

# **Loreto Secondary School**

## **Wellbeing Policy and Programme**

### **Introduction:**

Loreto Secondary School seeks to promote healthy lifestyles and the wellbeing of our school community, in a safe, supportive and non-threatening environment. Through its policies, procedures, activities and structures the school aims to create an environment in which:

- People feel valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- There is respect, tolerance and fairness
- People in difficulty are supported
- There is open and honest communication
- Effort is recognised
- Difference and diversity are valued
- Conflict is handled constructively
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted
- Initiative and creativity are stressed.

These aims are implemented in the daily transactions between management, staff, students and the wider school community.

### **Mission Statement:**

Truth, freedom, justice, sincerity and joy – as relevant today in Loreto, Wexford as for Mary Ward in 1609.

### **Ethos and Aims:**

A number of key principles and values determine the ethos, characteristic spirit and practices in our school.

- We are Christian educators who aim to communicate to our students by word and by deed what it means to be a fully human person in the light of Christ.
- We aim to work in a spirit of close co-operation with each girl's home as we take a shared responsibility for her overall formation and development
- We place considerable emphasis on the importance of a happy working atmosphere in the school that is based on mutual respect amongst all who study and work here.
- We recognise that each girl in the school has strengths, weaknesses, needs and wants that are particular to her. Within the confines of a school system that deals with a student population of 780, we do all in our power to both recognise and cater for individuality and diversity. It is for this reason that we attach great importance to providing a broad curriculum, a wide range of extra- curricular activities and comprehensive support structures for all students.

## **Philosophy:**

Loreto schools aim to create a ‘dynamic community where every student is valued equally and has a real sense of belonging’ (*Loreto Education: Continuing the Journey, 2017, p. 9*). The school is a welcoming school and commits to using its resources to ensure and promote the care and wellbeing of our students. The *Continuing the Journey* document outlines how the ideal of Loreto education today will be enshrined in:

- Courteous relationships within the school
- The wide and well-chosen curriculum provided
- Promotion of understanding of global issues
- The extra-curricular activities organised
- The systems, structures and policies
- Communications
- Interest and concern for the students
- Loyalty and gratitude (p.15)

The eight points above are central to how our school operates. They are also central to ensuring the wellbeing of the whole school community.

## **Rationale:**

In line with *The Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, The Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle 2017, The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018 – 2023* and Circular Letter 0015/2017, the school has devised a programme, which will provide junior cycle students, entering in September 2018, with over 400 hours of wellbeing related learning.

In the context of Junior Cycle reform, there is an increased focus on the need to ensure that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of school life. Accordingly, the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) have developed *Wellbeing Guidelines*. These guidelines govern what we, as a school, now set out to achieve. Wellbeing is commonly seen ‘as a combination of sustained positive feelings and attitudes- happy, healthy and confident young people who feel safe, secure, cared for, included, involved, and engaged and so on’ (*The Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle 2017, p. 18*). The World Health Organisation defines how 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’ (*The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018 – 2023, p.10*).

## **Context:**

This is a whole school policy which is informed by other school policies, including the following;

- Code of Behaviour
- SPHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- Homework Policy

