

Student Wellbeing Policy

Foundations

Halcyon first asks 'what is in the best interests of the child?' To help us understand and answer this question, wellbeing at Halcyon is built around the principle of human 'givens'. Human 'givens' are essential emotional needs that need to be nourished and, when met, will give each of us the sense of self and purpose to thrive in the world. When a child thrives, they will have the opportunity to fulfil their unique potential and to make the best of every learning opportunity that Halcyon has to offer.

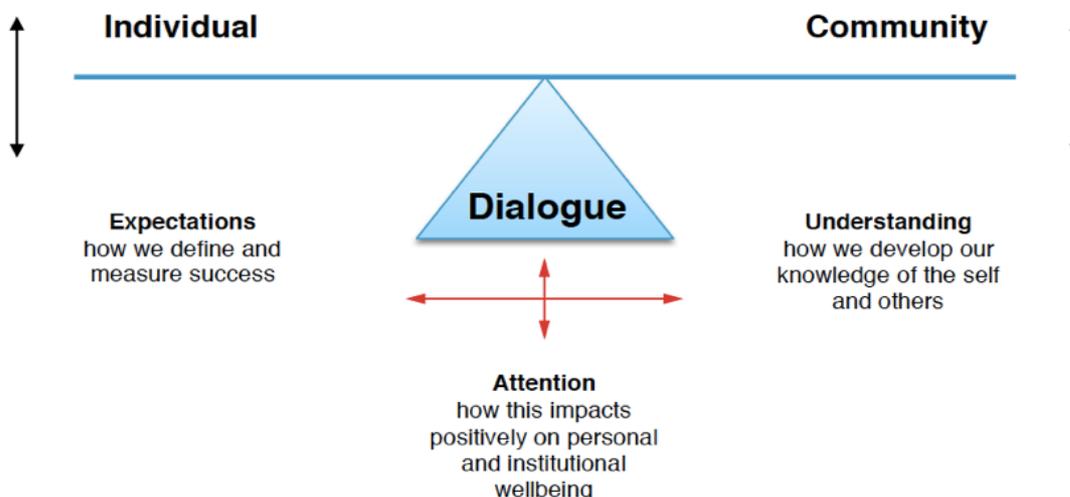
For each of us, our wellbeing is dependent upon

- Security - safe territory and an environment which allows us to develop fully
- Attention (to give and receive it) - a form of nutrition
- Sense of autonomy and control - having volition to make responsible choices
- Emotional intimacy - to know that at least one other person accepts us totally for who we are
- Feeling part of a wider community
- Privacy - opportunity to reflect and consolidate experience
- Sense of status within social groupings
- Sense of competence and achievement
- Meaning and purpose - which comes from being stretched in what we do and think

[\(Human Givens Foundation\)](#)

By keeping these key elements of Human 'givens' at the forefront of wellbeing, Halcyon intends to deliver a human-centered approach (Gill and Thompson). A human-centered approach ensures **student agency** in that policy and practice aim to develop the individual as a human being - education should be directed to the *individual as a whole*, thereby the individual is not treated merely instrumentally, but rather is respected as a person.

Student agency is achieved through constructive and effective dialogue. This dialogue underpins a successful wellbeing program, and allows us to find a balance between the needs of the *individual* and the *community*.



Aims

Through a human-centered approach, the Student Wellbeing programme aims to

1. respect and meet every student's 'human givens'
2. nurture and scaffold student agency so that students can make effective and informed choices - choices which support their own wellbeing and that of the community
3. ensure students are active, self-regulated learners
4. foster active student engagement and agency in all areas of school life, including the provision of collaborative forums for policy development, especially for those decisions relating to student learning and wellbeing
5. seek student participation, and foster student initiatives, in the development and maintenance of a collaborative, reflective school climate
6. ensure that the Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHEE) programme develops strategies and activities that align with Halcyon's core wellbeing aims
7. provide opportunities to develop research-based, innovative approaches to wellbeing

The Student Wellbeing programme aims to develop

Student Advocacy

Developing skills in participation, accountability, political literacy, open-mindedness and tolerance. Students advocate for themselves and each other, developing a secure, attentive environment that allows each individual to develop their unique potential.

Cognitive Coaching & Mentoring

Finding time to give and receive attention, to develop listening skills, to reflect and consolidate experience and to build meaning and purpose from our experiences. The primacy of dialogue helps us all to engage, develop self-mediation and make responsible choices [1]. At Halcyon, every student has a teacher-mentor who will advocate for them at all times.

