



CAMBRIDGE

Unlock learner wellbeing: A data-informed approach for Cambridge schools

Sarah Nelson and Tamsin Hart

12 March 2025 – 1pm GMT

Today we will discuss:

- How Cambridge supports in-school wellbeing
- Case study
- How you can do this in your school
- Key takeaways
- Questions.



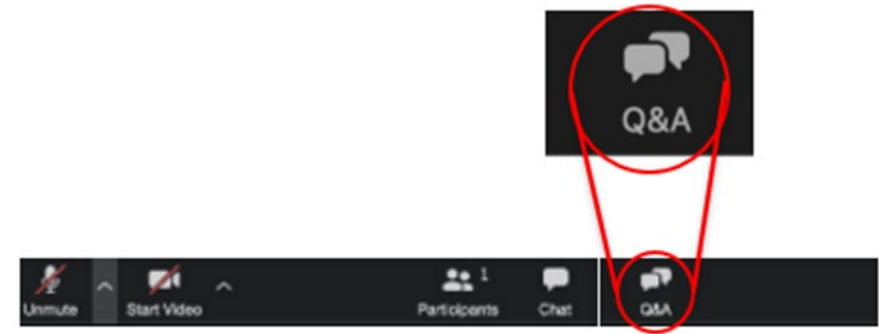
Q&A

Microphones & cameras off.

Use the Q&A Function in the toolbar to send us your questions (not the chat).

Like the questions you want answered (we will prioritise those with the most 'likes')

Q&A session will be at the end of the presentation



How does Cambridge support in-school wellbeing?

Poll

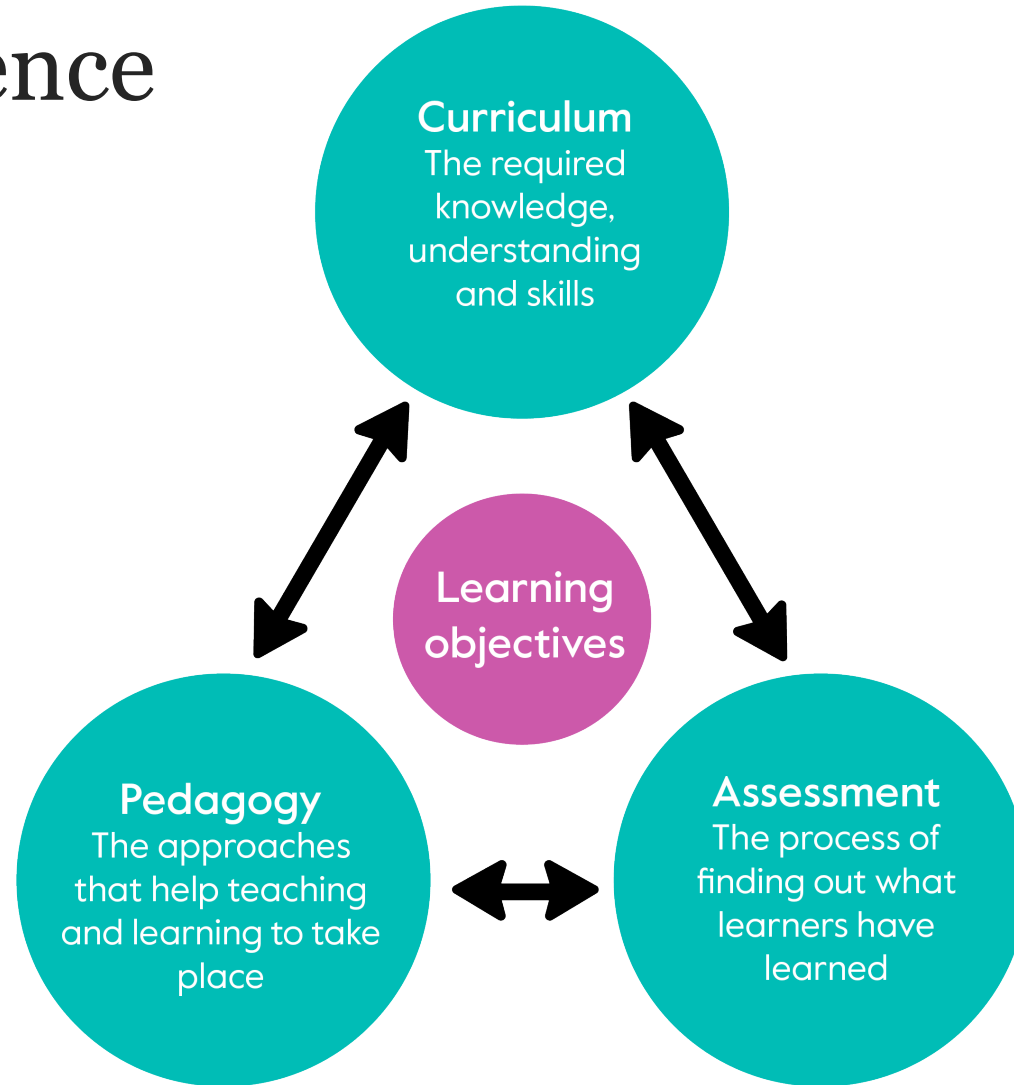
Are you teaching the Cambridge Primary or Lower Secondary Wellbeing curriculum in your school?