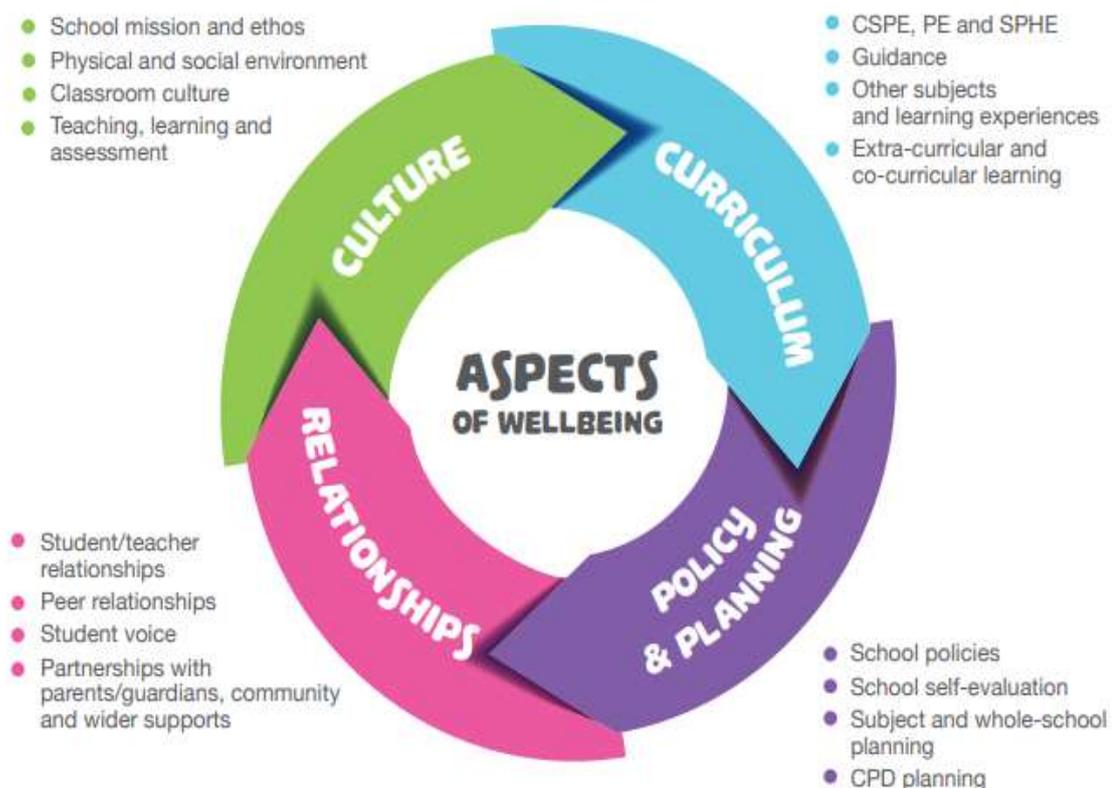
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy

### Wellbeing in Schools:

The school recognises the important role it plays in promoting and ensuring the wellbeing of our students and staff. The *Wellbeing Guidelines* identify four key aspects of wellbeing within the school setting: They are:

- **Curriculum:** This aspect refers to the subjects we provide and how we cater for wellbeing in the curriculum.
- **Policy and Planning:** This aspect refers to how we as a school endeavour to look after the wellbeing of the school community. Simply put, through policies, planning and school self-evaluation, we should make decisions with due regard to the wellbeing of our students and staff.
- **Relationships:** Strong relationships amongst all members of the school community form the backbone of a positive working environment. As a school, we endeavour to make sure that all interactions between students and staff are positive and affirming.
- **Culture:** Culture refers to our ethos, mission statement and the prevailing atmosphere in our school. We strive to make sure our school is a happy place to study and work.

The following image, taken from the *Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle 2017*, summarise the points above.



Six indicators of wellbeing have also been identified. They are:

- **Active:** Being physically active is an important element in staying well.
- **Responsible:** Each person must take responsibility for their own choices and make decisions which promote their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.
- **Connected:** It is important, for our wellbeing, to be connected to other people and to interact with others in a positive way. We should also appreciate the implications of our actions for those around us and further afield.
- **Resilient:** Everyone goes through challenges in their life. By building resilience, we hope to give our students the skills to cope with difficult situations.
- **Respected:** Feeling respected, listened to and cared for are key aspects of feeling well. Positive, respectful relationships are also central to maintaining our wellbeing.
- **Aware:** To stay well, we need to be aware of our thoughts, our emotions and our limitations. We should also be aware of those around us, conscious of how our actions might impact on their wellbeing.



The school has always placed a strong emphasis on the wellbeing of the school community. The introduction of a formal wellbeing programme at junior cycle will now complement the support structures already in place to support wellbeing. Through its policies and procedures, the school seeks to provide a safe, caring environment for all.

