



Wellbeing Policy

Deansrath Community College

This policy has been approved by the Board of Management	
Signature (Chair BOM)	<i>Lee J. Smith</i>
Date of Approval	<i>15/10/2019</i>
Date of Review	

Mission Statement

Our Mission in Deansrath Community College is to create a safe learning environment within the community which acknowledges diversity, fosters mutual respect, celebrates achievement, recognises the needs of the individual, challenging all to reach their full potential.

Context of this policy

Wellbeing is influenced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which emphasises a child's right to reach their full potential and to have participate in decisions that affect them.

Wellbeing is also in keeping with the government's policy framework Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020.

This policy is written in the context of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018-2023)

Current research indicates that a multi-component, whole school and evidence-informed approach is most beneficial in the promotion of wellbeing in an educational setting

Deansrath Community College aims to promote student wellbeing through a range of activities and approaches which will support the academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of our students.

What is Wellbeing?

Wellbeing is present when a person realises their potential, is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of their life, takes care of their physical wellbeing and has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community. It is a fluid way of being and needs nurturing throughout life (World Health Organisation, 2001)

Wellbeing will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It will promote life skills in students and will develop a sense of connectedness between students and both school and community.

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.

Indicators of Wellbeing



Wellbeing Protective Factors

- Positive relationships with peers and teachers – including positive teacher classroom management strategies
- A sense of belonging, security and connectedness to school through a positive school climate and participation in school and community activities
- Opportunities for social and emotional learning including the development of attention and planning, self-awareness, self-management, relationship and responsible decision-making skills
- Opportunities for the development of knowledge and skills providing a sense of mastery
- Fostering expectations, recognising contributions, effort and achievement and providing opportunities for success
- Wellbeing of school personnel
- Protocols and support systems that proactively support children and their families should difficulties arise
- Opportunities to develop the necessary skills to cope with using online technology in a safe and appropriate way
- Opportunities to develop skills to manage stress that may be linked to school work

Wellbeing risk factors

- Disengagement, absenteeism, isolation and alienation
- Violence, aggression, bullying and relationship difficulties
- Low achievement/learning difficulties
- Cultural differences
- School transitions
- Poor connections between family and school
- Lack of opportunity to develop social and emotional learning

Wellbeing and the Junior Cycle

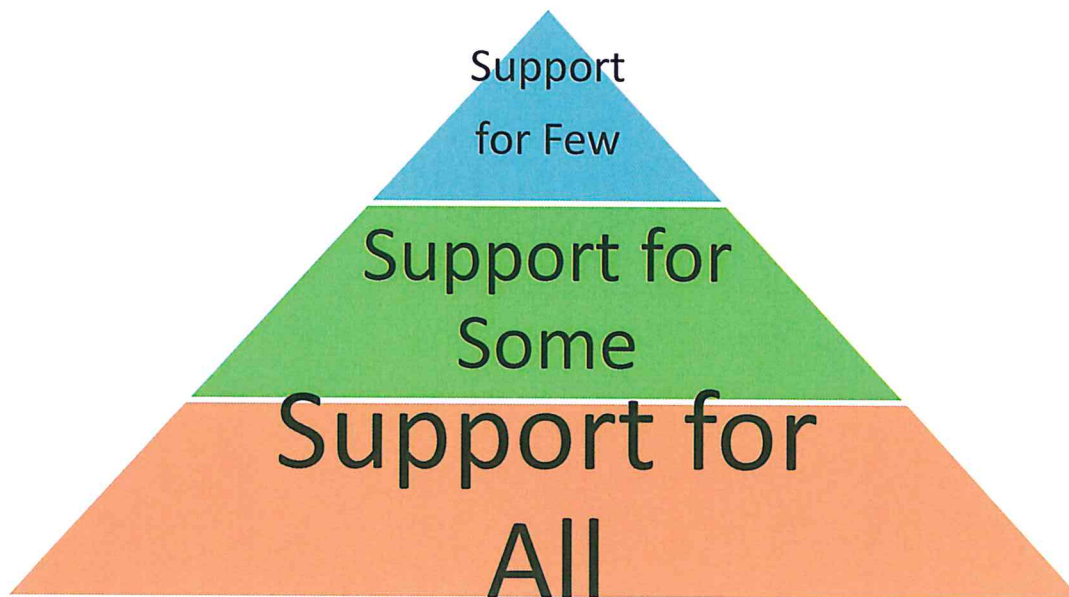
A number of the 24 Statements of Learning of the Junior Cycle relate explicitly to wellbeing. This include