A: Yes

B: No



Curriculum coherence



Curriculum structure



Understanding myself

- Identifying emotions
- Managing emotions
- Healthy habits

My relationships

- Healthy relationships

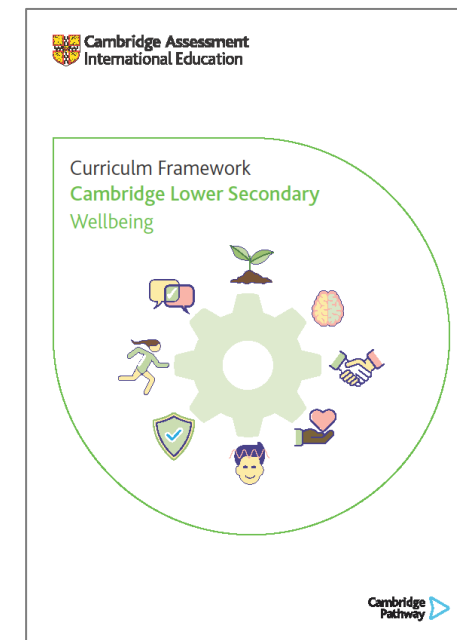
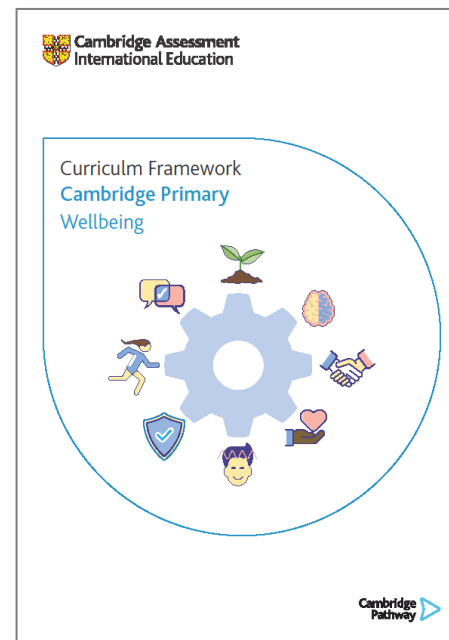
Navigating my world

- Staying safe
- Dealing with change
- Making a difference

Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Wellbeing – support for teachers

Available as part of the programme fee:

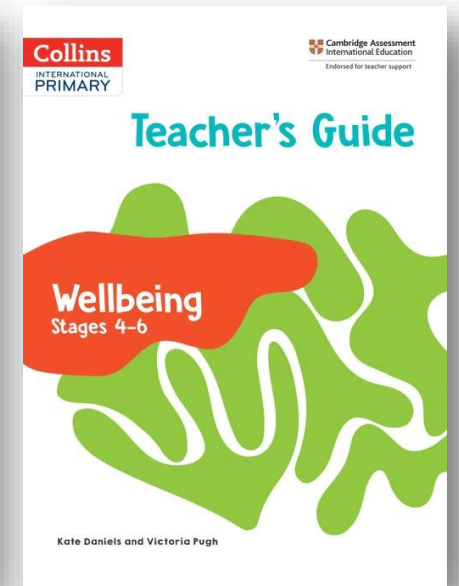
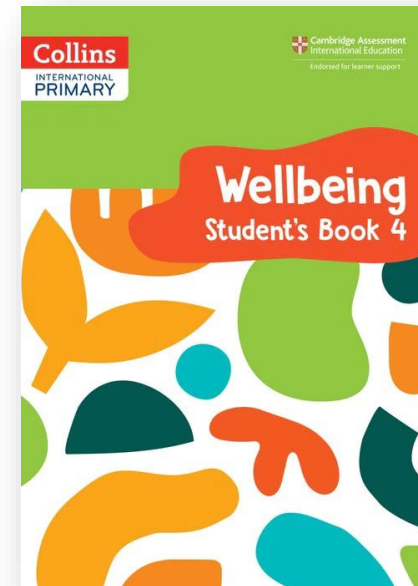
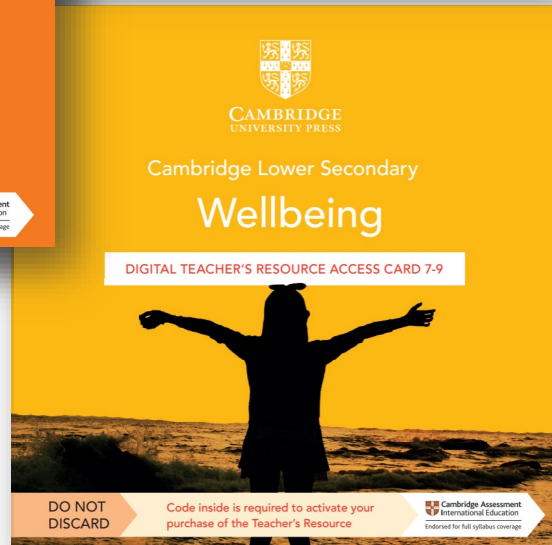
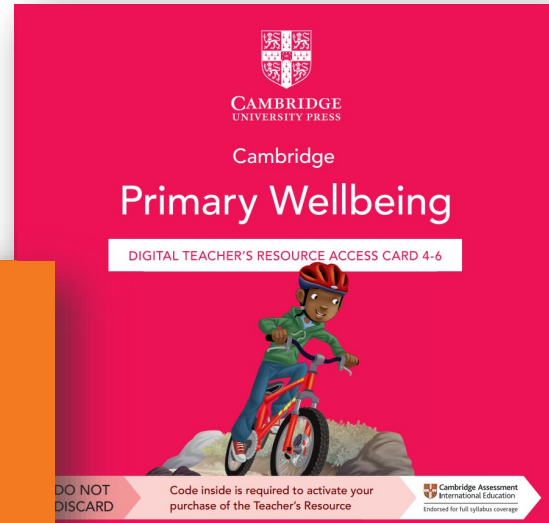
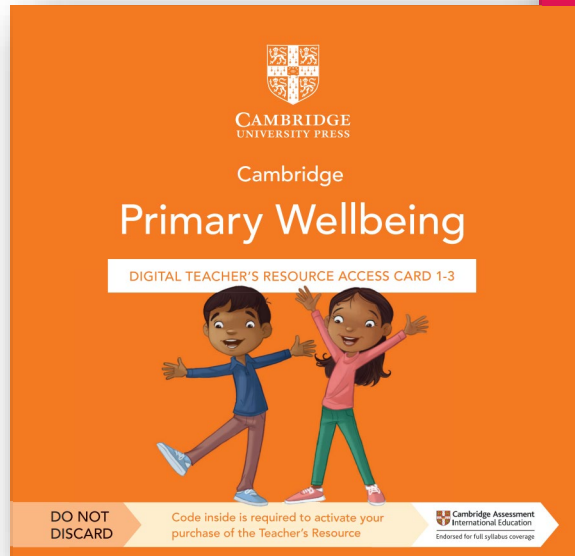
- Curriculum framework
- Progression grid
- Teacher guide
- Schemes of work
- Online training
- Community online forum.



