



Developing a wellbeing programme: What could a wellbeing programme look like for our 11 to 13 year old students?

Linda Harvie

Principal

Farm Cove Intermediate School

Term 2 2019

“Wellbeing is a long road.”

“It is a collective journey as well as an individual journey of discovery. It is about others and us. We cannot sit in silos.”

“Wellbeing is not just a programme. It is what we do every day and it has to be lived.”

“Happiness is not going to fall upon us.”

(A collection of staff quotes from school visits.)

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Farm Cove Intermediate (FCI) Board of Trustees for supporting my professional learning and acknowledge The Ministry of Education’s commitment to principals by funding the Primary School Principals’ Sabbatical Programme. Thank you also to the FCI Deputy Principal (DP), Assistant Principal (AP), teachers and administration staff for taking on additional responsibilities during my absence. I really appreciate their support.

Thank you to both the New Zealand (NZ) and Melbourne schools that opened their doors and allowed us to learn from their approach to wellbeing. The NZ schools included St Peter’s College in Cambridge, Mount Pleasant Primary School in Christchurch and Halswell Primary School in Christchurch. The Melbourne schools included Elisabeth Murdoch College, Langwarrin Park Primary School, Ringwood Secondary College and Tinternvale Primary School. Thank you also to Chris Munro, Tim Harper, Edwina Ricci, Maria Allison and Sarah Roney, educational experts in Melbourne, who assisted us by supporting our Melbourne trip planning. I appreciate their willingness to share their excellent contacts and extensive knowledge.

Executive summary

Research shows mental health concerns are accelerating worldwide. This acceleration is affecting our children’s lives now and it will influence their futures.

Parents are aware of the importance of mental health and they are supportive of their children learning wellbeing strategies (Seligman, 2012).

We have set a wellbeing goal within our Kahui Ako strategic plan. Since the start of 2018, we have trialled some initiatives. Our next step is to learn how to implement a successful programme in our school.

I have examined wellbeing literature by Seligman, Waters and The New Zealand Ministry of Education. This paper also reports on findings from school visits and wellbeing 'events'.

It appears that there is no short cut to developing wellbeing. However, there seem to be guidelines that could support the implementation of a successful programme. I will examine our research findings to outline some strategies that could assist us as we work to embed wellbeing.

Purpose

Student wellbeing is a topic of personal interest for me. It is also a FCI strategic goal and one of our Kahui Ako achievement challenges. During my sabbatical, I researched student wellbeing. What could a wellbeing programme look like for our 11 to 13 year old students? My knowledge in this area is limited so I believe that this research will be very beneficial. The findings should support us to develop our own wellbeing programme.

The school community, our Kahui Ako and the wider community will have access to these research findings. The wider community will include the Ministry of Education and other Kahui Ako with a wellbeing focus.

Rationale and background information

Depression worldwide is ten times more common than it was fifty years ago. Fifty years ago the average age of the onset of depression was thirty and now it is below fifteen (Seligman, 2012). This is having a significant effect on our teenagers.

Woodward (2019) and Anticich (2019) agree that there is a rise in anxiety, self-absorption and mood disorders in young people because we have a greater awareness of issues and our mind-set is economic scarcity. These researchers also see evidence of loneliness, lack of connectedness, increased self-harm and feelings of uncertainty about the future. This situation is leading to increasingly anxious students who are too distracted to learn, lack focus, lack motivation and display emotional based school avoidance. Jansen and Matla (2019) observe that in today's society we spend 50% of our waking lives not present, which they believe impacts significantly on our wellbeing.

The way we use technology is creating digital hyper-connectivity. We are substituting real life for digital life so we have more polarised opinions and are lacking the ability to compromise. Use of technology also means that students are not playing outside enough (Buckingham, 2019).

Randolph (2010) explains the rise of the “fragile thoroughbred”. Students who are coming from healthy functioning families are not coping. We are raising ‘racehorses’ that are easily injured because they are so specialised. Helicopter parenting and snowplough parenting are common. He explains that parents naturally protect their children. However, he questions what they need protecting from in today’s society. The reality is that, generally speaking, nothing is threatening their lives and children need to experience failure, as it is important for their development.

During our visit to a Melbourne College, Sarah Roney shared the Australian statistics. She explained that mental health is on a declining trajectory and the predication is that depression will be the number one health concern by 2030. Mental health needs affect one in seven primary students and one in five 15 to 19 year olds. Suicide rates have doubled in the last decade.

NZ mental health statistics also paint a bleak picture. We have high suicide rates and the second highest rate of bullying in The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Buckingham (2019) referred to Hone et al, (2015) research when she explained that more than half of the NZ population would meet the criteria for a mental disorder at some stage in their lives and only 25% of NZ working population is psychologically flourishing. The University of Auckland research, which surveyed our NZ youth in 2012, supports Hone’s statistics. They concluded that there is a rising prevalence of mental illness and distress is common.