The school recognises the importance of addressing all educational needs through the Continuum of Support:

- Support for All
- Support for Some
- Support for Few

In this school, the following procedures are in place to support the wellbeing of our students:

- **Subject Teacher:** The subject teacher is responsible for maintaining a safe environment in which to work. The subject specific teacher is also responsible for monitoring the progress of each student in his/her care, providing assistance where needed.
- **Class Teacher:** Each base class has a dedicated class teacher. This teacher is asked to take a particular interest in the welfare of the students' in his or her class. The Class Teacher will monitor attendance and sign the school journal of students in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year on a weekly basis.
- **Year Head:** The school has assigned three teachers to the role of Year Heads in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Year Heads monitor the students in their year group, ensuring that they are supported throughout their time in the school. Year Heads will also monitor attendance within the year group, contacting home where necessary. Year Heads will work closely with Class Teachers to ensure the wellbeing of the students in their care.
- **Guidance Counsellors:** Ms. Foley and Ms. Kelly deliver timetabled guidance classes to senior cycle students. In the first term of the year, they meet with every 1<sup>st</sup> year student. Furthermore, they are also available to meet students on an individual basis, should the need arise.
- **Student Care Co-ordination Team (SCCT):** The SCCT meet weekly to discuss individual cases of concern, as well as general, school-wide initiatives. This group is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principals, Guidance Counsellors and the Learning Support team. In the event of a critical incident, the SCCT will convene as soon as possible to consider the appropriate response, in line with established guidelines.
- **Student Support Team (SST):** Where there is a confirmed case of bullying behaviour and the issue has not been resolved, the SST will meet to investigate the matter further and consider its response. The SST will support those involved and seek to ensure a satisfactory resolution.
- **Child Protection:** New child protection procedures came into effect from December 2017. As a result, the school has prepared a comprehensive Student Safeguarding Statement. More detailed information on child protection can be found on our website, under the 'Child Protection' tab.
- **Learning Support (LS) Team:** The LS team coordinate the learning support timetable and liaise with parents of those children with additional needs. The LS team also work closely with feeder primary schools, to identify students who may need additional care upon entering Loreto, Wexford

- **Meitheal/Cara:** Following an interview process, 15 senior cycle students are appointed as Meitheal leaders. They support, encourage and help first year students throughout their initial year in the school. The Cara system entails all Meitheal leaders carrying on a pastoral role in 6<sup>th</sup> year for 2<sup>nd</sup> year students.

In addition to the procedures outlined above, the school organises a number of events each year, aimed at the wellbeing of our school community. These events are organised by various subject departments and teachers over the course of the year. The following summarises some of these initiatives:

- School visit for incoming first year students, normally held in May
- 1<sup>st</sup> year Retreat to Ballyvaloo
- Study Skills seminars for students and parents
- Two general meetings of parents are held each year. This is an opportunity to update the parent body about school developments and any issues of concern
- Internet Safety. The school will organise workshops for 1<sup>st</sup> year students around the area of internet safety
- Guest speakers. The school organises visits from various guest speakers. These vary from year to year and can be on a range of different topics. Guest speakers will be invited to the school in line with circular letter 0043/2018 'Best practice guidance for post primary schools in the use of programmes and/or facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing policy statement and framework for practice'
- Friendship week. This week is organised to promote the importance of friendship and inclusiveness.
- Wellness week. This week is organised by the Students' Council to promote the wellbeing of the student body.
- 6<sup>th</sup> year Wellbeing Day
- 6<sup>th</sup> year Glendalough Retreat
- Prize-giving Ceremony
- Multicultural Week.

In addition to the above, the school seeks to promote an environment, which is positive, affirming and true to our ethos. The school will endeavour to provide as many co and extra-curricular activities as possible, thereby giving our students the opportunity to enhance their wellbeing outside of the classroom. Students from all year groups are encouraged to become involved in the numerous sporting teams representing the school.

### **Staff Wellbeing:**

The wellbeing of school staff is also of extreme importance. As a school, we aim to support staff wellbeing through our policies, procedures and practices. For example,

- The promotion of a safe, comfortable teaching environment
- An open door policy whereby staff can discuss issues of concern with the Principal and/or Deputy Principals in a confidential manner
- Regular staff and departmental meetings
- An Assistant Principal (AP2) with a focus on staff wellbeing

- The use of school sports facilities
- CPD is provided, encouraged and supported by the Board of Management
- Subject departments are resourced as well as possible. Requests for extra resources are considered and authorised, as appropriate
- Staff have the opportunity to develop their leadership capacity through various initiatives, committees and groups.