<https://primary.cambridgeinternational.org>

<https://lowersecondary.cambridgeinternational.org>

Resources for Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Wellbeing



Cambridge Wellbeing Check

See a clear picture across:

Feelings



Life satisfaction

how much students
experience contentment
and overall life satisfaction.



Negative emotions

how much students
experience anxiety, stress
and/or sadness.

Functioning



Interpersonal wellbeing

how much students
experience feeling
connected to others in
school, that those people
care about them, and that
they are valued.



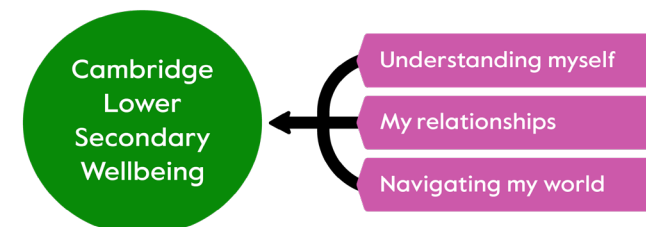
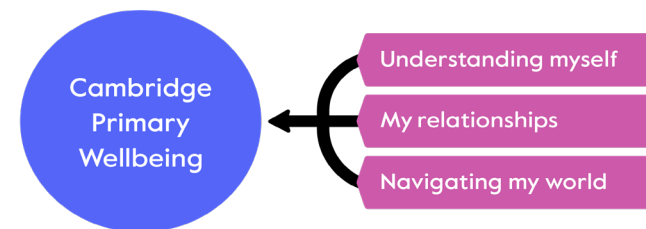
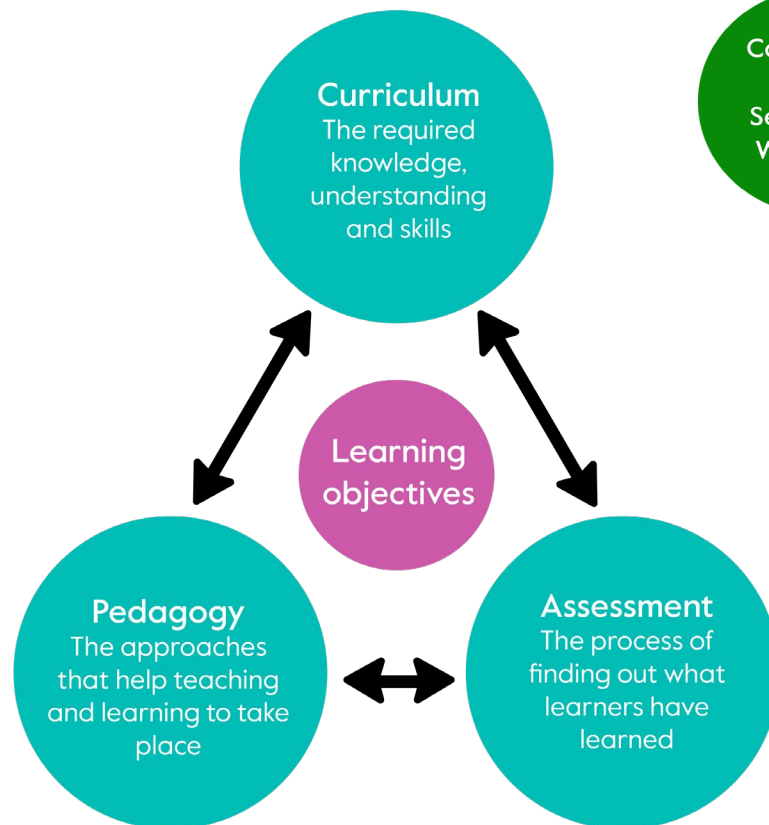
Competence wellbeing

how much students
experience competence,
self-confidence, fulfilment,
and purpose.



cem.org/wellbeing

Curriculum coherence



See a clear picture across:

Feelings



Life satisfaction
how much students experience contentment and overall life satisfaction.



Negative emotions
how much students experience anxiety, stress and/or sadness.



Interpersonal wellbeing
how much students experience feeling connected to others in school, that those people care about them, and that they are valued.



Competence wellbeing
how much students experience competence, self-confidence, fulfilment, and purpose.