Our FCI intermediate students aged 11 to 13 have completed the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) student wellbeing survey for four years. The results show that within most of the criteria over 70% of our students have indications of very positive wellbeing. However, for some of the survey questions less than 50% of our students selected a positive response.

The facts above paint an alarming picture and they contrast sharply with the vision in The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) for Years 1 to 13 (p.8). This vision describes our young people:

- who will be creative and enterprising
- who will seize the opportunities offered by new knowledge and technologies to secure a sustainable social, cultural, economic and environmental future for our country
- who will work to create an Aotearoa NZ in which Maori and Pakeha recognise each other as full treaty partners, and in which all cultures are valued for the contributions they bring
- who, in their school years, will continue to develop the values, knowledge, and competencies that will enable them to live full and satisfying lives
- who will be confident, connected, actively involved, and lifelong learners.

We have had this curriculum vision detailed above for twelve years. However, the mental health of our students does not seem to be improving. The situation seems to be the reverse, as the mental health of our students seems to be declining. Informal FCI observations and our transitioning data would indicate that anxiety is increasing for 10 and 11 year olds coming into our school. I am not suggesting that the ‘blame’

lies with schools. I am asking what steps can be implemented by schools to support our children so they reflect The New Zealand Curriculum vision?

The NZ Government's Education Review Office (ERO) publications (2016) remind us teachers, leaders and trustees have an ethical and moral obligation to ensure student wellbeing. They also make it clear that there is a legal responsibility.

Activities undertaken (Methodology)

I will draw on the expertise of wellbeing researchers and schools. There seems to be considerable data within literature and some schools that have a wellbeing focus are willing to share their experiences with us. To develop wellbeing we have introduced some strategies but we have no specific understandings of wellbeing programmes or a structure that would be sustainable. Collating, analysing, comparing and contrasting findings from literature, workshops, conferences and school discussions could allow us to achieve this goal. I am keen to compile my findings and share these with FCI staff and Board of Trustees, and our Kahui Ako.

To guide the conversations in schools and support the collation of the data gathered we used the following four focus questions:

- In what ways do teachers focus on wellbeing in your school?
- What are teachers doing to promote student wellbeing in your school?
- How do students take an active role in their own wellbeing?
- What changes are you planning to further develop your wellbeing programme?

FCI is a highly collaborative school environment. To continue this approach I decided to involve other teachers in my sabbatical opportunities. The DP, AP, Wellbeing Lead Teacher and invited teachers have visited schools and attended wellbeing related 'events'. By learning together, I know that FCI will get so much more from my sabbatical opportunities. Throughout this report I use the pronouns 'our' and 'we' in recognition of this collaborative approach.

Conferences and workshops attended were:

- Two Day Short Course in Applied Positive Psychology
- New Zealand Positive Education Conference (PENZ)
- Kahui Ako workshop day and two Skype workshop sessions with New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience (NZIWR): Adrienne Buckingham
- Staff meeting with teachers from Tinternvale Primary School
- Maroondah Community Education Evening with Lea Waters

Literature read and/or scanned included:

- Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and wellbeing. Martin Seligman.
- How the new science of strength-based parenting can help your child and teen to flourish: The strength switch. Lea Waters.
- Wellbeing for success: A resource for schools. Education Review Office.
- Wellbeing for success: Effective practice. Education Review Office.
- Positive psychology and classroom interventions. Martin Seligman et al.
- Mindset: Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential. Carol Dweck.

- Positive psychology in a nutshell: The science of happiness. Ilona Boniwell.
- Positive education: The Geelong Grammar School journey. Jacolyn Norrish.
- Every teacher matters: Inspiring wellbeing through mindfulness. Kathryn Lovewell.
- Activities for teaching positive psychology: A guide for instructors. Jeffrey Froh & Acacia Parks.
- A number of web-based articles recommended at the Applied Positive Psychology Course, PENZ Conference and NZIWR workshop.

Schools visited in NZ and Australia were:

- St Peter's College, Cambridge
- Mount Pleasant Primary School, Christchurch
- Halswell Primary School, Christchurch
- Elizabeth Murdoch College, Melbourne
- Langwarrin Park Primary School, Melbourne
- Ringwood Secondary College, Melbourne
- Tinternvale Primary School, Melbourne

School settings and backgrounds

Data was collected during seven school visits. Three of these schools catered for 11 year olds through to the last year of college while the remaining four were primary schools. The schools were in a range of socio-economic settings. The NZ college was the only private school.

Two of the colleges had a history of significant wellbeing needs and they had worked their way out of crisis by introducing wellbeing programmes. One of these colleges faced so many challenges that a pastoral care review had resulted in nineteen recommendations. This school soon realised that they had a business system and not a people system so worked to turn this around. One of their initiatives was to employ an educational psychologist to lead a range of wellbeing strategies.

