



## Using the ASPIRE Principles for Evaluating School and Student Wellbeing

### **Wellbeing comprises whole child, whole school approaches to promoting mental health**

Although most pupils are doing OK, we have a mental health crisis impacting on a significant number of children and young people. Schools can either exacerbate the difficulties or ameliorate them. Schools that are doing well for all the children and young people in their care are concerned about more than academic success. They want pupils to enjoy learning, feel they can be successful and know that people care about them.

This evaluation document has been developed from many research findings on wellbeing, mental health and resilience, healthy relationships, belonging and a positive school climate.

Schools who put wellbeing at the heart of their endeavours will find that children and young people are more engaged at school and academic outcomes reflect this; that mental health and resilience improve; there is more pro-social behaviour as positive relationships as modelled and taught and teacher retention increases as teacher wellbeing is addressed.

ASPIRE is an acronym for the principles on which school wellbeing is built: Agency, Safety, Positivity, Inclusion, Respect and Equity. Schools are ecologies, what happens in one part of the system affects what happens elsewhere so a whole school approach needs to include all stakeholders: students, staff, whole school and the community.

Here we explore how well your school is doing and what steps you might take to further develop a wellbeing approach.

Each school will be starting from a different place – this evaluation will need to be completed at different times. It will help schools construct an action plan for change and provide evidence for development.

For each principle and each category, you are asked to consider the following:

- A) This happens regularly – observable outcomes are ...
- B) We are working towards this – so far, we have ...
- C) At the moment this does not happen – our plans are to ...

PRINCIPLE	STUDENTS	STAFF	WHOLE SCHOOL	COMMUNITY
<p><b>AGENCY</b></p> <p>Self-determination is an evidence-based facet of wellbeing. With choice comes responsibility. When people are given some control over actions and decision-making they are more likely to take initiatives, have pride in their work and adhere to the decisions made.</p>	<p>Students are given opportunities for shared decision-making in things that concern them. This includes behavioural interventions.</p> <p>Teachers are in charge of classes and the context for learning but do not try to control students. Offering choices gives pupils ownership.</p>	<p>There is an authentic consultation process on policy, processes and new initiatives.</p> <p>Teachers are given choices over policy implementation – <i>how</i> things are put in place</p>	<p>Where appropriate, pedagogy is Socratic rather than didactic. Students are given opportunities to reflect, discuss, critique and ask questions.</p> <p>There is a wellbeing team comprised of staff, students and community representatives to research, develop and evaluate wellbeing initiatives</p>	<p>The school is transparent with the community on school values and invites their input on policy and practice in line with these values.</p> <p>The school takes into account community perspectives when developing new initiatives</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				

<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>
<p><b>SAFETY</b></p> <p>People can only function optimally when they feel physically, psychologically and emotionally safe</p> <p>Wellbeing is fostered where there is high social capital</p>	<p>Students work together to prevent bullying behaviour by promoting friendship, inclusion and upstanding.</p> <p>All students have the option of remaining silent if they feel uncomfortable verbally participating in an activity.</p>	<p>Mistakes are accepted as part of learning</p> <p>Mentoring and support systems for teachers are in place</p>	<p>Everyone has participated in professional development on establishing and maintaining positive relationships</p> <p>Kindness is embedded as a central school value</p> <p>There is no stigma around mental health issues</p>	<p>Parents are not blamed for their children's difficulties with behaviour or learning but are positioned as partners in seeking a resolution</p> <p>Families are given information about where they might access help and support for dealing with a range of adversities.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				

<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>
<p><b>POSITIVITY</b></p> <p>Negative emotions impede learning whereas positive emotions enhance creativity and problem-solving</p> <p>Having a positive perspective means using strengths based language and solution focused approaches</p>	<p>Wherever possible learning should be both enjoyable and active.</p> <p>Respectful laughter is acknowledged as promoting resilience and positive connection.</p>	<p>Strengths based approaches focus on positive character qualities, how these are demonstrated and how they can be used constructively in learning and relationships</p>	<p>Meetings to discuss concerns are solution-focused. What do we want rather than what do we want to get rid of.</p> <p>Gratitude is embedded as a central school value</p> <p>The school leadership has a clear vision on whole child, whole school wellbeing, clearly and regularly communicated to all stakeholders.</p>	<p>All meetings with families begin with a positive review of what has been achieved and a comment on the strengths of the student.</p> <p>Multicultural celebrations are part of school culture.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				

<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>
<p><b>INCLUSION</b></p> <p>A sense of belonging is critical to psychological health Exclusive belonging can dehumanise others outside the group, inclusive belonging accepts and values everyone.</p>	<p>Collaborative and cooperative working is encouraged.</p> <p>Students regularly meet and mix with those outside their primary social networks to break down barriers and reduce prejudice and stereotyping</p>	<p>There are regular social events to which all staff are invited.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to collaborate and share planning and resources</p> <p>Staff are mixed up in staff meetings so they discuss new initiatives with a range of colleagues</p>	<p>All students are valued and included, regardless of ability, behaviour or specific needs.</p> <p>Behaviour and special needs policies reflect this</p>	<p>Students are encouraged to engage in service learning projects either locally or further afield.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				

PRINCIPLE	STUDENTS	STAFF	WHOLE SCHOOL	COMMUNITY
<p><b>RESPECT</b></p> <p>Respect is encompassed in the Golden Rule: <i>Treat others as you would wish to be treated.</i></p> <p>This includes giving positive regard and seeking the perspective of others. Positive communication means active listening and not pre-judging.</p> <p>It also means building trust.</p>	<p>All students engage in social and emotional learning to develop the values and skills of healthy relationships. SEL is implemented with the ASPIRE principles and pedagogy</p>	<p>All staff have cultural awareness training. All staff are acknowledged for their efforts and contributions - this includes the difference that individuals make to the wellbeing of students who are struggling.</p> <p>People are reliable and do what they say they will do</p>	<p>Every part of the school is a “no put down zone”.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that every student, staff or family member will at time have issues that impact on how they function. This will be taken into account in the demands made on them.</p>	<p>Every community within the school is represented in as many forums as possible and within curriculum materials</p> <p>Communications home are expressed positively.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				

<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>
<p><b>EQUITY</b></p> <p>The more equality the greater wellbeing for all. In school equity means</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) everyone in the school having the same rights and opportunities</li> <li>2) flexibility to meet diverse needs.</li> </ol>	<p>Student with diverse needs have access to the full range of opportunities. This includes curricula and all other school activities.</p>	<p>Teachers focus on personal bests to ensure everyone experiences success.</p>	<p>Procedures are in place to share resources so that there is less re-invention of the wheel.</p>	<p>All families are informed of their rights in school and also responsibilities towards their children. They know who to contact when there is difficulty.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS AND EVALUATION</b></p>				