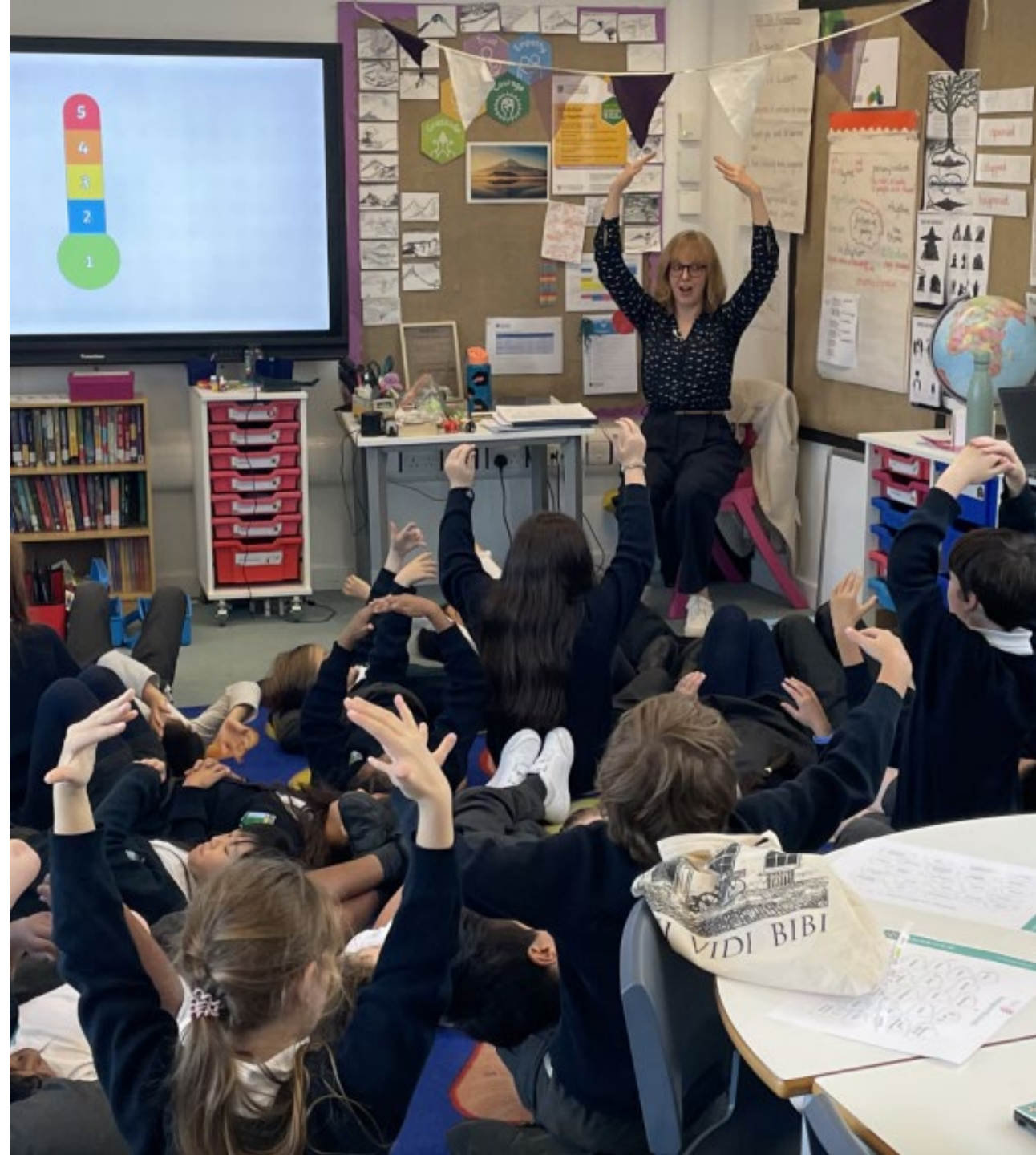
Functioning

Case study

Case study

How to gather wellbeing insights from your learners and to teach to the results using:

- Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Wellbeing curriculum
- Cambridge Wellbeing Check
- Cambridge Digital Teacher's Resources
- Cambridge Reading Adventures (Primary only)



Cambridge Wellbeing Check

Feelings are like clouds...



The Cambridge Wellbeing Check Lesson Plan

Lower
Secondary

for learners aged
11 to 14 years

Tel: +44 (0)1223 790 122
Email: CEM@cambridge.org

Part One – Understanding our mental wellbeing

Age suitability

This lesson plan is suitable for learners in the school year in which they turn 12 years old, up until the school year in which they turn 14. In schools in England and Wales, these are Years 7, 8 and 9. Learners entering Year 7 have usually completed seven full years of formal schooling.

Learning objectives

- to understand the range of different emotions and experiences that contribute to our mental wellbeing
- to practise identifying and talking about our emotions
- to be able to recognise and relate to the emotional experiences of others.

Curriculum area & alignment to statutory guidance¹

Mental wellbeing

By the end of Secondary school learners should know:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others.

Key vocabulary to define

Before the lesson, you may wish to work through our *Meaning of key words* information sheet and set of slides with some learners, to ensure they understand the key words included within the Wellbeing Check. The information sheet includes examples of each word being used in context. It is particularly useful for younger learners, and those with English as an Additional Language.

Pre-lesson: creating a safe space for learning (5 minutes)

- Mental wellbeing is a personal and sensitive topic. It is critical that prior to delivering any content, teachers take the time to create an inclusive, supportive classroom environment where learners can express their thoughts and experiences openly and honestly. Cultivating openness and inclusivity in the classroom environment takes time and is an essential foundation that is important not only for lessons on mental wellbeing, but for all learning.
- The first 5 minutes of the first lesson should be devoted to cultivating a safe space for exploring mental wellbeing, talking learners through what this space will feel like, and the ground rules for how to engage with one another in this space².


Over the next two lessons, we are going to be talking about our mental wellbeing, which includes our feelings. Feelings are a sensitive topic because they are very personal experiences. No two people experience the world in the same way, so their feelings are also bound to be different. The work we will be doing together in these lessons will feel challenging for all of us, because we do not often take the time to reflect on our feelings in a classroom context. Before we get started, it is really important that we agree a set of ground rules that we all stick to in order to create a space where everyone feels safe to participate.

¹ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers (Department for Education, England, 2020)

² Adapted from the PSHE Association (2019) 'Teacher guidance: teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing'

Cambridge Wellbeing Check



 CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring

Cambridge Wellbeing Check

When I am at school...
I feel good about myself

never

not often

sometimes

often

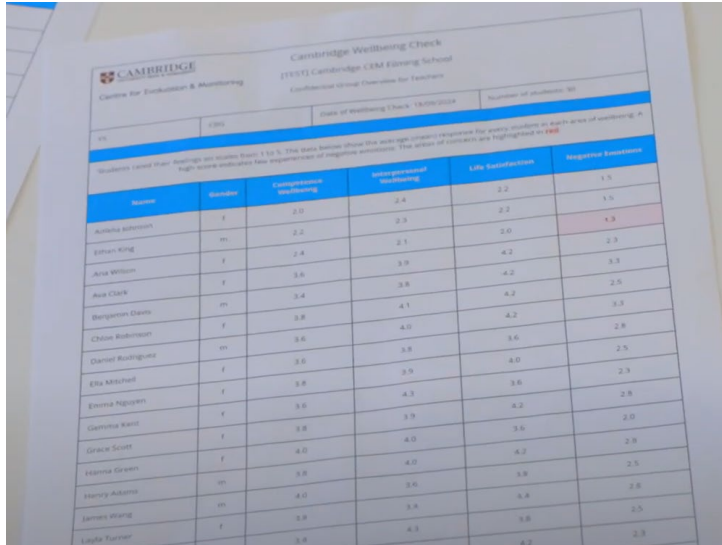
always

Back

Next

Cambridge Wellbeing Check

A suite of 12 reports giving whole class and student-level data.