Student Leadership

Providing opportunities to develop decision-making, communication skills and the negotiation of ideas, offering a real autonomy and control in key areas of school life. This supports a sense of community and ensures that everyone has a voice in their social group.

At Halcyon, we know that the best interests of the student are often found in their own agency to make informed choices. As expressed by Stephen Covey,

"The key to being proactive is remembering that between stimulus and response there is a space. That space represents our choice— how we will choose to respond to any given situation, person, thought or event. Imagine a pause button between stimulus and response—a button you can engage to pause and think about what is the principle-based response to your given situation. Listen to what your conscience tells you. Listen for what is wise and the principle-based thing to do, and then act."

Advocacy, coaching and leadership enable student agency and so allow community values to be explored and re-negotiated. These values include

A Sense of Justice: a grasp of the fundamental principles of social justice, economic and environmental equality and an understanding of the ethical frameworks which support the virtue of fairness.

Altruism: a commitment to work towards the sustainable benefit of others. To approach advantage aware of how our choices can help the common good.

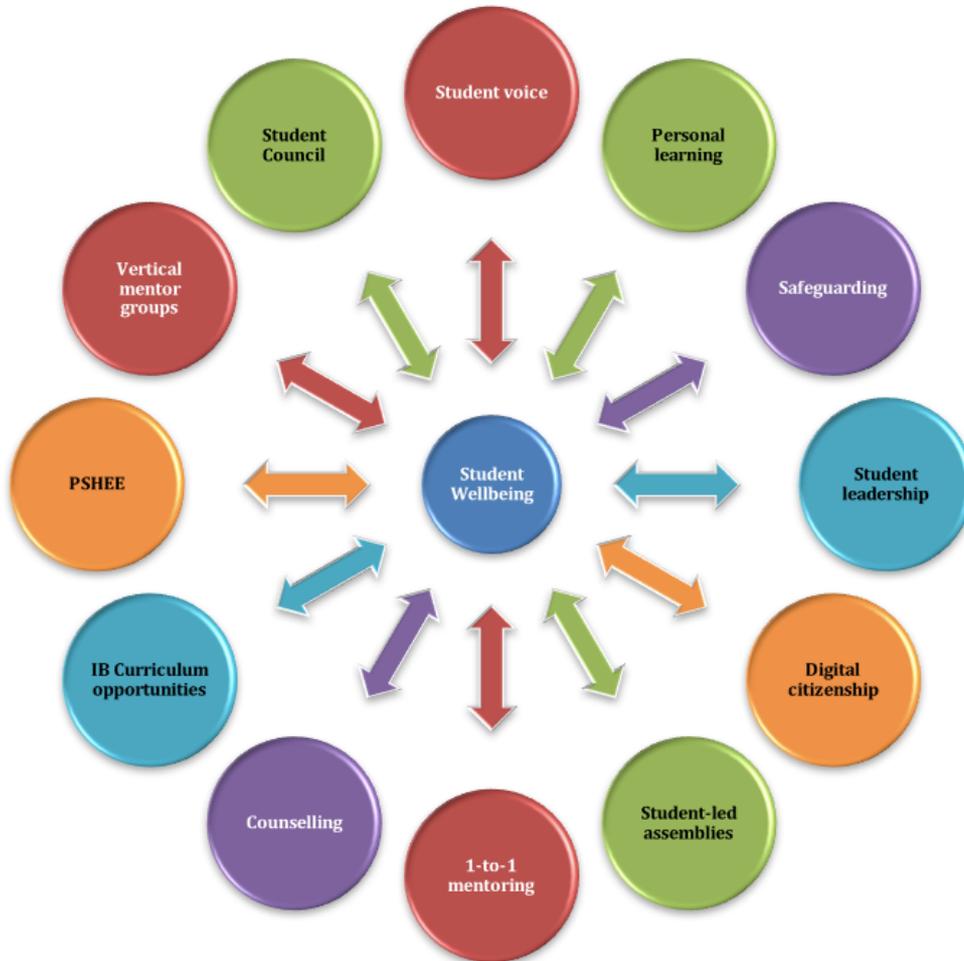
Courage: to have the fortitude to stand by their principles. To know when it is most effective to speak up, and to have the confidence to do so.

Resilience: to have the capacity to be deeply resourceful when life is inevitably challenging. To know how to seek help, and to have a good understanding of stoicism, optimism and happiness.

Happiness: to be in a state of positive wellbeing, allowing ourselves to not take ourselves too seriously. To have a sense of humour and above all to develop a sense of what brings us joy.