### **Student Voice:**

The school has structures in place to facilitate the student voice. Listening and responding to feedback from students is central to the wellbeing of the student body. The school places an emphasis on hearing the student voice, through the following channels:

- Students' Council
- Prefects' Council
- Justice and Peace Group
- Class Teachers
- Year Heads
- Learning Support Team
- Guidance Counsellors
- SCCT
- Close cooperation with home
- Amber Flag committee
- Green Schools committee
- School Planning Group
- Head Girls
- Regular classroom visits by the Principal

### **Wellbeing and School Self Evaluation (SSE):**

The school keeps its policies, curriculum and procedures under ongoing review. The school will use the SSE process to reflect on how we promote wellbeing in the school. The SSE process will allow us examine our strengths and weaknesses in this area and consider areas for improvement. This will involve the views of all stakeholders.

### **Wellbeing in Junior Cycle:**

In line with guidelines set down by the Department of Education and Skills, the school will work towards providing 400 hours of wellbeing related learning at junior cycle level by 2020. From September 2018, students will study the following:

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Wellbeing Classes</b>	<b>Total number of periods per week</b>	<b>Total time allocation</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	CSPE SPHE PE Choir	5	111 hours
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	CSPE SPHE	5	111 hours

	PE Wellbeing Modules		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year * (Students in this group will still be following the old Junior Certificate syllabi in CSPE, PE and SPHE)	CSPE (Examined in June, 2019) SPHE PE	4	90 hours
<b>Total:</b>			312 hours

**Wellbeing Modules:** Second year students will take wellbeing modules. All modules are of approximately six weeks' duration, with one period per week allocated.

For the school year 2018/2019, the following modules will be available each Wednesday at 10.10 a.m.:

<b>Title of Module</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
Choral Singing	Ms. A. Walton
Active Meditation	Ms. J. Byrne
Friends for Life	Mr. M. Mullen
Making Mood Mellow	Ms. K. Johns
Healthy Eating	Ms. G. Martin

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Module Title</b>				
	Choral Singing	Active Meditation	Making Mood Mellow	Healthy Eating	Friends for Life
30/08/2018 – 12/10/2018	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
15/10/2018 – 07/12/2018	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.1
10/12/2018 – 08/02/2019	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.2
11/02/2019 –	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.3

29/03/2019					
01/04/2019 – 31/05/2019	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4

### **Wellbeing in Senior Cycle:**

At senior cycle, the school continues to promote the wellbeing of its students through its taught curriculum. In addition to the points mentioned above, the school also provides:

- A comprehensive Transition Year programme which includes wellbeing classes, a mindfulness module, guest speakers, work experience, first aid training and a timetabled wellbeing class.
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Information about subject choices and career paths
- Timetabled Guidance classes

## Junior Cycle Wellbeing Modules: Aims and Objectives:

**Title of unit:** Choir (1<sup>st</sup> year students only)

**Duration:** 33 weeks x 40 mins: 22 hours

**Aim of the unit:** To encourage all students to sing and foster a love of music. To encourage students to perform in a group and on their own, where possible.

**Links:** As a school, choir has always formed part of the timetable in Loreto, Wexford. With regard to the ethos of the school, choir has particular importance as it helps foster relationships, promote friendships, promote inclusivity in 1<sup>st</sup> year and develop singing talent.

It has been proven that singing can improve wellbeing, as the following article confirms:

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/features/joining-a-choir-the-pitch-perfect-way-to-improve-wellbeing-460109.html>

Statements of Learning	Example of related learning in the unit
SOL 4: Creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved.	Sings a range of different songs, appreciating differences in rhythm, tone, pitch and sound.
SOL 16: Describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships	Can interpret and predict musical patterns and relationships through singing.

**Key skills.** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

Key skill	Element	Student learning activity
Staying Well	Being social Being confident	Singing as a group, mixing with their peers and performing with and in front of fellow students.
Being Creative	Exploring options and alternatives	Working with the teacher to explore different sounds, musical varieties and different ways of singing various songs.

Working with others	Learning with others Developing good relationships	Working as part of a class group, fostering relationships through singing.
Communicating	Using language Listening and expressing myself Performing and presenting	Using the language of music to communicate, perform and express oneself as part of a group and individually.