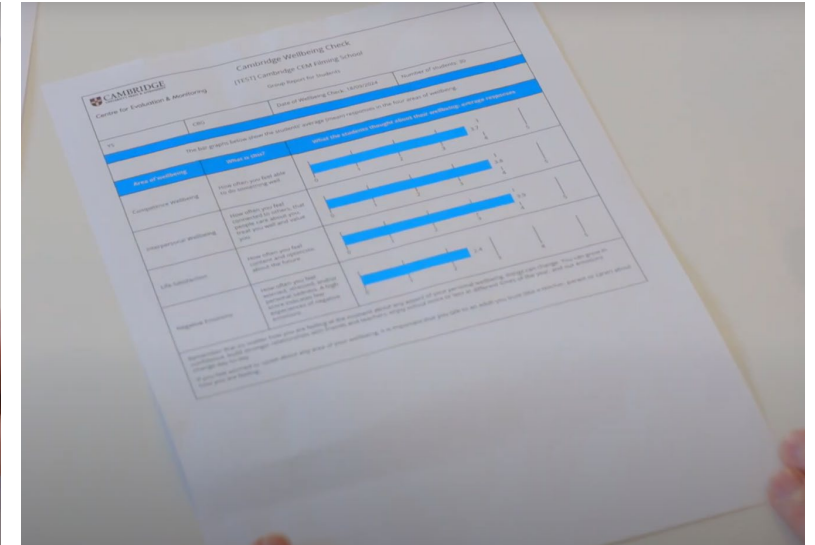
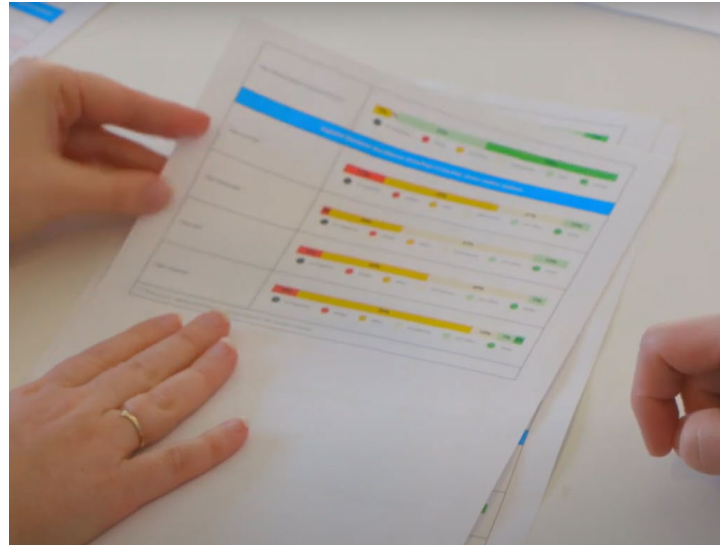


Cambridge Wellbeing Check
(TS1) Cambridge CEM Learning School
Confidential Group Overview for Teachers

Class: [redacted] Date of Wellbeing Check: March 2024 Number of students: 20

Students rated their feelings on a scale from 1 to 5. The bars below show the average scores for each student in each area of wellbeing. A high score indicates a low experience of negative emotions. The scores of students are highlighted in red.

Student	Gender	Emotional Wellbeing	Social Wellbeing	Life Satisfaction	Resilience
Alexis Johnson	f	2.0	2.4	2.2	1.5
Edison King	m	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.2
Aria Wilson	f	2.4	3.9	4.2	3.3
Ava Clark	m	3.4	4.1	4.2	2.5
Bernardine Davis	f	3.8	4.0	4.2	3.3
Chloe Robinson	f	3.6	3.8	3.6	2.8
Daniel Rodriguez	f	3.6	3.8	4.0	2.5
Ella Mitchell	f	3.8	3.5	3.5	2.3
Evanna Nguyen	f	3.6	3.5	4.2	2.8
Gertrude Ward	f	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.0
Grace Scott	f	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.8
Hannah Graham	m	3.8	4.0	3.8	2.5
Henry Adams	m	4.0	3.8	3.8	2.8
James Wang	f	3.8	4.0	3.8	2.5
Lidia Turner	f	3.8	4.0	4.2	2.3



456Um.04 Practice a range of strategies they can use when self-managing unpleasant or intense emotions and identify which strategies they find most useful.

Planning



> CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY WELLBEING STAGES 4–6: **TEACHER'S RESOURCE**

> Scope and sequence Stages 4–6

The lesson plans in this Teacher's Resource can be taught in any sequence; providing you with the freedom and flexibility to teach in a way that best suits you and your students. However, we have also provided a suggested teaching order by stage, which you can either follow strictly or loosely as needed.

