

Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring

# Monitoring Wellbeing

*Ensure wellbeing is tracked consistently across your setting to enhance your school's culture and provision.*

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Teaching and Learning Lead

Cambridge Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring

November 2022

# Our Presenter

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Based in the UK, Mark has worked in education since 1997 and leads the development of assessment and reporting products for Early Years and Primary children.

Mark is a former primary school headteacher. He taught in three schools in north-east England for 18 years.

Mark joined CEM in 2015.

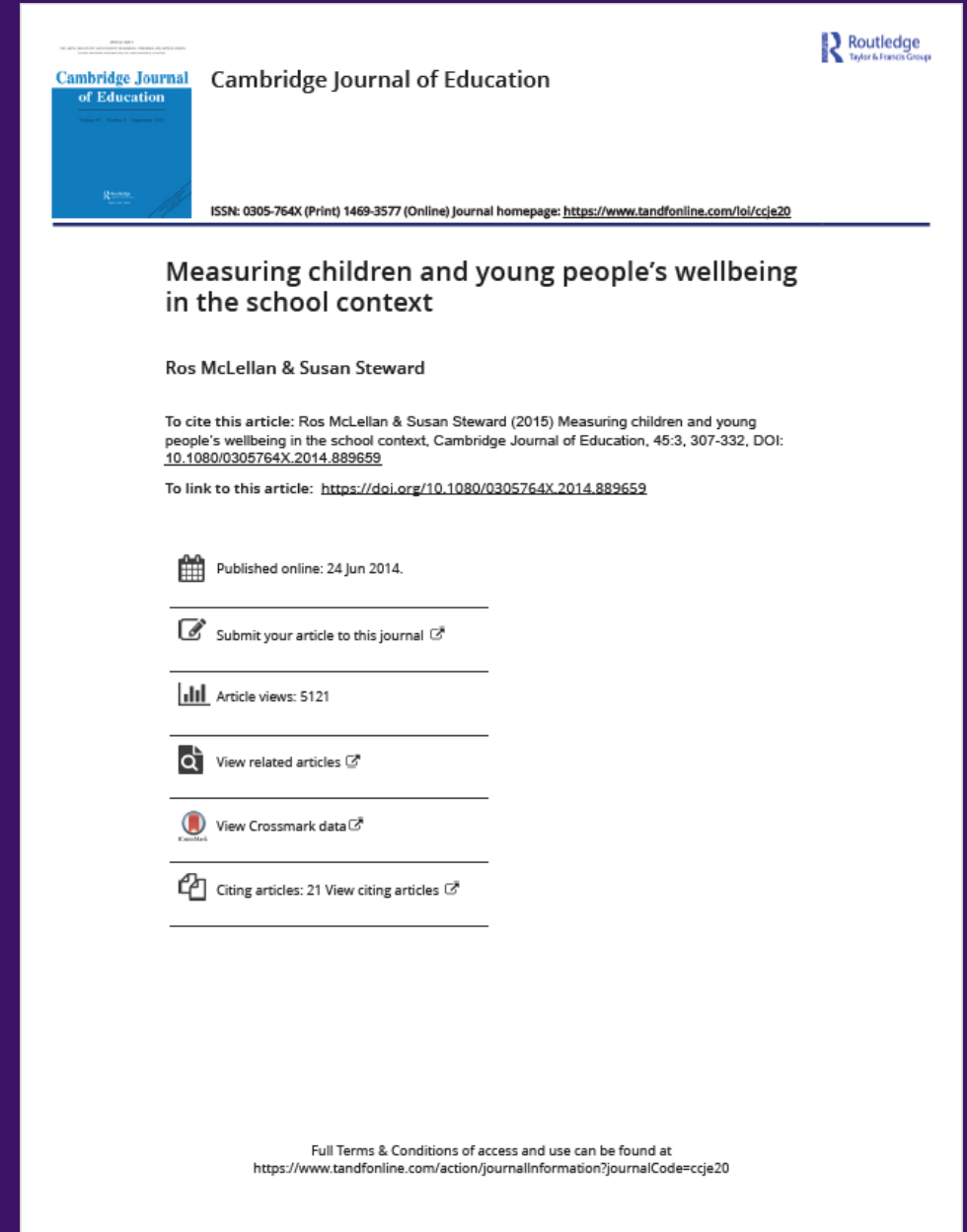
# What will we discuss today?

- 1) Research into wellbeing in educational settings
- 2) The link between wellbeing and learning
- 3) Should we 'assess' wellbeing?
- 4) How can we monitor and improve wellbeing in educational settings?


# 1. Research into wellbeing in educational settings.

- Our recent wellbeing work is based on research by colleagues in the Faculty of Education, Cambridge University (McLellan & Steward, 2015).
- Their research highlights the need to distinguish between measures of wellbeing for adults and children.
- A wellbeing framework is proposed which concentrates on the experiences of children and young people in school or college.

