace ongoing Continuous Professional Learning.
- Meetings of all relevant staff groups are held at regular intervals with an emphasis on collaboration and sharing best practice;
- The school communications' system ensures all staff are aware of important events and opportunities;
- Events are organized throughout the year to support Workplace Wellbeing;
- An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for teachers and Special Needs Assistants. The aim of the strategy is to promote the health of employees in the workplace with a focus on prevention rather than cure. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme and Occupational Health Service. The service is available as a free confidential service which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. It is accessible through a Freephone Helpline, the details of which are available at www.education.ie/Employee Assistance Service. The DESK Occupational Health Service is currently operated by Medmark Occupational Healthcare. It is also

accessible through a Freephone Helpline, the details of which are available at www.medmark4teachers.ie.

6. Links with School Policies

All school policies directly relate to Wellbeing and are reviewed regularly through the lens of wellbeing, as set out in 1.2 above.

7. Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management of Coachford College is committed to the supporting and development of student potential in keeping with the school's mission statement. The Board seeks to promote a caring and committed school community where everyone is valued as unique, in keeping with the school's mission and characteristic spirit. The core aim of the school's curriculum, policy and planning is to develop the whole person, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, spiritual and physical. All relationships in the school community are built on the central tenet of respect.

Coachford College endeavours to meet the wellbeing needs of its staff and students.

Wellbeing by its nature is constantly evolving. This Policy seeks to provide the scaffolding and framework so that all members of the school community and stakeholders can build on and add to this process. In recognition of this, this Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

The Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Coachford College on May 18th 2021, as signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal.

It shall be made available to all members of the school community, and posted on the school's website.

Signed by:

Niamh Lehane

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 18/05/2021

Áine-Máire Ní Fhaoláin

Principal

Date: 18/05/2021