Stage 4: Suggested teaching order

Learning objective covered	Lesson plan number	Links to other lesson plans and learning objectives
456Ui.01 Identify a wide range of emotions in themselves and others using a wide range of vocabulary.	4.1 + Worksheet 4.1	
456Ui.02 Understand how emotion can physically affect their bodies.	4.2	
456Um.01 Explore triggers for different emotions.	4.3	
456Um.02 Evaluate whether their behaviour is appropriate for a given situation.	4.4	

Planning

Suggested teaching activities

Spontaneous teachable moments

Theory

Learning objective	
456Ui.03 Understand that emotions can change over time due to planned and unplanned external factors.	
Suggested teaching activities	Key vocabulary Links
<p>Start with a check in. Using the mood meter, ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are your emotions right now? Are they different from yesterday? Why? <p>Introduce the idea that emotions change over time.</p> <p>Create a timeline of key events in the life of an individual. This may be story of a fictional or historical character or someone who is popular with the learners, e.g. a sports person who has had successes and failures. If possible, include at least one planned and one unplanned event.</p> <p>Learners work in groups to build a model of, or draw, a different key events in the life of the chosen character. Encourage groups to consider their model or drawing and explain their choice of colours, positioning and shapes. Ask: <i>What does this tell you about emotions in relation to this character and event?</i></p> <p>In the same order that the events occur in the character's life, ask each group to present and explain their model or drawing to the whole class. Identify the emotions the character experiences in each event and how these change.</p> <p>Explain that details about people's emotions based are based on our own experiences because there is an emotional reaction to the character's experiences. Ask learners if they have experienced any events similar to the ones in the character's life and how they felt.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to link this activity to control and the range of emotions they feel when in control (e.g. planned factors) and when things are not planned. For example, if they know</p>	<p>Timeline</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Planned</p> <p>Unplanned</p> <p>Other Wellbeing</p> <p>456Um.01 Explore triggers for different emotions.</p> <p>456Ui.01 Identify a wide range of emotions in themselves and others using a wide range of vocabulary.</p> <p>456Um.03 Practise a range of strategies to support emotional self-care and identify which they find most useful.</p> <p>Cross-curricular</p> <p><u>Science</u></p> <p>6Bp.01 Describe the physical changes that take place during puberty in humans.</p>
<p>they are going to have a test they can prepare for it and this helps calm their nerves, whereas if there is a surprise test they may panic or get really worried.</p> <p>Review learning by asking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What happens to your emotions when things change? How do planned and unplanned events impact on feelings? Can you give an example of when your emotions change? What strategies do you find useful when something changes? 	
Spontaneous teachable moments	Any planned or unplanned changes in school offer the opportunity to explore this concept in context, e.g. unexpected changes to timetables or an unexpected visitor to the class. Reflecting on the emotions learners feel at these points will reinforce the learning objective.
Key points to consider	Reactions to change may include: shock and disorientation, anger and other emotional responses, coming to terms with new situations, acceptance and moving forward. Everyone will respond differently and some of this is dependent on individual strategies for emotional regulation. Some of these will be automatic, but learners can also develop a toolkit of strategies to draw on these when they feel challenged, particularly when events are unplanned. They can learn how to control their emotions to help them cope and build resilience. Practicing strategies such as mindful breathing can help calm our emotional responses enough to help them think. You will find information and exercises on mindful breathing online.
Theory	Dan Siegel's hand model of the brain is useful here. There are a number of change theory models and these may provide useful visual references.




Learning objective

Other Wellbeing objectives

Cross-curricula links

Key points to consider

Cambridge Reading Adventures

Title/Author		Cambridge Primary Wellbeing Curriculum Strand/s	Cambridge Primary Wellbeing Curriculum Sub-Strand/s	Cambridge Wellbeing Check Sub-Domain/s	Cambridge Reading Adventures Blurb
White	 Don't Give Up Yet! Lauri Kubuitsile 9781108400787 Fiction	Understanding myself Navigating my world	Managing emotions Dealing with change	Competence wellbeing Interpersonal wellbeing	Tefo's grandfather was invited to play for a football team in England. He remembers how difficult he found leaving home and not being welcomed in the team at first.
White	 The Great Migration Jonathan and Angela Scott 9781107560659 Non-fiction	Navigating my world	Staying safe Dealing with change	Competence wellbeing	The Great Migration is a round trip of about 3000 kilometres. Find out why animals make this journey every year and the dangers they face on the way. Think about how and why people also move to a new area or country.
White	 The Great Escape Peter Millett 9781107551589 Fiction	Understanding myself	Identifying emotions Managing emotions	Competence wellbeing Negative emotions	Selma is scared of the water but when some whales beach themselves, she has to be brave. Can she help to save the whales?

Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary

Wellbeing & Cambridge Reading Adventures

Mapping chart





Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary

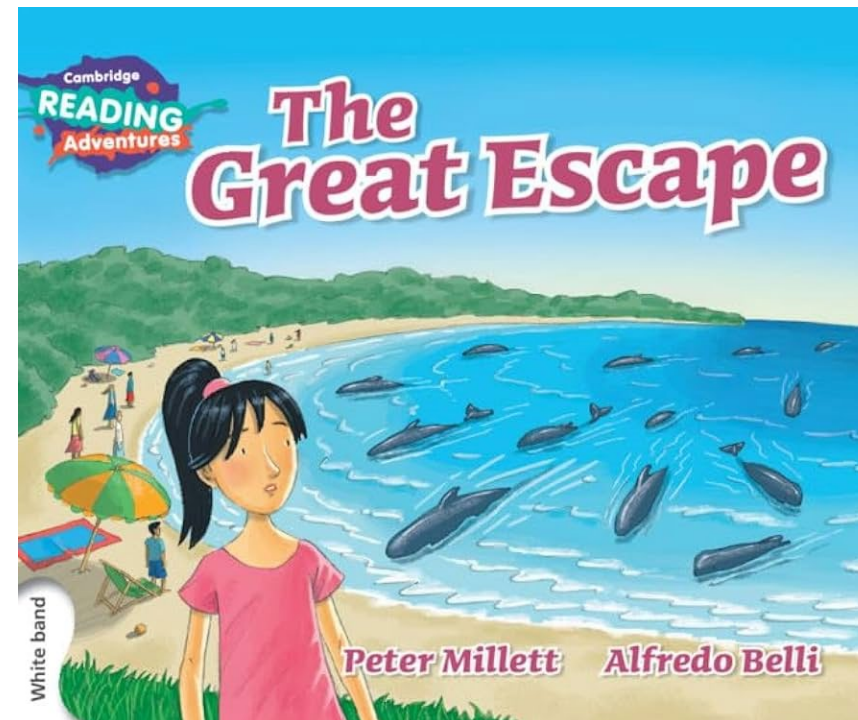
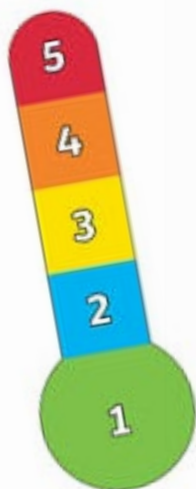
Stage 5 wellbeing lesson plan