The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

### Suggested learning outcomes

At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Participate in a choir, singing in harmony with others (**Active, Connected**)
- Understand the importance of musical timing, pitch and tone (**Active, Connected**)
- Have the confidence to perform with their class group, in front of an with others (**Resilient, Active**)

### Sample Learning Activities:

- Students will have the opportunity to perform with their peers
- Students will have the opportunity to listen to and interpret various musical tones and sounds.

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Engage with other students through song.
- Are able to perform as a class group or on their own
- Work collaboratively on harmonies, rhythm and song
- Recognise how the learning in this module connects to the wellbeing indicators.

### Useful resources, web links and community links:

**Title of unit:** Healthy Eating (2<sup>nd</sup> year students)

**Duration:** 6 weeks x 40 mins: 4 hours

**Aim of the unit:** To provide practical information of healthy eating and to improve culinary skills amongst students so that they can provide healthy, nutritious and low-cost meals and snacks.

**Links:** This module links to first year Home Economics and aspects of the SPHE curriculum.

**Statement of learning**

**Example of related learning in the unit**

SOL 10: Has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably

Consider what constitutes health eating, the importance of fruit and vegetables, calcium and protein. Through the fat teaspoon test, students will consider ways to lower fat in their diet.

SOL 11: Takes action to safeguard and promote her wellbeing and that of others

Consider some of the key elements of a well-balanced diet (Fibre, fruit/veg. calcium and protein) thereby promoting their own wellbeing.

SOL 13: Understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices.

Consider some of the key elements of a well-balanced diet thereby promoting a healthy lifestyle.

**Key skills** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

Key skill	Element	Student learning activity
Staying Well	Being healthy, physical and active	By examining ways of improving your diet, students, through this module, are encouraged to maintain a healthy food lifestyle.
Managing Myself	Making considered decisions	This module encourages students to think about their current lifestyles and take rationale, thoughtful decisions regarding their diet and health.
Working with others	Learning with others	Students will work with their peers to discuss ways of improving their diet. They will also cook a healthy meal, working with their classmates to apply the knowledge acquired from the course.

Communicating	Using language  Listening and expressing myself	Students will have the opportunity to express themselves, make suggestions and contribute to discussions around healthy eating.
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The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

### **Suggested Learning outcomes**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Understand the importance of fibre, protein, fruit, vegetables and calcium in a balanced diet (**Aware, Responsible**)
- Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy meals (**Aware, Responsible**)
- Cook a simple, quick healthy meal based on knowledge acquired over the course of the module (**Active, Aware, Responsible**).

### **Sample Learning Activities:**

- Discuss and study the varied constituents of a balanced diet using worksheets
- Consider the importance of food safety through classroom discussion and brainstorming
- Students will work collaboratively to produce a simple, healthy meal.
- Students will consider, using the fat teaspoon test, ways to reduce fat intake.

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Participate in classroom discussion and activities around the topic of healthy eating
- Prepare, using the knowledge acquired over the course, a simple, nutritious meal.
- Work with their classmates to consider ways to improve their diet thereby improving their wellbeing.
- Recognise how the learning in this module connects to the wellbeing indicators.

### **Useful resources, web links and community links:**

<b>Title of unit:</b> Friends for life (2 <sup>nd</sup> year students)	<b>Duration:</b> 6 weeks x 40 mins: 4 hours
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**Aim of the unit:** This unit aims to use elements of the friends for life programme to support students in their second year in the school. The unit will explore strategies to help students understand their feelings, deal with worry, stress and anxiety with a focus on promoting positive mental health.

**Links:** This module has links to SPHE. It also links with some of the themes explored in the first-year retreats.

Statement of learning	Example of related learning in the unit
SOL 5: Has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making	Students will explore the importance of understanding feelings, making positive decisions and the importance of making and keeping friends.
SOL 11: Takes action to safeguard and promote her wellbeing and that of others	Through lessons on building confidence and becoming aware of our senses, students will explore ways of relaxing, feeling stronger thereby promoting their own wellbeing. Students will also take part in activities looking at the importance of family, schools and friends.

**Key skills** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

Key skill	Element	Student learning activity
Staying Well	Being confident	Students will explore ways to improve and build on their confidence (session 3).
Managing Myself	Knowing myself Making considered decisions Setting and achieving personal goals	At the beginning of this module students will have the opportunity to reflect and consider their personal goals in life.  Through activities, such as the Feelings Charades, students will attempt to understand their feelings more deeply, practising empathy.