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

How Deansrath Community College can best promote the Wellbeing of its School Community

Research indicates that a multi-component, preventative, whole school approach is the most beneficial approach for schools in the promotion of wellbeing within its community. Interventions which are universal to all and those of a targeted nature will also be employed. A whole school approach to wellbeing will be used. This will involve all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life that impact on wellbeing. A whole school approach has been found internationally to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for individual children and young people, including improved behaviour, increased inclusion, improved learning, greater social cohesion, increased social capital and improvements to mental health (Weare & Gray, 2003).

The Continuum of Support



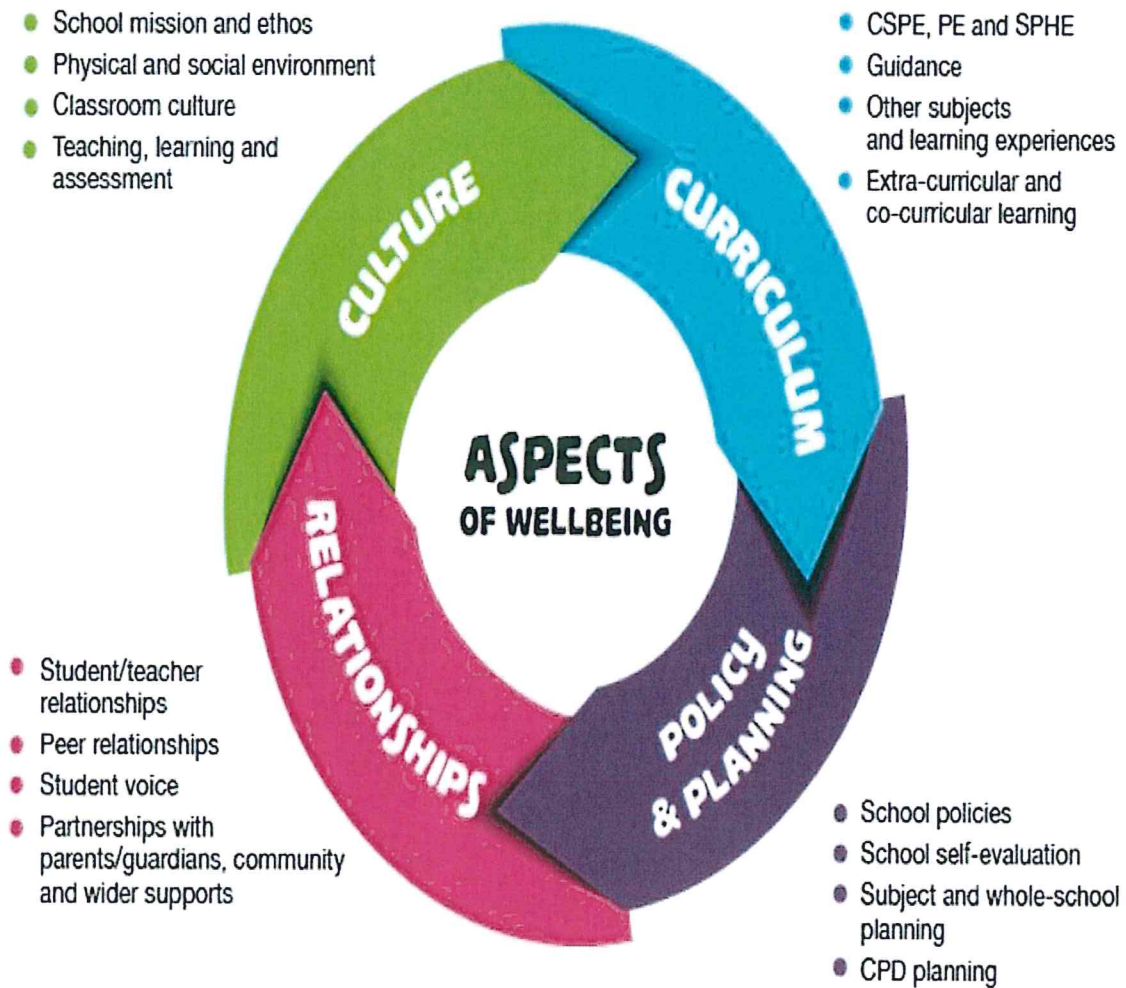
Support Plus for Few: Individualised, targeted intervention for children and young people with more complex and enduring needs.