Considerable external funding was available to support two of the schools' wellbeing programmes. They were participating in a 27-school cluster that was beginning to share wellbeing across their community. This cluster initiative had started five years previously with the council supporting a group of 10 schools. These schools had very strong links with the local university so were benefiting from university research expertise and were developing longitudinal research data. There was no shared thematic approach across these cluster schools for the structured lessons so each school was developing their own programme. Within the funded package, there were professional learning and development (PLD) systems for teachers and parent evenings for the whole community.

Two other schools that we visited had combined their funding three years earlier and employed a fulltime educational psychologist. This psychologist worked in the four schools as the leader of wellbeing. This cluster had an agreed wellbeing model and a specific focus for each term including structured wellbeing lessons. The 'shared' psychologist is a critical link across this cluster and supports PLD, planning and co-ordinating the common approach across the four schools.

All of the schools except for the private college were working within wellbeing networks that involved other schools. Networking to share models, ideas and successes seems to be a highly important aspect of the development of wellbeing.

Findings in literature, conferences and school visits

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is “feeling good and functioning well” (Huppert & So, 2009). This definition was provided by Buckingham (2019) at the NZIWR workshop. Buckingham explained that feeling good includes being motivated, calm, energetic and ambitious. It does not mean that happiness is always part of the equation. Work, relationships and having a meaningful life are aspects of functioning well. Buckingham summarises wellbeing as when your resources outweigh your challenges.

Why teach wellbeing and can wellbeing be taught to 11 to 13-year-old students?

It is important to answer these two questions before examining what a wellbeing programme could look like. There is no point in proceeding with this research if there are not sound reasons for teaching wellbeing. I also need to know that 11 to 13 year olds are able to learn strategies to improve their wellbeing.

NZ based and overseas researchers believe that wellbeing is teachable. None of the research I have read challenges the statement that wellbeing can be taught, neither do they question the value of teaching it.

The NZ Government’s Education Review Office (ERO) has two 2016 wellbeing publications. The first is ‘Effective Practice’, which includes information on how to evaluate and improve wellbeing. The second is ‘A Resource for Schools’, which outlines case studies of effective wellbeing practices in schools. These publications explain that wellbeing is a key to student success and links to learning. They also recognise that schools with good wellbeing practices know the importance of explicit teaching. ERO research concludes that schools can strengthen student wellbeing.

I have read three research projects that have specific data relating to the teaching of wellbeing. Woodward (2019) explains that children are able to learn that they can cope, that emotions are transient and through experience, we can teach our emotional brain to cope. Seligman, et al. (2009) claims there is substantial evidence from well-controlled studies that skills that increase resilience, positive emotion, engagement and meaning can be taught to school children. Waters, (2019) states that educational specialists who promote Positive Education believe that schools can explicitly teach and assess wellbeing.

Seligman (2012) explains that he has surveyed thousands of parents and they want their children to be taught wellbeing strategies; happiness, contentment, fulfilment, balance, kindness, health, satisfaction, meaning and love. Parents understand that schools teach achievement, thinking skills, success, conformity, literacy, math, test taking, discipline and similar topics. He comments that there is almost no overlap in the two lists. He believes that schools could teach both the skills of wellbeing and achievement without compromising either.

Seligman (2012) and Waters (2017) leave us in no doubt about why we should teach wellbeing. “I conclude that, ... wellbeing should be taught in school because it would be an antidote to the runaway incidence of depression, a way to increase life satisfaction, and an aid to better learning and more creative thinking” (Seligman, p.80). Waters (2017) agrees with this. She explains that a school curriculum, which incorporates wellbeing, will prevent depression, increase life satisfaction, encourage social responsibility, promote creativity and foster learning. Additional learning skills for wellbeing at school can have long-term effects on career success, job satisfaction and income. Importantly there is early research to suggest Positive Education can cultivate empathy, altruism and pro-social behaviours (Waters, 2019). Greater levels of self-control are also benefits of high levels of wellbeing (Robinson, 2016). Researchers agree that wellbeing programmes not only support the here and now, they also have lasting value as they prevent, promote and increase future wellbeing.

Robinson (2016) notes that when students are involved in specific wellbeing teaching they do better academically. Australian research agrees with Robinson’s findings as it shows that where there is a specific wellbeing curriculum students are six months ahead in NAPLAN tests (Waters 2017).

The schools we visited have researched wellbeing and taken time to develop and implement wellbeing programmes. They have no doubt about whether or not wellbeing is teachable. Staff recognised that their emphasis on wellbeing is making a difference to their children, and claim that this is the most important aspect of their school. Two of the schools had been in crisis and staff were not equipped to support the students. By shifting the emphasis from crisis to prevention, they are now in situations where ‘pointy end’ incidents have lessened and teachers and students are creating stronger connections. “Teachers are showing that they care and are becoming a significant adult in the children’s lives” (College Assistant Principal, Melbourne).