McLellan, R. & Steward, S. (2015) Measuring children and young people's wellbeing in the school context, Cambridge Journal of Education, 45:3, 307-332.



The screenshot shows the article page for 'Measuring children and young people's wellbeing in the school context' in the Cambridge Journal of Education. The page includes the journal's logo, ISSN information, and a list of interactive links such as 'Submit your article to this journal', 'View related articles', and 'View Crossmark data'. The article title and authors (Ros McLellan & Susan Steward) are prominently displayed at the top of the content area.

 Cambridge Journal of Education

Routledge  
Taylor & Francis Group


ISSN: 0305-764X (Print) 1469-3577 (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ccje20>


## Measuring children and young people's wellbeing in the school context


Ros McLellan & Susan Steward


To cite this article: Ros McLellan & Susan Steward (2015) Measuring children and young people's wellbeing in the school context, Cambridge Journal of Education, 45:3, 307-332, DOI: [10.1080/0305764X.2014.889659](https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2014.889659)


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# The four areas of wellbeing

## 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.

## What does *wellbeing* mean in the context of school life?



As wellbeing is a subjective, psychological state:

- It changes over time
- children in the same physical circumstances may experience very different levels of wellbeing
- We must ask children about their wellbeing.

## 2. The link between wellbeing and learning.



# Wellbeing is linked with academic success

- Better wellbeing is linked with some forms of motivation (students wanting to learn and make progress).
- Wellbeing is linked to engagement. Students with lower levels of wellbeing are more likely to truant.



## Further evidence that wellbeing is linked to academic performance:

- ‘...researchers in the UK (Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012) and the USA (Suldo, Thalji, & Ferron, 2011) identified correlations between wellbeing and educational performance...’
- ‘An international literature review (Lindorff, 2020) concluded there is evidence of links between wellbeing and attainment and between whole-school approaches to wellbeing and attainment, but that this is heavily dependent upon implementation.’

(Suto & Benton, 2022)

# 3. Should we 'assess' wellbeing?

## Why should we assess wellbeing in schools?

Why should we assess anything?

If you can measure (or assess) something, you obtain better information about it and increase your understanding of it...

...this is true of wellbeing.



# Uses of a wellbeing check

Teach and  
explore wellbeing  
with students

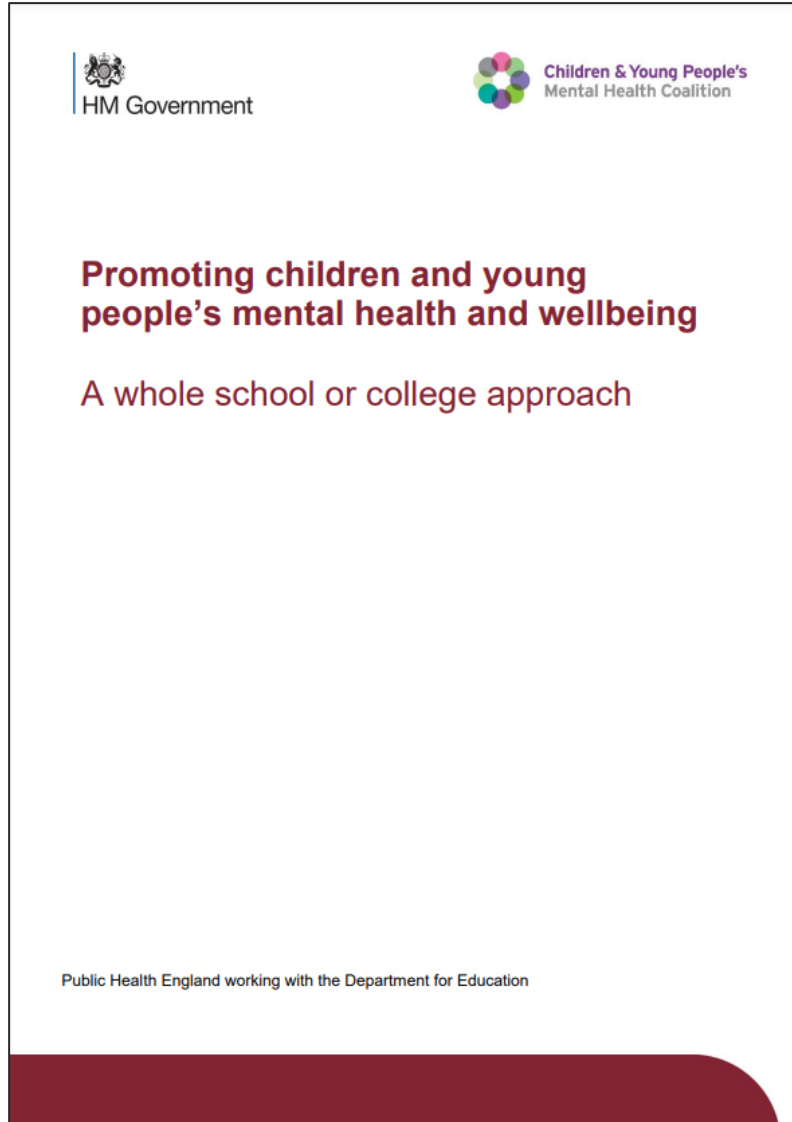
Evaluate the  
wellbeing of  
groups of  
students

Understand  
individual  
students'  
wellbeing levels

Evaluate the  
impact of  
interventions to  
improve wellbeing

## 4. How can we monitor and improve wellbeing in educational settings?

- Procedurally
- Pedagogically
- Practically
- Personally



## Procedurally:

- There is a lot of documentation available free of charge.
- From gov.uk
- This document describes 8 principles of a whole school or college approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing.