School Support for Some: Identification, targeted prevention and early intervention for those at risk.

Whole School and Classroom Support for All: Whole school support for wellbeing promotion that includes prevention and development of social and emotional competence & coping skills for all.

In line with best practice the Continuum of Support is used as the framework within which the wellbeing needs of students are addressed. It recognises that young people can have different needs at different times. Those with greater needs may require more specific or a greater amount of support at a given time in comparison to the support given to all other students.

The 4 aspects of Wellbeing



Culture and Environment

Mission and ethos

Our Mission in Deansrath Community College is to create a safe learning environment within the community which acknowledges diversity, fosters mutual respect, celebrates achievement, recognises the needs of the individual, challenging all to reach their full potential.

School and classroom climate and culture

A key indicator of success in the area of culture and environment is that young people and staff experience a sense of belonging within the College. A key programme to ensure a successful transition from Primary to Second-level school is the Belonging Plus Programme which involves all First Year Students and runs throughout the first week of school in August/Sept.

The following policies promote a safe environment for all within the College. This list is not exhaustive as policies undergo a process of continual process of review.

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Code
- Child Protection Policy
- Critical Incident Policy.
- Data Protection Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Our Internet Safe Usage Policy
- Substance Use policy
- SPHE policy

School buildings and grounds

We are extremely aware of the impact of the physical environment on the wellbeing of our school community and Deansrath Community College are immensely proud of the quality of the school building and the outdoor grounds. There is adequate indoor and outdoor space to allow for social interaction of all. A Buddy Bench is located in the indoor canteen area which promotes further social interaction between students and further inclusion of all students. Every effort is made to ensure that the school environment is safe, healthy and warm for all school partners. Every effort is made by school partners to ensure that the school buildings and grounds are also welcoming and inviting to our community and visitors alike. The upkeep of our outside areas also add to the physical environment. The college has a Remembrance

Garden which may be used as a quiet, peaceful area to reflect and perhaps remember those who have passed away.

Students and staff are encouraged to suggest improvements which could be made to our physical environment in order to make it more inviting or attractive. We also use the school building to feature the excellent work and talents of students and to celebrate certain important times of year such as Christmas or St Patrick's Day.

A Parents' room is located close to the College reception area. This room provides a quiet, private area for parents to meet with each other or to meet with college staff or Senior Management.

Deansrath College is also easily accessible to all due to it being single storey. Its wide corridors and recently widened doors allow for ease of movement throughout. There are a number of Disability access toilet facilities, one of which has essential lifting equipment. The Home Economics Room 43 has recently been fitted with a specially adapted kitchen unit to allow for participation of all students in the subject.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

An indicator of success in relation to curriculum is that students experience positive, high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, which provides opportunities for success for all. All teachers within the College are appropriately qualified and are registered with the Teaching Council. Deansrath Community College staff also avail of ongoing Continued Professional Development under the Cosan Framework. Newly Qualified Teachers must also complete the Droichead Programme and newly appointed staff must successfully complete a probationary period.