This is a collection of quotes from our discussion with staff in one of the colleges in Melbourne. “Do this because it makes a positive difference to all. ... Students learn better. ... The school community is less pessimistic and talk is more optimistic.

Positive Psychology and Positive Education

It is important that we define these two terms, as they are key wellbeing terms. Positive Psychology is an umbrella term for applied research that shifts the focus from mental illness to the discovery and promotion of the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive or flourish. This research seeks to equip individuals, teams and organisations with evidence-based strategies to improve wellbeing and performance. It is the science of optimal functioning. The aim is to develop interventions to build on people’s strengths, rather than focus on improving weaknesses. It begins by asking, not what is wrong, but what is right, what is working well, and then it builds on that. Focussing on what is WRONG with us, tells us NOTHING about what is RIGHT with us (Buckingham, 2019).

The Positive Psychology course shared the following information (Ritchie, 2018). Positive Psychology is not about positive thinking or using positive affirmations. It is the theory and practice, which enables us to go beyond surviving, to actually thriving. Historically psychology was deficit based as it focused on moving people from below

the line to on the line and then get people operating above the line. This is important. As Martin Seligman, the field's founder once said, "Traditional psychology wasn't designed to produce wellbeing, just to curtail misery. The same goes for Prozac: it may lift your depression but it will not make you happy. Wellbeing is a process over and above the absence of depression, anxiety and anger" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). We now have around twenty years of Positive Psychology theory and findings that can help promote healthy functioning and thrive.

Positive Education was a concept created by the teachers and researchers at Geelong Grammar School situated near Melbourne. Geelong Grammar staff worked with Martin Seligman to introduce school based Positive Psychology. Positive Education is applying the research of Positive Psychology to an educational setting to build children's psychological fitness (Norrish, 2015).

Seligman sees a need to revolutionise world education. He observes that for two hundred years workplace skills have been the subject matter of the education system. He notes that we now need to teach the skills of wellbeing. The skills of wellbeing include how to develop positive emotions, better relationships and positive accomplishment. Positive Education brings together robust science from Positive Psychology with best practice teaching in order to support schools and individuals to flourish. It focusses on prevention, is strengths-based and is universal so involves the whole school community (Norrish, 2015).

What could a school wellbeing programme look like?

Our research has led us to the understanding that a highly effective school wellbeing programme includes:

- timetabled lessons
- wellbeing models
- wellbeing culture
- professional development
- community links

Timetabled lessons

Most of the schools we visited had timetabled wellbeing lessons. Our discussions included information and advice to consider when establishing lessons. Each of these schools had a wellbeing model to underpin their wellbeing programme. They had developed programmes based on a Positive Education model except for the private college, which had developed their own values-based programme. The majority of schools preferred this model because they believed that this approach improves academic performance and job readiness.

Although each school's wellbeing system differs, the procedures in place to deliver the lessons were similar. The following points sum up the timetabled lesson similarities:

- A teacher who knows the students well teaches the lessons.
- Every timetabled lesson system has a Strengths-based approach. All staff and students complete a Strengths questionnaire. (To develop an understanding of a Strengths-based approach I suggest that you refer to the research of Quinlan who developed the Awesome Us Strengths programme.)

- Teachers do not plan the lessons. An educational psychologist, Head of Positive Education (HOPE), training teachers or the leadership team is responsible for this.
- Themes for each set of lessons are outlined on the calendar. This avoids repetition, gives balance and provides a common focus. Examples of themes are get involved, relate well, be healthy, live your values and enjoy positive emotions.
- Teachers' lesson packs can include booklets and a USB of power points with videos. Lessons are not prescriptive and teachers can adapt them according to the class needs although there is an expectation that the content is covered.
- Lessons relate to the student needs where this is applicable. Lessons for senior college student lessons include coping with exam stress and anxiety. Year 6, 7 and 8 students' lessons include friendships, getting involved and keeping healthy.
- Lessons are set on the timetable and there is an expectation that every teacher takes the 20 to 35 minute lesson in their timetabled slot.
- The parent community has information on the programme.
- PLD is a very important aspect of teaching lessons (see Professional Development section).
- School leadership teams agree that it is important to measure wellbeing to evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons. Prepared surveys that are available include the Mindmatters survey and the PERMA workplace survey.

Norrish (2015) explains the Geelong Grammar wellbeing experience in his publication *Positive Education: The Geelong Grammar School Journey*. This is a very practical and worthwhile read of how initially a search for wellbeing, which began in 2003, has developed into the very successful Positive Education programme. A key component of this programme is timetabled lessons where students attend weekly or fortnightly lessons known as "Pos Ed". They review lessons and adjust them to align with student feedback, community expectations and Australian contexts.

A wide range of suggested activities for teaching Positive Psychology is available in Froh & Parks (2016). They explain that the list of topics that could be included is vast and lessons do not need to be restricted to those included in Positive Psychology literature. Teachers have many options from which to choose so they can consider their own interests, student interests and those, which fit with the community. They encourage teachers to include interactive, hands-on experiences within lessons, as these are powerful learning experiences.