Practice

Students at Halcyon are supported in their Wellbeing through a range of Wellbeing initiatives, as seen in the following overview:



Student voice should be actively encouraged and developed through every individual interaction and, more formally, through Halcyon’s organised, collaborative learning forums – through curricular activities, mentor groups, student council, explorations, extra-curricular activities, and any other ad hoc learning group.

Student Council provides a forum for **student leadership**, and will provide student representatives for the development of school initiatives.

Mentoring is delivered through 1-to-1 cognitive coaching sessions. Every student has a personal teacher mentor/advocate and will have teacher-to-student coaching sessions throughout the school year.

Vertical Mentor Groups comprise a teacher’s student mentees, grades 6-12. This collaborative group provides a forum to deliver **student-led-assemblies**; to explore and shape school climate; to consider innovative student-led approaches to community needs; to progress **personal learning**, and to deliver coaching (above).

PSHEE classes provide a weekly forum to explore and an engage in dialogue about community and personal relationships, develop informed, agentic decision-making,

and practice key life-skills, such as **digital citizenship**. The PSHEE curriculum supports **effective and informed choices**.

IB Curriculum development prioritises student-led inquiry and student ownership of learning. It provides a safe, secure environment that fosters autonomy, develops personal competence and achievement, and provides learning with meaning and purpose.

Safeguarding is the foundation upon which we ensure students' safety and security, and it informs and underpins all our interactions. Safeguarding is overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and wider student wellbeing is supported by **counselling** services.

The Wellbeing Team

Structure

The Wellbeing Team consists of the Student Wellbeing Leader, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the School Counsellor. The Student Wellbeing Leader chairs the team and is responsible for delivering the Student Wellbeing Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding at Halcyon and for appropriate, timely liaison with, and reporting to, the LSCB. The counsellor is responsible for the therapeutic support of students at Halcyon.

In every weekly meeting, the wellbeing team work toward the implementation of the Student Wellbeing Policy. The team will always address

- standards of student safeguarding
- specific safeguarding concerns
- the on-going (responsive) development of the PSHEE programme
- those students who would benefit from individualised support

Monitoring Wellbeing at Halcyon

A **student wellbeing review** is conducted five times a year. There is one review at the start of each term and half term. At these times information is shared with the teaching team regarding students requiring additional wellbeing support: for reasons of data protection, and due to the often sensitive nature of discussion, no minutes or notes are recorded.

The **student academic and wellbeing log** is used by all teachers to log academic and wellbeing information. The logs can include both positive information and concerns and will facilitate decisions ensuring the correct support is given to the student. In the case of serious concerns or incidents, teachers also report immediately to the Director or Student Wellbeing Leader. In situations where there are safeguarding concerns these are reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

When a log has been completed the Student Wellbeing Leader is informed. Unless there is over-riding safeguarding concern, the Student Wellbeing Leader will pass this information to the Mentor who will undertake a coaching conversation their mentee and monitor outcomes.

A **Student Learning Agreements (SLA)** may be put in place in the case of repeated logs expressing concerns. Parents are notified and a dialogue begun between the student, school and family to best support the student in making **effective and informed choices** about their wellbeing and learning.

An SLA will be developed with the student, and consists of:

- Expectations of the school
- Goals set by the student
- A list of those who will support the process and their contact details
- How the SLA will be monitored
- A list of evaluation meetings for the student, parents, mentor and wellbeing leader to participate in
- Signatures of all parties involved in the SLA

Coaching feedback surveys are collected and analysed to understand student engagement, the effectiveness of process, the effective application of coaching skills, success in meeting student needs, and overall support for the aims of the Student Wellbeing Policy.

Mentoring

The Role of the Learning Mentor

The learning mentor is an advocate for the mentee, providing them with the tools to have the necessary agency to make effective, informed choices and *‘To provide support and guidance to children, young people and those engaged with them, by removing barriers to learning in order to promote effective participation, enhance individual learning, raise aspirations and achieve their potential’* (George, from Children’s Workforce Development Council[2]). Halcyon uses this definition to guide mentors and the practices associated with cognitive coaching, planning and reflective conversations to help structure the mentor-mentee conversations (Costa and Garmston). This enables students to develop as self-directed learners, who can self-manage, -moderate and -mediate.