According to best practice in the fostering of enhanced wellbeing among young people wellbeing promotion should carry through to all aspects of teaching and learning. As young people spend most of their day in classrooms their daily experience of teaching and learning contributes hugely to their wellbeing. The teaching and learning must be inclusive, engaging, differentiated, fostering expectations of high achievement and providing opportunity for success. Deansrath Community College has an EAL and AEN team both of which meet on a weekly basis to ensure that all teaching that occurs in the College includes all students. Deansrath Community College is committed to providing quality Teaching and Learning. This is aided by the use of a variety of learning & teaching methodologies and strategies,

To allow for all of the students experiencing success a wide variety of Programmes are available within the College

- Junior Cycle Programme
- Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP) – this programme aims to provide a curriculum that assists schools and teachers in making the Junior Certificate more accessible to young people who may leave school without formal qualifications. It attempts to help young people experience success in school which increases their self-esteem and results in a desire to continue in education
- Transition Year Programme – re-introduced into the College in 2017 to meet the needs of students the TY programme features a mandatory Wellbeing Module which runs throughout the academic year and involves all TY students
- Leaving Certificate Programme
- Leaving Certificate Applied Programme - provides a positive experience for students whose focus is on the P.L.C. or apprenticeship route to employment. Wellbeing is featured in the LCA programme specifically in subjects such as Social Education and Hotel, Catering and Tourism. Elements of this course such as the development of interview skills and completion of work experience enhance student confidence and wellbeing
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme – is a Senior Cycle Programme of the DES which brings a strong vocational dimension to the Leaving Certificate. It combines

Academic study, enterprise, work and the community. It allows students the opportunity to develop interpersonal, vocational and technological skills. Self-directed learning is a key feature of this programme

At Junior Cycle/Certificate level the College offers subjects to suit the interest and aptitudes of students.

At Senior Cycle, the College offers courses and subjects which will appeal to the interests and aptitudes of all students.

Deansrath Community College strictly complies with Circular which legislates for the provision of wellbeing for Junior Cycle students. As a result, students are provided with the compulsory wellbeing subjects of SPHE, CSPE, PE and Guidance.

In the pursuit of increased academic attainment for all students at both Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle level numerous study and revision practices are in place for all students. These practices are essential in order to develop a habit of study for students. Deansrath Community College runs night study for 3rd and 6th Year students and attendance at this is both promoted and encouraged. Senior cycle students undertake the Super generation Programme which aims to increase study skills. First year students undertake the Learning to Learn Programme during Pastoral Care Class

Deansrath Community College strives to recognise and reward the excellent work and attainment of students as often as possible. The use of intercom, school website & social media (Instagram and Facebook) is used to celebrate student achievement both within the College and outside the College. Year group assemblies take place on a monthly basis while entire school assembly takes place each term. A key feature of all assemblies is to recognise the work, achievements and accomplishments of our students in academic and non-academic areas. Student of the Month Awards, Student of the Year Awards, Full Attendance Awards are key awards which are used to highlight student success. The Colm Higgins Award is given to the 6th Year student who most fulfils the criteria for this prestigious award.

Extra-Curricular Learning

A large number of extra-curricular activities take place in the College. These activities cater for a huge range of interests and ability levels of our students. Example include

Gaelic Football	Film Club	
Soccer	Outdoor Pursuits	
Netball	Strength & Conditioning	
Table Tennis	Swimming	
Badminton	Zumba Class	
Boxing	Yoga Class	
Ukulele Club		

Co-curricular Learning

A wide variety of co-curricular learning takes place in Deansrath Community College. Examples include

- Debating Society
- Talks, tours, trips
- JCSP Make a Book Competition
- JCSP theatre trip
- Drama trips
- History tours –
- Zoo trip by TY students
- European trips
- Art projects and competitions
- Choir, Festival of Music
- Essay, poetry and creative writing competitions
- Musicals and Talent Shows
- CPR for schools
- Drive for Life Programme
- School Mile Challenge

Planning Supports

- Young people within the College are involved in the suggestion and planning of extra-curricular activities
- Teachers subject plans must have explicit reference to teaching, learning and assessment approaches that promote collaboration, self-assessment and sense of achievement
- Differentiated lesson plans feature in the teaching of all class groups
- CPD hours under HR to allow for Department meetings to allow for common schemes of work and common assessment techniques
- Planning of wellbeing within DCC will be supported by the work of the SSE Core Committee