Wellbeing models

A key to timetabled wellbeing lessons is choosing or developing a suitable model. This could be an existing model, a combination of existing models or a school's own model.

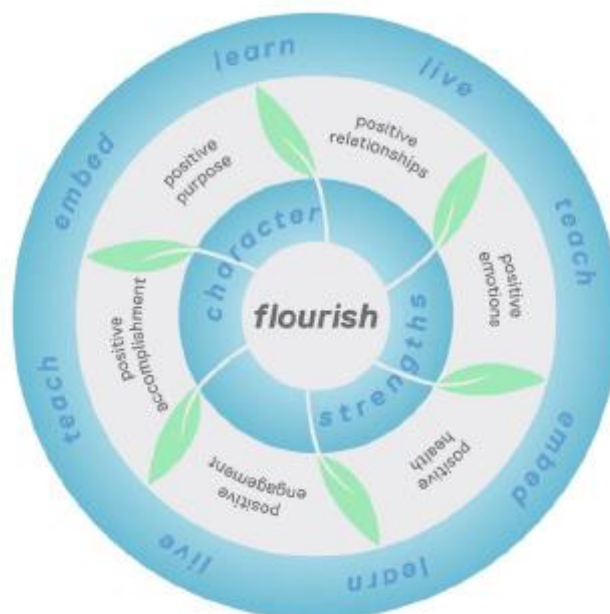
The following guidelines on using a wellbeing model are from the college discussions in Melbourne.

- Work towards developing a cluster model that could be applicable across all age groups, provides consistency between schools, and yet allows flexibility for each school setting.

- Focus on a model that can provide clear branding and a universal language across the cluster.
- Use a Strengths-based and Positive Education model.
- Analyse what you are already doing alongside your chosen model and adjust these aspects to create strong wellbeing links.
- Use the selected model to identify any aspects of wellbeing that are not included within the school programme and find ways to fill these gaps.
- Focus on a continuous improvement process.

There are numerous wellbeing models easily accessible online and within literature. Here are seven that were referred to during our research.

- Te Whare Tapa Whā Model of Hauora: Durie.
- Five Ways to Wellbeing: Mental Health Foundation New Zealand.
- The Mental Fitness Model: Robinson, Oades & Caputi.
- Christchurch Boys' High School Model: Wiremu Grey.
- Bounce Back www.bounceback.co.au
- Geelong Grammar developed the PERMA based model displayed below. Thorough research underpins this model (Buckingham, 2019). Several of the schools that we visited based their wellbeing programme on this model so I have included the diagram for you to consider.



- PERMA-V model is the Geelong Grammar model, with an additional element. I have decided to display this, as it is an example of an adapted model.

Hone was one of the NZ researchers who included vitality (Buckingham, 2019).



Waters (2019) explains that frameworks are always helpful guides when implementing any new education initiative.

Wellbeing culture

The message is very clear. Involving students in a timetabled wellbeing programme is not enough. The entire school community needs to promote wellbeing. This whole school approach includes aspects of school life such as curriculum, PLD, behaviour management, visual arts, reward systems, fundraising, assemblies and special events.

In the schools we visited, wellbeing linked across every aspect of school life. The wellbeing model is not just timetabled lessons; it has become a way of being. There are wellbeing links to parent conferences and interviews that all start with what is going well. “It is what we do want – not what we do not want”, (College AP). One college displays posters, and awards students with positive postcards to reinforce learning. They also purchase staff and student wellbeing magazines. Every college has a wellbeing centre where students can self-refer at any time. Students participate in a number of wellbeing activities outside of their timetabled wellbeing lessons. Brain breaks, dance warm-ups, mindfulness, mindful walks and random acts of kindness are examples. Wellbeing dogs are in two of the colleges. Guest speakers and wellbeing champions distribute and support wellbeing messages.

Both of the colleges in Melbourne have special wellbeing events. One has ‘house’ days each term where students suggest ideas for events like swimming, games on the field, paper plane making, and they organise the whole day. They link these events to positive emotions. The other college starts each year with a mental health carnival that includes a large group artwork, dance, lip sync, jumping castles, purchasing food etc. They recognise that visual wellbeing is very important so they create murals, posters and sculptures.

The wellbeing model underpinning the behaviour management system is a feature in some schools. “Staff have a no yelling approach....staff and students greet each other....we look at the whole child and acknowledge circumstances....students are supported to solve their own problems....we approach situations with wellbeing vocabulary. For example, a student in incorrect uniform would be asked how can we help you with uniform instead of punishing the student”. (School leadership team members). ‘Too busy to bully’ is a focus in one primary school. We observed trained Play Leaders set up and facilitate games so young students’ play was supported. This strategy impressed us as it has advantages for the whole school community. Each college had numerous lunchtime and after school activities including gym activities, sport and gardening.