# Eight principles to promoting a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing:

*Running a wellbeing check may be able to help you...*







## **Mental health and behaviour in schools**

**November 2018**

## Procedurally

- From gov.uk
- Schools have a central role to play in enabling their pupils to be resilient and to support good mental health and wellbeing.
- Clear systems and processes should be in place to help staff who identify possible mental health problems, providing routes to escalate issues with clear referral and accountability systems.
- The culture, ethos and environment of the school can have a profound influence on both pupil and staff mental wellbeing.

# Procedurally: UK Government guidance

- School staff cannot act as mental health experts and should not try to diagnose conditions. However, they should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- There are things that schools can do for all pupils, as well as those at risk of developing mental health problems, to intervene early to create a safe and calm educational environment and strengthen resilience before serious mental health problems occur.

behaviour, well communicated social norms and routines, which are reinforced with highly consistent consequence systems. This should be paired with an individualised graduated response when the behavioural issues might be a result of educational, mental health, other needs or vulnerabilities.

- Schools should consider how best to use their SEN and pupil premium resources to provide support for children with mental health difficulties where appropriate.

- School staff cannot act as mental health experts and should not try to diagnose conditions. However, they should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- There are things that schools can do for all pupils, as well as those at risk of developing mental health problems, to intervene early to create a safe and calm educational environment and strengthen resilience before serious mental health problems occur.

As set out in Chapter 6 of the statutory SEND 0-25 years Code of Practice 2015, schools need to be alert to how mental health problems can underpin behaviour issues in order to support pupils effectively, working with external

needed. They also need to be aware of their duties under the Act, recognising that some mental health issues will meet the criteria for a Special Educational Need.

If a school suspects a pupil has a mental health problem, they should use a graduated response process (assess – plan – do – review) to put support in place. This should include a number of identification and measurement tools, such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Boxall Profile, which are used as part of the process.

Schools should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems and identification, referral to experienced skilled staff and clear accountability systems.

Schools should also ensure they have an understanding of the local services available, including school nurses, and how and when to draw on or refer to these services. Where required, schools should expect parents and pupils to be able to access support elsewhere, including from their GP, NHS professionals working in specialist CYPMHS, voluntary organisations and other sources. Further guidance on how schools can work with these services can be found in Chapter 4.

Schools should also identify organisations that can offer further resources, training, advice and information about evidence-based approaches to support a range of sources. More information can be found in

## **Pedagogically:**

### ***An idea for a wellbeing lesson (1):***

Snails have delicate outer shells. In a way, we are all like snails. We all need to feel safe and protected on the inside, but we are fragile even if on the outside we appear tough and strong. Our outer shells can be easily damaged or crushed by others when they speak insensitively or act without care. During this lesson, I want you to imagine each of your classmates are snails and consider carefully how your words and actions might make them feel unsafe.

Snails need an environment to feel safe in if they are to explore the world outside of their own shell. Today, our environment will be our classroom space and we need to agree some rules to make this space safe for everyone.

For example, one rule might be that we respect that everyone is different. No single snail is the same as another. Everyone has their own beliefs, thoughts and feelings that are valid. A rule we could agree on, then, is that if we disagree with another person's opinion, we will disagree with the opinion itself rather than disagreeing with the person. In other words, just because you think a person's opinion is wrong does not mean that they as a person are wrong.

Does that sound like a useful rule? Can you think of some more ways we can keep our classroom space supportive and somewhere we all want to be?

*[Elicit learners' ideas, write their rules on the board as learners contribute. Then, connect learners' own rules with any that remain unmentioned below or use their ideas to expand/introduce remaining rules.]*



## My shell

Something I can do to feel safe and comfortable is:

A place I can go to feel safe and comfortable is:

Someone I can talk to if I ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable is:



## Pedagogically:

### ***An idea for a wellbeing lesson (2):***

Our mental wellbeing can be positively impacted when we engage in personally meaningful activities. Different activities have meaning for different people. Try and think of two activities in your life that are important to you. Make sure they are different – if possible – from your areas of personal development. For example, going to church and playing guitar might be activities I do to relax, but if improving my guitar skills is already an area of personal development for me, then I might think of another activity that has meaning for me. For example, playing netball with my friends. *[Give learners one minute to complete their final red memo for meaningful activities.]*