Monitoring

The monitoring of Wellbeing provision will be undertaken by each subject department and by the Senior Management to ensure that the College is meeting all requirements in the area of Wellbeing provision for all

Wellbeing and the Curriculum – Junior Cycle

Curriculum Area	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Hours
PE	2 x 40 mins	2 x 40 mins	2 x 40 mins	135 hours
SPHE (To include Friends for Life Programme)	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	65 hours
CSPE	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	65 hours
Belonging +	20 hours			20 hours
Alert Programme	7 hours	7 hours		14 hours
Resilience Programme		5 hours		5 Hours
Guidance	3 x 40 mins	3 x 40 minutes	9 hours	13 hours
I.T. – Online Safety	3 x 40 mins	3 x 40 mins	3 x 40 mins	6 hours
Pastoral Care/Learning to Learn	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	1 x 40 mins	65 hours
Religious Ed.	3 x 40 mins	3 x 40 mins	3 x 40 mins	6 hours
Activities related to Wellbeing	Sports Day – 4 Mental Health Awareness - 40 mins Christmas Social – 1Hr	Sports Day – 4 Mental Health Awareness - 40 mins Christmas Social – 1 Hr	Sports Day - 4 Mental Health Awareness - 40 mins Christmas Social – 1 Hr	12 hours 2 hours 2 hours
Total				410 hours

School and centre self-evaluation

Evaluation of the wellbeing provision will be undertaken by Subject Departments which will be led by the SSE Core Team

Continuing Professional Development

Central to this is the role of staff and the importance of building professional capacity to engage in a reflective process to implement and sustain wellbeing policy and strategies from within. Research has shown that building professional capacity of teachers enhances not only the wellbeing and empowerment of teachers themselves, but has a positive impact on the systems which acknowledges the interaction of wellbeing and achievement (Hargreaves et al, 2018). Deansrath Community College implements a comprehensive CPD plan to ensure that all teachers have the necessary training to promote wellbeing on a whole class basis and through SPHE, CSPE, PE and Guidance.

There is ongoing engagement of staff with CPD in the area of Teaching and Learning with specific emphasis placed on differentiation, assessment within Junior Cycle and also ICT in the classroom.

Policy and Planning

Coherent policy and planning at a whole school level is needed to ensure the successful delivery of a wellbeing promotion process in schools.

Policies related to Wellbeing

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Home, School, Community Liaison Policy
- Homework Policy
- Internet Safety Policy
- Physical Activity Policy
- RSE Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Student Council Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Relationships and Partnerships

Student and staff relationships

- Deansrath Community College has a comprehensive Pastoral system in place. The tutor system allows students to build up a rapport with one key member of staff. The AYM system gives students one person who have overall responsibility for their academic progress and success while the Year Head has overall responsibility for a Year Group within the College.
- The role of the teacher has also been found to be paramount to children and young people's wellbeing (OECD, 2017), and reaches beyond teaching and learning. The relationship that teachers develop with the young person is a key influence on wellbeing development. Access to 'one good adult' who can guide and support a young person at a vulnerable time is an identified protective factor. For this reason, Deansrath Community College runs the Check and Connect Programme for students who require additional support.
- School Completion Programme - Bawnogue/Deansrath SCP (under EWS in Tusla) works in 4 schools in the area and aims to support vulnerable students' attendance, participation and retention in school to completion of Senior Cycle through a wide range of needs-led-supports and initiatives including breakfast and after school club (part of Fresh Start Transfer Programme), individual supports, attendance supports and Easter and Summer Camps
- Chaplain - The Chaplain's role is to be available to support students and staff on life's journey and to take an interest in all aspects of the life of the school. The Chaplain works closely with the Religious Education Department to provide opportunities for the faith development of students.
- Guidance Counsellor - The Guidance Counsellor provides personal counselling, educational and career guidance to all students during their time in Deansrath Community College. The guidance provision for each year group is outlined in the Guidance Plan.
- School Counsellor - The Counsellor provides professional support on a one to one basis and in small group settings for students with emotional and psychological needs in holistic setting. The counsellor is also available to staff and parents and can offer outside referrals where necessary.
- Critical Incident Team - The Critical Incident team is made up of Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor, School Counsellor and other members of staff.