The colleges have developed systems and procedures to keep the school safe for staff and for the students. The ‘packs’ included best practice for risk assessment, scripts for various issues and templates for referrals. These systems are a requirement whenever there is a specific need. This has lowered staff stress levels and made the school safer.

Seligman (2019) sees The Geelong Grammar wellbeing project where the teachers “embed positive education into academic courses, on the sports field, in pastoral counselling, in music and in the chapel” (p.3) as highly successful. Waters (2019) agrees with the whole school approach when she explains that “the principles of positive education (need to be) modeled and supported throughout the entire fabric of the school” (p.4). All staff need to commit to the goal to make wellbeing relevant across the whole school. “It is body, mind and spirit not just academics. Nothing is more important than wellbeing i.e. academic activities are not more important than counselling sessions, sports and cultural activities” (NZ college leader).

Five schools are benefiting from wellbeing ‘experts’ either employed fulltime within their schools or available across the wellbeing cluster. At one college, every teacher is encouraged to contribute to wellbeing using their strengths e.g. the woodwork and science teachers use their specific skills and classroom resources.

Wellbeing leadership includes both teachers and students. Selected students participate in a wellbeing leadership team. Some schools have a teacher as the Head of Positive Education (HOPE). A wellbeing leader in one of the colleges believes that every school needs at least one wellbeing champion who will lead for the ‘long haul’.

Professional development

All schools delivering timetabled school-wide wellbeing lessons stress that staff need to know that facilitating these lessons is a clear expectation. However, handing the lesson package over to teachers and saying “here is the wellbeing curriculum – this is what we want” will not work. Staff need on-going structured sessions to understand wellbeing concepts, study the specific focus and discussions on how to unpack the lesson content.

The Melbourne schools’ timetable specific PLD for at least one to two hours a term. This can be school sessions with an internal or external facilitator or it could be a cluster school approach including sharing and celebrating. Using a PLD drip feed

approach is the terminology used in some schools. Most schools recognise that committing to on-going PLD is hard. However, they left us in no doubt that if we are going to teach wellbeing well, we will need to educate our staff well and all staff will need to 'live' it.

Some of the Melbourne staff are involved in Positive Education university studies. One of the courses is a Positive Education six-day intensive study. Those who had taken up this option had found the postgraduate studies invaluable.

One of the Melbourne colleges shared how every teacher has an evaluation (appraisal) goal in wellbeing. The leadership team recommend goals that teachers can adapt and modify. Short informal learning walks (10-15 mins) and peer observation are part of teacher evaluation.

While considering Positive Education PLD it seems appropriate to consider teacher personal wellbeing. Norrish (2015) discusses "Live it".

"The aim is for staff to live their lives with more positive emotion, engagement, accomplishment and purpose. Adults who are committed to nurturing their own wellbeing become authentic role models for students.... These comments are equally pertinent for parents and family members, and it is hoped that they too actively apply Positive Psychology concepts in their personal, professional and family lives" (p.36).

Building wellbeing literacy is a goal in most of the schools. The literature and resources, which they highlighted to achieve this goal included:

- Leading coaching in schools: Creating conditions for effective learning: Campbell and van Nieuwerburgh.
- Building wellbeing literacy (podcasts etc.): Oades
- Framework for improving student outcomes (FISO) model: State Government of Victoria, Australia 2019. (This model includes student wellbeing links.)
- Making positive psychology work/Appreciative inquiry (AI) podcasts: McQuaid. AI is also available in a box set for staff, students and community.
- Contextual wellbeing: Creating positive schools from the inside out: Street.
- Berry Street education: www.childhoodinstitute.org.au
- Geelong Grammar developed a considerable bank of resources including a whole school set of wellbeing lessons ready for release this year. Their resources also include PEEC, which is a free PERMA Profiler for staff.
- Rights and respect: University of Melbourne programme.

Every teacher matters: Inspiring wellbeing through mindfulness (Lovewell, 2019) is a book dedicated to every teacher. Lovewell's focus is heart-centred teaching and learning, where education embraces the wellbeing of every teacher and student. There are outlines of numerous mindfulness strategies to give teachers the practical tools to look after their emotional, physical and mental health. The City of Maroondah, in Melbourne, has gifted each teacher a personal copy and we received a copy. Thank you to the facilitators of the Maroondah Positive Education initiative for this gift.

While in Melbourne, we participated in two PLD sessions. The first was an after-school staff meeting and the second a community education evening. In the staff meeting teachers further developed their understanding of gratitude and considered how gratitude could relate to themselves, professional relationships, teaching and students. The second session was an evening in a community auditorium where Lea Waters, the author of *The Strength Switch*, was the keynote speaker. She shared a very powerful message and related this to her own struggles as a child, teenager and young adult. It was worthwhile to experience these two very effective examples of PLD in action and it was a reminder that PLD is a key to wellbeing success in schools and it needs to include the community. Both of these sessions were quite emotional experiences. This made me realise that unlike most PLD wellbeing could relate to us on a personal level, so we need to be aware of this and inform participants of how to access appropriate support.