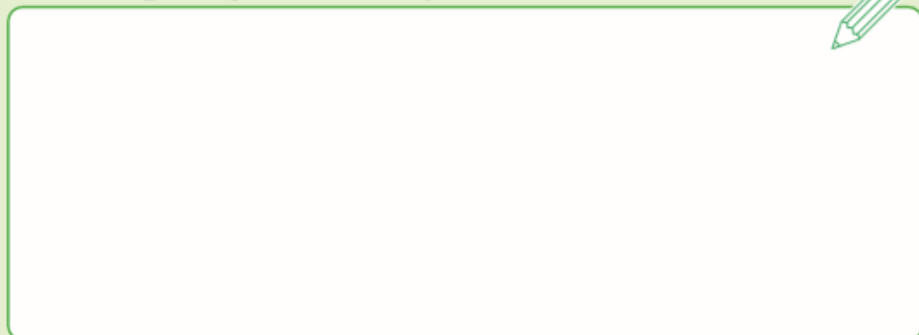
The green memo on the bottom of your worksheet asks you to think of some emotions you experience as ‘positive’ or ‘comfortable’. Try and be specific; for example rather than ‘happy’ you might put ‘passionate’ or ‘carefree’. It might help to think about how you feel when you engage in the meaningful activities you have listed, or when you are spending time with the person you have noted in your orange memo. *[Give learners 30 seconds to complete their green memo for positive/comfortable emotions.]*

The blue memo asks you to then reflect on some emotions you experience as ‘negative’ or ‘uncomfortable’. Again, try and be specific, so rather than ‘sad’ you might put ‘anxious’ or ‘tired’. *[Give learners 30 seconds to complete their blue memo for negative/uncomfortable emotions.]*


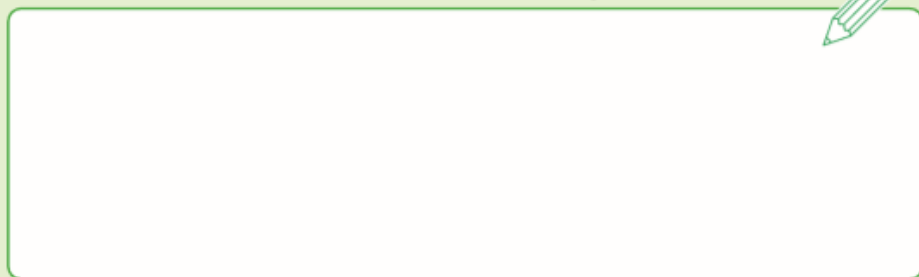
These memos are personal to you. You might like to reflect on them or add to them in your own time and you will need to refer to them in our second lesson on mental wellbeing so make sure you do not lose them.

# Memos on my mental wellbeing

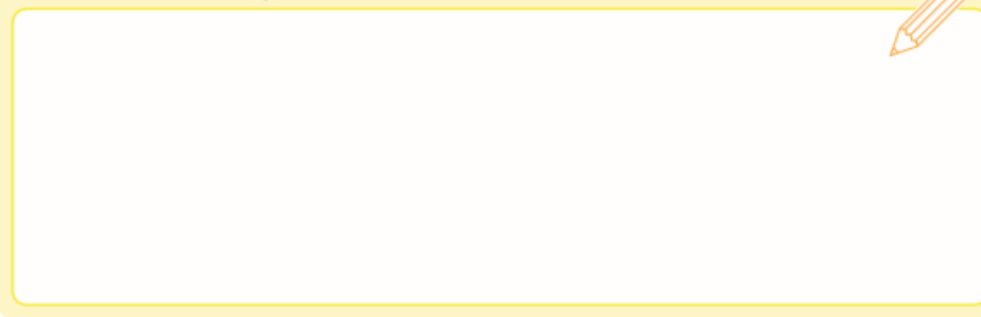
A relationship that has a positive impact on my mental wellbeing is my relationship with...


How I would describe that relationship...

Personal development to me means...


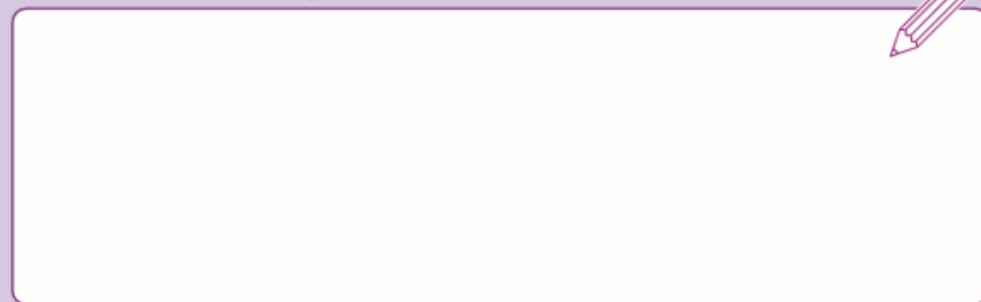
Meaningful activities in my life are...