5 mins	Story time ACTIVITY: Listen to the story <i>The Great Escape</i> by Peter Millett While listening ask learners to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">What emotion is Selma feeling?Have you ever felt the way Selma felt? [Perhaps share examples of when.]	<i>The Great Escape</i> by Peter Millett (audio only)	10 mins	Breathing strategy ACTIVITY: Ask learners to get in a comfortable position and explain that you are all going to practise a strategy that people use to help calm down intense emotions. Give the following instructions to learners: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Place your hands on top of your head.Breathe in deeply through your nose for three seconds – 1, 2, 3. As you do, raise above your head like a balloon inflating.Hold your breath for three seconds – 1, 2, 3.Breathe out through your mouth for three seconds – 1, 2, 3. As you do, bring your arms back down like a balloon deflating.Let's repeat it again, but this time we will breathe out for five seconds.Let's repeat it again, but this time we will breathe out for seven seconds. Ask learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Who has practised a breathing strategy like that before?Do you find this a useful strategy for managing intense emotions? In what way? Explain that it is perfectly normal for differences in opinion. Some people find breathing strategies like this helpful because different emotions are associated with different forms of breathing. When you feel calm and happy, your breathing will be regular, deep and slow. If you feel anxious or angry, your breathing will be short, fast, and shallow. Purposefully changing the rhythm of your breath can signal a change to your body. When we breath in our heart rate speeds up, and when we breathe out it slows down. Therefore, when we increase the amount of time we breathe out we're telling our bodies it's time to relax. We are now going to think about other strategies and see which ones you think may be useful to you.		<p>Blowing bubbles forces you to pause, focus on a single activity and think about your breathing. [Similar impact to the earlier breathing exercise].</p> <p>3 Bringing awareness to your body and grounding. Rub your hands together, wiggle your fingers and clap your hands three times. Wiggle your toes and stamp your feet three times firmly on the floor. Focus all your attention on your feet. Think about how your feet feel as they touch the ground / the bottom of your shoes.</p> <p>Directing focus onto your physical body, particularly on the way our feet touch the ground, can help you to feel more secure and grounded. Also, the movement can help us calm down by releasing energy from our body.</p> <p>DISCUSSION: Ask learners to give feedback on whether they think these would be a helpful strategies for dealing with intense emotions or during unpleasant times and why.</p> <p>Share the information in red as part of the discussion.</p>	
10 mins	Feelings thermometer DISCUSSION: Introduce the 'feelings thermometer' to the learners. Say: 'This is a thermometer that helps us understand how our emotions can be at different levels. For example, if I was feeling a little bit angry I would be at number 1 on the thermometer (point to number 1). If I was feeling really, really angry I would be at number 5 (point to number 5).' <p>'Angry at number 1 might be a small feeling inside my stomach. I might be a little restless, but it might not be visible on my body or to anyone else otherwise.</p> <p>But, angry at number 5, I would feel rage inside, I might feel very hot, have a red face or sweat. My chest might feel tight and my heart would be pumping fast. My shoulders would be tense and my fist might be clenched. I might feel dizzy or be shaking. There would be tension on my face and in my head and eyes.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">[Using fear/nervous/scared as our example.] Where do you think Selma sits on her emotion thermometer?Why? [Elicit behaviours that suggest this level.]What could the other levels look like for Selma? <p>Make it clear that our levels are relative and that our 5 may be different to someone else's 5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Were those feelings helpful or unhelpful for Selma? Why?'Do you think strong emotions use up a lot of our energy?'What did Selma do to manage her emotions? [If necessary, listen to the relevant clip again.]	Thermometer image (A3)	20 mins	Alternative strategies carousel Below are some examples of different types of strategies. Split the class into three groups and ask them to carousel around each one. 1 Find items (in the classroom) for every colour of the rainbow. This is called 'Rainbow grounding'. It can help you to focus on the present moment when you feel overwhelmed. 2 Blow bubbles.	Instructions for each group A rainbow worksheet Bubbles	10 mins Find your own strategies ACTIVITY: Ask learners to mind map strategies that they feel would be most useful for them (they may already have their own strategies).	Pen Paper
						5 mins Plenary ACTIVITY: On a sticky note, ask learners to write down the strategy that they think would be most useful for them. All learners to add their sticky note to the board.	Sticky notes

Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary

Stage 5 wellbeing lesson plan

5 mins	<p>Story time</p> <p>ACTIVITY: Listen to the story <i>The Great Escape</i> by Peter Millett</p> <p>While listening ask learners to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emotion is Selma feeling? • Have you ever felt the way Selma felt? [Perhaps share examples of when.] 	<p><i>The Great Escape</i> by Peter Millett (audio only)</p>
10 mins	<p>Feelings thermometer</p> <p>DISCUSSION: Introduce the 'feelings thermometer' to the learners.</p> <p>Say: 'This is a thermometer that helps us understand how our emotions can be at different levels. For example, if I was feeling a little bit angry I would be at number 1 on the thermometer (point to number 1). If I was feeling really, really angry I would be at number 5 (point to number 5).'</p> <p>'Angry at number 1 might be a small feeling inside my stomach. I might be a little restless, but it might not be visible on my body or to anyone else otherwise.</p> <p>But, angry at number 5, I would feel rage inside, I might feel very hot, have a red face or sweat. My chest might feel tight and my heart would be pumping fast. My shoulders would be tense and my fist might be clenched. I might feel dizzy or be shaking. There would be tension on my face and in my head and eyes.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Using fear/nervous/scared as our example.] Where do you think Selma sits on her emotion thermometer? • Why? [Elicit behaviours that suggest this level.] • What could the other levels look like for Selma? <p>Make it clear that our levels are relative and that our 5 may be different to someone else's 5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were those feelings helpful or unhelpful for Selma? Why? • 'Do you think strong emotions use up a lot of our energy?' • What did Selma do to manage her emotions? [If necessary, listen to the relevant clip again.] 	<p>Thermometer image (A3)</p>



10 mins

Breathing strategy

ACTIVITY: Ask learners to get in a comfortable position and explain that you are all going to practise a strategy that people use to help calm down intense emotions.