Working with others	Developing good relationships and dealing with conflict	Session 5 of this module will focus on the attributes of a good friend and the importance of making and keeping good friends.
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The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

**Suggested Learning outcomes:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Set achievable, personal goals, recognising their strengths and weaknesses (**Aware, Resilient, Responsible**)
- Recognise the importance of relaxation and connecting with friends as part of a healthy lifestyle (**Aware, Connected**)
- Value the importance of helping other (**Aware, Responsible**).

**Sample Learning Activities:**

- Students will take part in feelings charades and other activities in order to practice empathy and understand feelings
- Students will use handouts and worksheets to consider, plan and set personal goals
- Through brainstorming and class discussion, students will look at ideas as to how they can develop their confidence and become more aware of their senses.

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Reflect on their strengths, weaknesses and ambitions, setting their own personal goals
- Recognise ways in which they can feel happier.
- Show an understanding of the importance of empathy
- Recognise how the learning in this module connects to the wellbeing indicators.

**Useful resources, web links and community links:**

- My Friends Youth activity book
- My Friends Youth group leader manual
- Youtube clips

<b>Title of unit:</b> Choral Singing	<b>Duration:</b> 6 weeks x 40 mins: 4 hours
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**Aim of the unit:** This unit aims to engage students in choral singing, enabling them to perform songs individually and as a group. At the end of each module, students will be able to participate in a final performance.

**Links:** This module has links to Choir, in first year. There are also links to junior cycle music and PE

<b>Statement of learning</b>	<b>Example of related learning in the unit</b>
SOL 4: The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the processes and skills involved.	Taking a song, learning the melody, learning the harmony, student accompaniment (if relevant).
SOL 23: The student brings an idea from conception to realisation.	Performance at the end of the module.

**Key skills.** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

Key skill	Element	Student learning activity
Staying Well	Being positive about learning	In this short unit of learning, students will find enjoyment and fun through song and dance.
	Being confident	Students will develop confidence in their ability to perform.
Managing Myself	Knowing myself	Students get to recognise their own strengths/weaknesses and reflect on elements that they can improve on.
	Being able to reflect on my own learning	
Working with others	Learning with others/Co-operating	Students will work with their peers to contribute to a collective performance.

Communicating	Performing and Presenting	Students will communicate through song and dance.
	Listening and expressing myself	Students will listen to others and express themselves through the medium of song/dance.
Being Creative	Learning creatively	Students will explore different mediums of performance.
	Exploring options and alternatives	They will also consider different arrangements, styles and means of artistic performance.

The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

**Suggested learning outcomes:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Participate, in a group, in a musical or dance performance (**Active, Connected**).
- Demonstrate skills acquired in a certain artistic discipline (**Aware, Active**).
- Recognise their artistic abilities, working individually and collaboratively, to demonstrate growth in these skills (**Aware, Connected**).

**Sample Learning Activities:**

- YouTube sing-a-long
- Class choral singing
- Exploration of different genres of songs, e.g. musical, pop, African etc.

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Are able to follow music properly
- Sing in tune with their chosen music
- Perform the song accurately and with confidence
- Are able to work in a group
- Demonstrate an ability to keep to the beat of a song by using percussion instruments, where appropriate.

<b>Title of unit:</b> Active Meditation (2 <sup>nd</sup> year students)	<b>Duration:</b> 6 weeks x 40 mins: 4 hours
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**Aim of the unit:** To reflect on the nature of self, spirituality through the Chakra Energy Mandalas.

**Links:** This unit links to elements of the Religious Education curriculum. It also links to the Mathematics curriculum through the use of geometry.

<b>Statement of learning</b>	<b>Example of related learning in the unit</b>
SOL 4: Create and presents artistic works and appreciates the processes and skills involved	Students will use colour, design, patterns and shapes to explore emotions, spirituality and their relationships
SOL 5: Has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making.	Through the intuition mandala exercise and personal journal work, students will consider their personal choices and decision making.
SOL 6: Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she lives	Students will learn about the origins of Mandalas, their meaning and the history of Mandala Art throughout the world, as a means of self-expression, personal growth and spiritual transformation.