Emotions that feel negative/uncomfortable for me...


Emotions that feel positive/comfortable for me...

# Practically:

## Further sources of advice



**Anna Freud**  
National Centre for Children and Families

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About us Clinical support and services Schools and colleges UCL Programmes Professionals Training and events Research and policy Parents and carers Young People

# 5 STEPS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A Framework for Schools and FE Colleges

**Mental health is everyone's responsibility.**

*The question is, how do you create a school or college-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing?*

We've created an evidence-based framework so that you can decide on your own approach to mental health and wellbeing in 5 simple steps. Our 5 Steps Framework is developed by mental health experts and teachers, for teachers.

It's interactive, it's simple and it's free. It will help you to support staff, lead change, and engage with parents, carers and the community so that you can meet your pupils' and students' needs.

By [registering](#), you can move through the steps, in any order, at your own pace and update a personalised action planning tool that can be regularly reviewed.

Read our [user guide](#) for more information on how to use the framework.



Watch on  YouTube



[annafreud.org](http://annafreud.org)



Personally:

Make sure that every student has formed at least one strong and supportive, appropriate relationship with an adult in school.

Everyone needs someone to turn to in difficult times.



**Questions?**

**Find out more:** [www.cem.org/wellbeing](http://www.cem.org/wellbeing)

**Subscribe:** [www.cem.org/buywellbeingcheck](http://www.cem.org/buywellbeingcheck)

Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring

# Example resources from the Cambridge Wellbeing Check

# The Cambridge Wellbeing Check

- Digital: runs on any PC, tablet or laptop
- No paperwork or marking
- Quick and easy to set up and use
- Suitable for students between 7 and 18
- Includes 22 questions
- Flexible: fits around lesson plans and school day
- Assess students several times each year – as you need



# The assessment – example questions

When I am at school I feel happy

never

not often

sometimes

often

always

When I am at school I feel sad

never

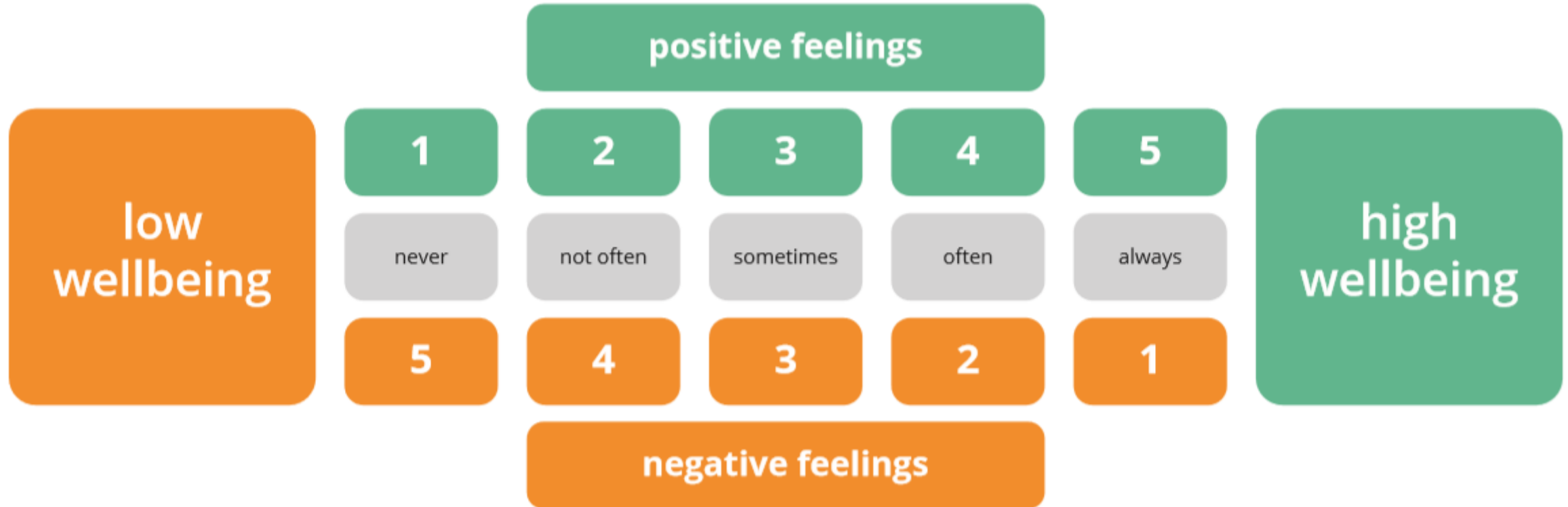
not often

sometimes

often

always

# The reports – how are students’ responses reported?



# An overview of the reports

- This table shows the content of each report and how to use within your school.