Cognitive Coaching

Every staff member is trained as a cognitive coach (Costa and Garmston). Mentors are provided with training sessions on

- Mentoring and wellbeing at Halcyon
- The structure of the mentoring programme
- Applying cognitive coaching
- Record keeping and data collection
- Mentor group research

Mentor Groups

Every teacher at Halcyon will be a mentor, and each mentor group will have student peer-mentors, trained through the student leader programme. Peer-mentors will work with the teacher-mentor to support the wider mentor groups. Teacher mentor and peer mentors will be coupled with mentees using common interests (Garringer *et al.*)

Mentor groups meet for four hours over two weeks, and will contain

- 15-minute individual coaching sessions, following the planning and reflective conversation models of cognitive coaching
- personal learning time
- preparation for student-led assemblies
- service learning

Additionally, enhanced coaching will be available to those students who require additional support through an Individual Learning Plan or Student Learning Agreement. This will be supported by the student's mentor, the Student Wellbeing Team and, if necessary, a specialised special educational needs mentor.

Student Wellbeing and the Curriculum

Student wellbeing is explored directly through the **PSHEE curriculum**, which is outlined in the PSHEE Policy.

The intended **IB Curriculum** offers students the necessary opportunities to develop competence, enjoy achievement, and have autonomy and control over their learning. The wellbeing programme aims to remove barriers to learning, by developing self-regulated learners making informed, effective choices. Students' successful engagement in the curriculum provides a key measure of the success of a Halcyon education.

Personal Learning is central to human-centered education and the exploration of one's unique potential. Dedicated personal learning time is available to allow students to pursue

- self-designed personal learning projects (PLP)
- service learning goals
- novel learning experiences, through the Explorations programme
- extracurricular activities

Halcyon Residential Week

Embedded into the curriculum is the Halcyon Residential Week, in which students attend a five-day residential programme at the start of the year. This concentrates on the individual and their role in the community, and it focuses in the development of collaboration and resilience. The programmes are also developed to support emotional (affective) competencies. The residential programmes become progressively more challenging as students move from through the school, providing a scaffold for student growth.

Student Wellbeing and Student Leadership

The Student Leadership programme provides a framework for students to develop a range of skills which support their agency in the community. The programme provides the opportunity for students to advocate, and to share their skills and learning with others.

The Student Leaders programme consists of three elective units, each of which can be followed independently:

- Student Ambassador
- Peer Mentor and Cognitive Coaching
- Peer Mediator and Restorative Practices

The elected **Student Council** has a student-led constitution. A student council representative meets regularly with the Student Wellbeing Leader to share student opinion and provide reflection on the efficacy of wellbeing practice at Halcyon.

Student Wellbeing and Counselling

The School Counsellor is a member of the Student Wellbeing Team, contributing to student wellbeing decisions. The WBT may refer a student to the counsellor if the team believes that this would be in the best interests of the student: to support that student in making effective, informed choices. Students can self-refer by meeting with or emailing the counsellor at talk@halcyonschool.com

If a student requires frequent, long-term, therapeutic support, or requires access to specialized support services outside of those offered by the counsellor, then they may be referred for external counselling. When external counselling is advised to support a student's wellbeing, a student's family will be fully engaged in this process.

When external counselling is a requirement of a particular student learning agreement – a condition within an agreed, planned course of action to support individual wellbeing and access to learning – the duration and frequency of the therapy must be confirmed by the external counsellor and the school.

Confidentiality & Safeguarding

All interactions with children are guided by *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE, Sept. 2016)* and confidentiality – in coaching conversations, between teacher-mentors, in counselling conversations – is always superseded by the need to keep children safe. While mentors will advocate for their students, and the counsellor will provide confidentiality to support students' ability to express understanding, meaning and purpose in often complex and difficult circumstances, there is a clear understanding that should *any information be disclosed which potentially, or in actuality, places a child at risk* then this information will be shared with the Wellbeing Team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Student Wellbeing & School Policy

Whilst a Wellbeing Policy is not a statutory requirement, this policy operates alongside and in accordance with our existing policies which include:

- Admissions
- Behaviour and Discipline
- PSHEE
- Safeguarding
- Anti-bullying
- Code of conduct
- Fire safety
- First Aid
- Trips
- Supervision
- Acceptable Use
- Health and Safety
- SEN
- Student Attendance

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- *The Children Act 1989*

- *The Children Act 2004*
- *Education Act 2002 (section 175)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2016) –*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)*
- *The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005*
- *Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Section 26)*

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This policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in light of any significant changes in statutory requirements and legislation.

[1] Research has shown that mentoring has overall beneficial effects for students enrolled in such programmes. One substantive meta-analysis of 73 independent evaluations of mentoring programmes by DuBois et al. draws conclusions that mentoring programmes are effective in improving outcomes across behavioural, social, emotional and academic domains.

[2] George provides a functional map of how provision should be applied. This map is linked [here](#) as a structure for how learning mentors function at Halcyon.