Peer Relations

- Friendship Fortnight is an annual whole school initiative to encourage both students and teachers to forge better relationships with their classmates and teachers. Events such as the Random Acts of Kindness Day, 1st and 2nd Year Debates and Mental Health Awareness Day, encourage students to take part and work together to promote a spirit of friendship within the school.
- Prefects and Buddy systems are in operation within the College
- Friends for Life Programme - The school runs the 'Friends for Life' programme in 1st and 2nd. This programme focuses on building the skills of resilience in preventing and managing anxiety
- Friendship club takes place in Room 8 every Thursday lunch time and is open to all students. This gives students the opportunity to make friends, mix with students from other year groups, seek advice from other students or simply enjoy a board game or a chat with friends and classmates under the supervision of Ms Crowley

Student Voice

An indicator of success involves students, teachers and parents feeling heard which can lead to an improvement in school culture. Deansrath Community College has a well-established Student Council, Parent's Council and Staff Council to allow the voice of students, parents and teachers to be heard.

Partnership – staff, students, parents/guardians

- Home, School, Community Liaison promotes partnership between the College, parents/Guardians and local community with the overarching aim of increasing school attendance, retention and attainment rates. Student welfare is a key area in the work of the HSCL
- HSCL Parents' Courses – Many courses are run in the College for Parents/Guardians. Advance notification are given via letter regarding these courses. Examples of courses which take place include Yoga, Gardening, Healthy Eating, Christmas Cookery, Maths and Literacy Courses
- Paired Reading takes place within the College which allows for Parents/Guardians to visit the College and become involved in Paired Reading with their child and his/her class group
- 1st Year Parent Coffee morning – This occurs in October to allow 1st Year parents to meet their child's Year Head, AYM and Class Tutor in an informal, relaxed setting. Senior Management and HSCL will also be in attendance

- Christmas Parent and Student Night occurs for 1st Year Parents/Guardians in December. A night of fun activities including Cookery, Christmas Art, Yule Log making, table quiz and refreshments.
- Parent Tutor meetings occur in January for 1st, 2nd, TY and 5th Year students in order to discuss Christmas exam results. Parent Teacher meetings also take place which in line with DES requirements.
- Professional networks for teachers

Partnerships with other schools

Deansrath Community College has established very strong links with our 2 primary “feeder” schools. Students from these Primary Schools visit the College numerous times prior to beginning class in 1st Year. Easter Camp takes place in DCC as well as Taster Programmes in certain practical subjects in order to allow students to familiarise themselves with school layout, teachers and some subjects before they commence in September

Community Partnerships

Deansrath Community College has established partnerships with many community organisations and groups.

- Jigsaw
- Social justice engagement - RE Department and CSPE students are engaged in a number of social justice and fund raising events throughout the year. Christmas Food appeal and the Shoebox Appeal take place each year. Concern debates

External Supports

- Health Promoting Schools – Deansrath Community College is involved in the Health Promoting Schools Initiative.
- National Education Psychological Services
- Special Education Needs Organiser
- Education Welfare Officer and TUSLA
- HSE Social services
- Child Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Juvenile Liaison Officer service
- Garda Youth Diversion Programme workers
- Pieta house

Support for Some

Care Team - Our care team meet weekly. It is made up representatives from the AEN department, the guidance counsellors, and is coordinated by both deputy principals. The team discusses its current caseload and any students referred to them by members of staff, by parents or by student peers. It monitors ongoing concerns

Counselling

Restorative Practice

Support for Few

Close relationship with external agencies and services The Pastoral Care, guidance teacher and management avail of all the supports or agencies appropriate to the identified needs of “the few” students.

Staff Wellbeing

Over recent years staff CPD has been organised in Mindfulness, wellbeing and in first aid training for staff.

Each year the staff Social Committee organise a number of social gatherings to mark the end of each term or special events.

Staff members are regularly reminded of the support available through the Employee Assistance Scheme.