Report	Content	Usage		
		Whole-group or whole-school evaluations	Use with lesson plans to teach students about wellbeing	Understand individual students & identify those with low levels of wellbeing
Confidential Group Overview for Teachers	Table of mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing for each student in your group.	✓		✓
Detailed Overview of Responses for Teachers	Stacked bar chart showing how your group responded to each question. It shows the percentage of students who chose each response option.	✓		
Individual Student Summary for Teachers	Bar chart showing an individual student's mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing.			✓
Individual Student Response Report for Teachers	Table showing how an individual student responded to each question in the Check. Responses of most concern are highlighted.			✓
Group Report for Students	Bar chart showing your group's mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓	✓	
Individual Overview for Student	Descriptive statements based on the responses the student gave to each of the four areas of wellbeing. To be shared with the student to help them reflect on their feelings, without attaching a score to their responses.			✓
Class Gender Split Report for Teachers	Bar chart that displays class or group's average (mean) wellbeing scores split by gender, for each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓		
Year Group Gender Split Report for Teachers	Bar chart that displays year group's average (mean) wellbeing scores split by gender, for each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓		
Comparison report (classes or groups)	Bar chart that displays average (mean) scores of your selected classes or groups, in each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓		
Comparison report (year groups)	Bar chart that displays average (mean) scores of your selected year groups, in each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓		
Individual Student Tracking Report for Teachers	Bar chart that displays a student's wellbeing across different time periods, in each of the four areas of wellbeing.			✓
Year Group Tracking Report	Bar chart that displays year group's average (mean) scores over different time periods, in each of the four areas of wellbeing.	✓		

# The reports

- **Individual overview for students** showing the short statements summarising the student’s responses.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT		Cambridge Wellbeing Check		
Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring		Example School		
Individual Overview for Student				
Lucy Lollipop	19 June 2012	Y6	Class One	Date of Wellbeing Check: 09/09/2022
From the answers you provided, the comments below describe your wellbeing in four separate areas.				
Area of wellbeing	What is this?	What you thought about your wellbeing		
Competence Wellbeing	How often you feel able to do something well.	When you are at school you almost always feel good about yourself and you usually feel healthy. You often feel that you are doing well, you often feel confident and you sometimes feel that you can deal with problems.		
Interpersonal Wellbeing	How often you feel connected to others, that people care about you, treat you well and value you.	When you are at school you often feel happy, you feel people are always friendly, you often feel noticed and you nearly always feel valued. You mainly feel safe, you almost always feel you are treated fairly, you don't feel lonely and you feel people always care about you.		
Life Satisfaction	How often you feel content and optimistic about the future.	When you are at school it is not often that you feel bored and you always feel energetic. You enjoy things all the time, you always feel excited by lots of things and you often feel there is lots to look forward to.		
Negative Emotions	How often you feel worried, stressed, and/or personal sadness.	When you are at school you are not often worried, it is not often that you feel miserable, you don't often feel sad and you don't generally feel stressed.		
Remember that no matter how you are feeling at the moment about any aspect of your personal wellbeing, things can change. You can grow in confidence, build stronger relationships with friends and teachers, enjoy school more or less at different times of the year, and our emotions change day-to-day.				
If you feel worried or upset about any area of your wellbeing, it is important that you talk to an adult you trust (like a teacher, parent or carer) about how you are feeling.				