Two schools reminded us of the following quote. "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I believe that this summarizes the importance of PLD and working collaboratively both within schools and across the community.

Community links

In most schools, the wellbeing goal had extended to target everyone within the school and across the wider community. "It is a whole school and cluster approach because we all really want the same thing," (HOPE college leader). The primary to college link is critical so students go on to college with a sound understanding of wellbeing terminology and strategies. In one of the colleges, we discussed the importance of finding a way to develop a common language across the wider community.

As outlined in the PLD section in the Melbourne school cluster, parent sessions are available. School based parent libraries are also established and links to online sites shared. One NZ school is using School TV: an Australian platform. The intention was for students to use this. Now parents access it more than students do.

Wellbeing programmes within schools include immersion in the community e.g. working in a soup kitchen and hi buddy programmes where younger support older and older support younger. Involvement in these events has become part of the school programme in one college. The school leadership team commented that the students love this. Students are also involved in personal projects where they have to do something practical. This usually involves creating something for someone in the community or community work.

Implications and on-going actions: summing up and applying our learning

We know that a FCI wellbeing programme will not just happen. We need to take deliberate actions.

Before we left Melbourne, we set aside time to talk about our findings and their implications. This was a very valuable discussion as everyone had many ideas to contribute. The following notes summarise our thoughts after seven school visits, the

Positive Education (PENZ) Conference in Christchurch, examining literature and our personal experiences after exploring wellbeing in our school since the start of 2018. Our learning and reflections are organised under these headings:

- FCI wellbeing culture
- FCI timetabled wellbeing lessons
- Wellbeing PLD for FCI staff
- Wellbeing across our Farm Cove community.

FCI wellbeing culture

Wellbeing is not just a set of timetabled lessons. It is a way of life. We need to establish what immersed in wellbeing would look like by involving our FCI staff in discussion.

We already have a number of established initiatives, which could link with wellbeing so we can analyse these and consider including them as part of our FCI wellbeing programme e.g. FCI REP awards, Reach Out badges and House Competition Days. We have also discussed some additional wellbeing activities, which could be suitable for our classrooms, or special events programme.

A wellbeing model is necessary to form the basis of wellbeing across our school as this can provide clear branding and enable a common language. We do not need to create our own model as we could adopt an existing model or combine models. We are looking for a Strengths based Positive Education model. A PERMA based model could be a sound choice as we are already linking our teachers' appraisals with PERMA. It would be an advantage if our choice of model was applicable across our cluster schools and the wider community so we will work with this as a goal.

There is a need to re-clarify expectations so we have a common understanding of what it means to work collaboratively. This is important because we understand that the best way to achieve our wellbeing goals is through a collaborative approach.

We want to be pre-emptive in establishing a wellbeing programme. We are not going to wait for a wellbeing crisis.

FCI timetabled wellbeing lessons

Wellbeing themes for each term would ensure coverage of the main themes and lessen repetition. There would be an expectation that every teacher facilitates the 20-30 minute wellbeing lesson in a weekly timetabled slot. Teachers would receive planned lessons to teach. They would have flexibility in the delivery of the lesson.

We would consider purchasing the Geelong Grammar programme based on PERMA, which is due for release this year. We understand that the writers of this programme know Positive Education very well. They have successful experience implementing this programme in their school and they have on-going research data. It will be important to ensure that the lessons fit comfortably with our students, staff, parents and wider community.

To use a Strengths approach for timetable lessons all students would need to complete a Strengths survey. Our teachers have already completed a Strengths survey. They now need to revisit their results.

Trialling and evaluating wellbeing lessons across selected classes for Terms 3 and 4 this year could be worthwhile. This could support a successful whole-school timetabled lesson start in 2020. We will take our time to ensure success as we start timetabled wellbeing lessons. Each term students would evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons. Reflection time for teachers would be included within wellbeing PLD sessions.

Wellbeing PLD for FCI staff

The message from wellbeing experts is clear. You cannot take care of others without addressing our own wellbeing. We need compassion for colleagues and ourselves. This is not an easy road.

PLD is a drip-feed approach with a session once or twice every term to achieve the best results. Staff meetings could be with an internal or external facilitator and they can be for one school or a cluster approach. We will remind ourselves that wellbeing PLD includes both knowledge and skills. When budgeting for wellbeing PLD we need to ensure it has meaning, purpose and is cost effective. This PLD may have considerable emotional impact on staff. We need to be aware of this and remind staff of the resources that are available to support them. Team leaders have a critical role in supporting the achievement of our wellbeing goal. These leaders will benefit resourcing so they can facilitate intentional positive culture discussions.

All staff require a deep research-based understanding of wellbeing. To support an understanding every teacher will be gifted a copy of Seligman's 'Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and wellbeing' with the expectation that they will read it. A staff wellbeing library will also be set up.