**Key skills** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

<b>Key skill</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Student learning activity</b>
Staying Well	Being spiritual	This unit allows students the opportunity to reflect on their emotions, self-esteem and self-confidence. Meditation helps students to connect with their inner self. Personal journal work will also form part of this module.
Managing Myself	Knowing myself	This module gives students time, in a relaxed classroom environment, to consider their thoughts, emotions and relationships.

Communicating	Listening and expressing myself	Active meditation allows students the opportunity to listen to their inner thoughts and express themselves through the mandalas.
Being Creative	Imaging Learning creatively	Through meditation, worksheets and personal reflection, students will use their imagination to draw, colour and design their mandalas.

The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

### **Suggested Learning outcomes**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Understand the meaning of the mandalas (**Aware**)
- Reflect, through the mandalas and personal journal work, more deeply on their own spirituality, feelings and emotions (**Aware, Connected, Responsible**)
- Understand the importance of meditation and taking time to oneself in ensuring their own wellbeing (**Aware, Resilient, Responsible**).

### **Sample Learning Activities:**

- Meditation during class time.
- Personal journal work and reflection
- Designing, colouring and creating mandala circles

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Understand the importance of Mandala Art as a process of self-expression and personal growth
- Create and explain some of their own mandala art
- Participate fully in meditation exercises, thereby attending to their own wellbeing and mental health

### **Useful resources, web links and community links:**

- ‘My Journey Through Mandala: An Active Meditation Practice into Creative Self-Expression’, written and illustrated by Josie Fogarty Byrne.

**Title of unit:** Making Mood Mellow (2<sup>nd</sup> year students)

**Duration:** 6 weeks x 40 mins: 4 hours

**Aim of the unit:** To provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their feelings and emotions through the creation of a mood book.

**Links:** This unit links to elements of the SPHE curriculum, Visual Art and the Active Meditation module.

Statement of learning	Example of related learning in the unit
SOL 4: Create and presents artistic works and appreciates the processes and skills involved	Students will use colour, design, patterns and shapes to explore emotions, spirituality and their relationships
SOL 11: Takes action to safeguard and promote his/her wellbeing and that of others	At the beginning of each class, students will carry out breathing exercises. They will examine ways in which to catch negative thoughts and stop them impacting on their wellbeing.
SOL 23: Brings an idea from conception to realisation	Students will create their own mandala and create a mood book, selecting their own colours and patterns.

**Key skills** (The elements and the learning outcomes for the eight key skills in junior cycle are set out in detail in Key Skills for Junior Cycle. Select the four key skills that this unit is particularly significant in supporting.

Key skill	Element	Student learning activity
Staying Well	Being spiritual	This unit allows students the opportunity to self-reflect and consider their own thoughts and emotions. At the beginning of each class, students will carry out breathing exercises.
	Being healthy, physical and active	During this module, students will have the opportunity to complete a silent walk outside. They will then reflect on what they heard, saw and felt during the walk. The role of silence will also be considered.

Managing Myself	Knowing myself	The activities in this module encourages students to become more aware of their feelings, challenging negative thoughts.
Being Creative	Imaging Learning creatively	Through breathing exercises, creating a mandala and their own mood book, students will be able to creatively express themselves.

The wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. (The Wellbeing Indicators are: Active, Aware, Connected, Resilient, Respected, Responsible)

### **Suggested Learning outcomes**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to...

- Create their own mood book (**Active, Aware**)
- Discuss negative thoughts and consider ways in which they can be channelled (**Aware, Resilient**)

### **Sample Learning Activities:**

- Breathing exercises at the beginning of each lesson
- Select, create and design their own mandala
- Create their own mood book

**Assessment:** Students will show evidence of their learning when they:

- Discuss the rationale behind mandalas and the associated mood book
- Participate in classroom activities and classroom discussion
- Complete their mandala and mood book, reflecting on their own emotions, anxieties and concerns

### **Useful resources, web links and community links:**

- Short, guided meditations including 3-minute breathing space, body scan and 7/11 breathing exercises
- YouTube clips including Mark Williams, 'Mindfulness guys' and mindfulness meditation for kids
- Apps (for example, Calm, Headspace and Buddhify).