# The reports

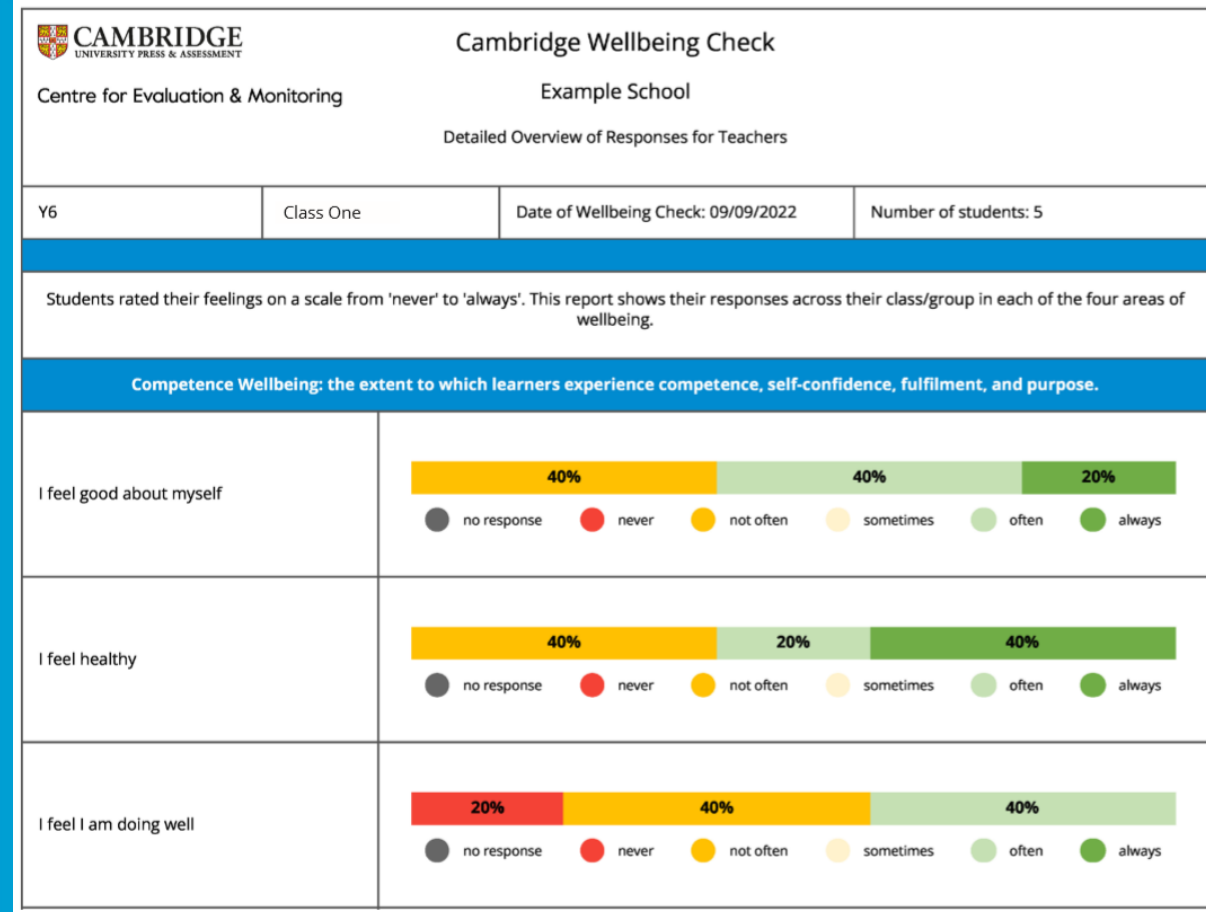
- **Individual student response report** details responses to each question in the check.
- Responses of most concern are highlighted. The most common responses to each question from the group are shown for comparison.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT		Cambridge Wellbeing Check			
Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring		Example School			
		Individual Student Response Report for Teachers			
Isaac Icecream	17 March 2011	Y7	Class Two	Date of Wellbeing Check: 09/09/2022	
How the student answered the questions. The response to each question is shown by a ✓ Areas of concern are highlighted in red.					
	never	not often	sometimes	often	always
Competence Wellbeing: the extent to which learners experience competence, self-confidence, fulfilment, and purpose.					
I feel good about myself		✓			
I feel healthy			✓		
I feel I am doing well		✓			
I feel confident	✓				
I feel I can deal with problems			✓		