Wellbeing across our Farm Cove community

When considering the implementation of a wellbeing programme we need to reflect on our context e.g. tangatawhenua, physical environment, relationships and values. Our Kahui Ako schools agreement already includes a wellbeing goal. We hope to be able to work with our cluster schools to adopt a model that suits all age levels and discuss a shared approach to wellbeing.

Implementing a successful wellbeing programme not only requires a whole school but it also requires a whole community approach. To have real impact staff, students, parents, sports clubs, health providers and other organisations which support the school all need to understand the goals, the terminology, be informed and get involved.

Most parents would benefit from a more in-depth understanding of wellbeing. Online links, suggestions of books and parent evenings can support parents to develop their understanding. Parent feedback will be important in measuring the effectiveness of a wellbeing programme.

Thanks to Stephanie, Tamara, Ludwig, Belinda and Tim for their honest reflections and creative input. This will provide significant support for us as we move forward to develop our FCI wellbeing programme.

Conclusion

This research has allowed me to answer the question what could a wellbeing programme look like for our 11 to 13 year old students? The answer is short. A successful wellbeing programme looks like a whole school immersed in a wellbeing culture. The actions required to achieve this are complex.

When I posed this question, it was my belief that I would discover a checklist of what could be included in a wellbeing programme and we would be able to work through the list and tick the boxes. Instead, I discovered that wellbeing has an impact on every part of school life. It includes conversations with students, curriculum, behaviour management, assemblies, PLD, timetables, special events, school environment, parent relationships, budgets and community links.

This seems like a significant challenge. Where could we start? A wellbeing expert who we spoke with asked us 'How could you promote wellbeing in your school?' They then answered the question for us, 'walk through the open doors'. This seems like good common sense. To start, we can analyse what is already in place to see if a wellbeing lens is applicable and pick up where staff show expertise and enthusiasm. Two positives are that we know wellbeing is highly contagious and we are in it for the long haul.

By working collaboratively, we will: Learn it - Live it - Teach it - Embed it. Our wellbeing programme will provide a framework for the conversations to change and positively affect our lives now and in the future.

Note: I would really value the opportunity to discuss wellbeing with you. Please feel free to email me lindah@farmcove.school.nz

References

Anticich, S. (2019). *Neuroscience and Positive Education: How we can support our children to flourish*. Christchurch: Paper presented at the New Zealand Positive Education Conference.

Boniwell, I. (2012). *Positive psychology in a nutshell: The science of happiness*. London: Open University Press.

Buckingham, A. (2019). *Positive Education: An introduction to the science of whole-school wellbeing*. Auckland: Paper presented at the Elm Park School Kahui Ako Workshop.

Dweck, C. (2017). *Mindset: Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential*. London: Robinson.

Education Review Office. (2016). *Wellbeing for success: A resource for schools*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

Education Review Office. (2016). *Wellbeing for success: Effective practice*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

Froh, J. & Parks, A. (2016). *Activities for teaching positive psychology: A guide for*

- instructors*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Jansen, G. & Matla, R. (2019). *Restorative practice: Fundamentals for wellbeing*. Christchurch: Paper presented at the New Zealand Positive Education Conference.
- Lovewell, K. (2019). *Every Teacher Matters: Inspiring wellbeing through mindfulness*. Surrey: Kind Mind Publishing.
- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Norrish, J. (2015). *Positive Education: The Geelong Grammar School journey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Quinlan, D. (2014). How 'other people matter' in a classroom-based strengths Intervention: exploring interpersonal strategies and classroom outcomes. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 10 (1); 1-13.
- Ritchie, R. (2018). *Positive difference: short course in applied psychology*. Auckland: Paper presented at Applied Positive Psychology Course.
- Robinson, P. (2016). *Practising Positive Education: A guide to improving wellbeing literacy in schools*. Sydney: Positive Psychology Institute Pty.
- Seligman, M., Ernst, R., Gillhan, J., Relivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3).
- Seligman, M. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and wellbeing*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Seligman, M. (2019). *Resilience training for educators: Authentic happiness*. Retrieved from <https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/learn/educatorresilience>
- The University of Auckland, (2012). *Youth 2000 publications*. Retrieved from <https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty/adolescent-health-research-group/youth2000-national-youth-health-survey-series/youth2012-survey.html>
- Waters, L. (2017). *How the new science of strength-based parenting can help your child and teen to flourish: The strength switch*. Australia: Ebury Press.
- Waters, L. (2017). *Lea Waters on Positive Education: Tecmilenio University*. Youtube.com. Retrieved from URL.
- Waters, L. (2019). *Getting the happiness formula right in the classroom*. Retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/getting-the-happiness-formula-right-in-the-classroom-370>
- Woodward, E. (2019). *Teaching in the age of anxiety*. Christchurch: Paper presented

at the New Zealand Positive Education Conference.