Give the following instructions to learners:

1. Place your hands on top of your head.
2. Breathe in deeply through your nose for three seconds – 1, 2, 3. As you do, raise above your head like a balloon inflating.
3. Hold your breath for three seconds – 1, 2, 3.
4. Breathe out through your mouth for three seconds – 1, 2, 3. As you do, bring your arms back down like a balloon deflating.
5. Let's repeat it again, but this time we will breathe out for five seconds.
6. Let's repeat it again, but this time we will breathe out for seven seconds.

Ask learners:

- Who has practised a breathing strategy like that before?
- Do you find this a useful strategy for managing intense emotions? In what way?

Explain that it is perfectly normal for differences in opinion.

Some people find breathing strategies like this helpful because different emotions are associated with different forms of breathing. When you feel calm and happy, your breathing will be regular, deep and slow. If you feel anxious or angry, your breathing will be short, fast, and shallow.

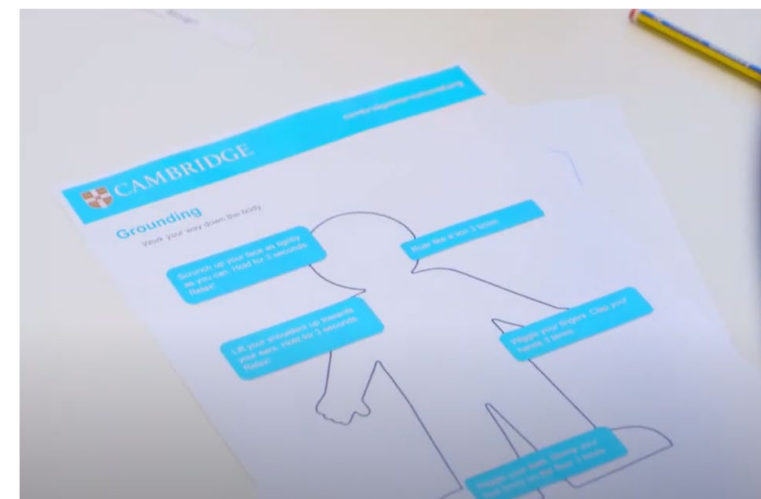
Purposefully changing the rhythm of your breath can signal a change to your body.

When we breath in our heart rate speeds up, and when we breathe out it slows down. Therefore, when we increase the amount of time we breathe out we're telling our bodies it's time to relax.

We are now going to think about other strategies and see which ones you think may be useful to you.



20 mins	<p>Alternative strategies carousel</p> <p>Below are some examples of different types of strategies. Split the class into three groups and ask them to carousel around each one.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Find items (in the classroom) for every colour of the rainbow. This is called 'Rainbow grounding'. It can help you to focus on the present moment when you feel overwhelmed. Blow bubbles. Blowing bubbles forces you to pause, focus on a single activity and think about your breathing. [Similar impact to the earlier breathing exercise]. Bringing awareness to your body and grounding. Rub your hands together, wiggle your fingers and clap your hands three times. Wiggle your toes and stamp your feet three times firmly on the floor. Focus all your attention on your feet. Think about how your feet feel as they touch the ground / the bottom of your shoes. Directing focus onto your physical body, particularly on the way our feet touch the ground, can help you to feel more secure and grounded. Also, the movement can help us calm down by releasing energy from our body. <p>DISCUSSION: Ask learners to give feedback on whether they think these would be helpful strategies for dealing with intense emotions or during unpleasant times and why. Share the information in red as part of the discussion.</p>	<p>Instructions for each group</p> <p>A r</p> <p>Bu</p>
10 mins	<p>Find your own strategies</p> <p>ACTIVITY: Ask learners to mind map strategies that they feel would be most useful for them (they may already have their own strategies).</p>	<p>Pe</p> <p>Pa</p>
5 mins	<p>Plenary</p> <p>ACTIVITY: On a sticky note, ask learners to write down the strategy that they think would be most useful for them.</p> <p>All learners to add their sticky note to the board.</p>	<p>Sti</p>



Repeating the cycle

Step 1: Start

Start with the Cambridge Wellbeing Check. At the start of the year gather data with the Cambridge Wellbeing Check. You can gather more data across the year to compare against the original scores.

Step 2: Review and select

Review the results and select your wellbeing programme. Based on the results use our curriculum to help you decide which areas you would like to focus on. The learning objectives help you to decide how to use our supporting resources to teach to these results.

The curriculum framework supports spontaneous teachable moments so you can offer support when it is needed. Structured teaching ideas also help you plan. Learning objectives (LOs) across the curriculum frameworks can be taught together or independently for flexibility.

Step 3: Teach

Teach the wellbeing programme with supporting resources. The teacher's resources provide lesson plans that are mapped to LOs and linked to the Cambridge Wellbeing Check.

How can you do this in your school?

What would you do?

Imagine you have done the Cambridge Wellbeing Check, and the data tells you that Interpersonal Wellbeing is low across your class, particularly in relation to **feeling lonely** and **cared for**.

What would your next step be?

You may want to refer to the following learning objectives:

456Rh.01 Describe the role of different types of relationships in their life.

456Rh.02 Explain the importance of friends and how they can support each other when they need help or are unhappy.

Key takeaways

Key takeaways



- Teaching and learning is most effective when there is coherence between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.
- Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Wellbeing can be taught as a stand-alone subject or integrated into other parts of your school curriculum.
- Data from the Cambridge Wellbeing Check can be used to inform your planning.
- Cambridge provides lots of support but is still flexible enough to allow you to adapt to suit your context.
- Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Wellbeing supports an inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

Any questions?

Thank you!



Get in touch!

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