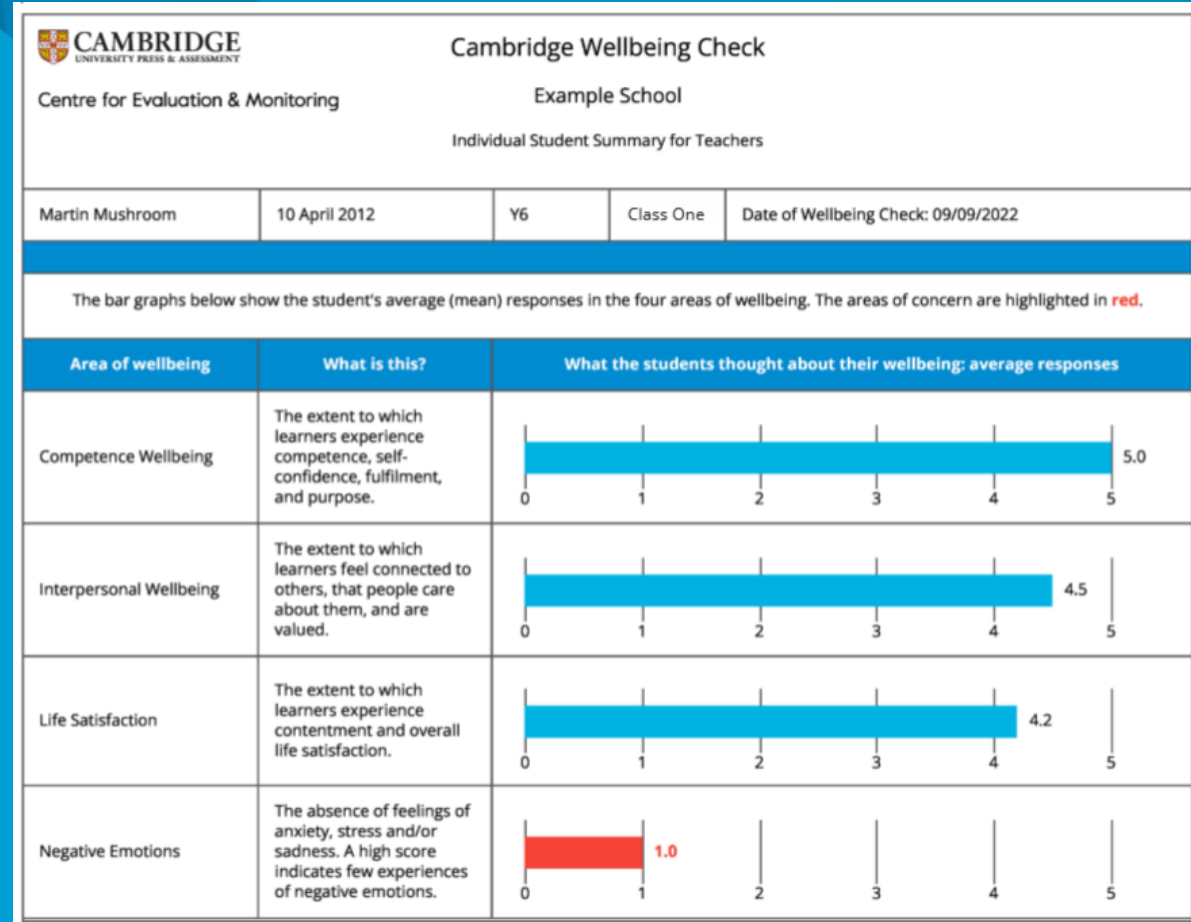
# The reports

- **Detailed overview of responses** showing how the group responded to each question. It shows the percentage of students who chose each response option.



# The reports

- **Individual student summary report** showing an individual student's mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing.



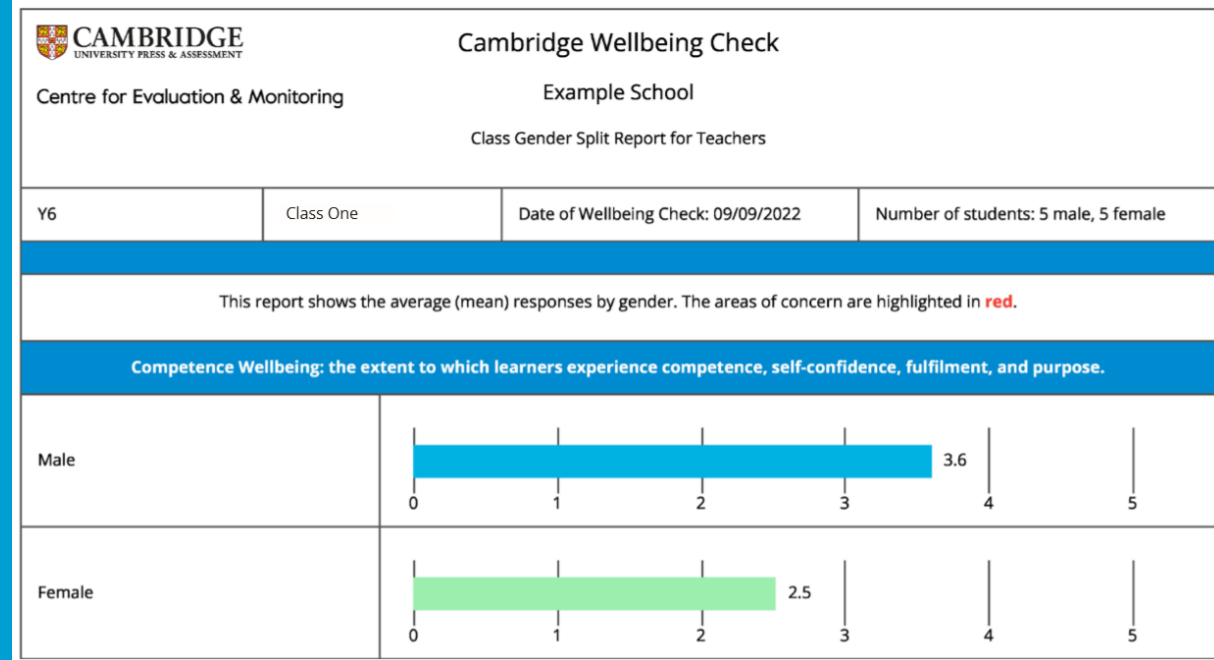
# The reports

- **Confidential group overview for teachers** showing for the class/year group the mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing, for each student in the group.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT		Cambridge Wellbeing Check			
Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring		Example School			
Confidential Group Overview for Teachers					
Y6	Class One	Date of Wellbeing Check: 09/09/2022		Number of students: 12	
Students rated their feelings on scales from 1 to 5. The data below show the average (mean) response for every student in each area of wellbeing. A high score indicates few experiences of negative emotions. The areas of concern are highlighted in red.					
Name	Gender	Competence Wellbeing	Interpersonal Wellbeing	Life Satisfaction	Negative Emotions
Abdul Apple	m	3.0	3.6	3.8	4.3
Harriet Honey	f	1.4	2.4	2.2	2.3
Lucy Lollipop	f	4.2	4.8	4.6	4.0
Ola Onion	f	2.0	3.3	2.8	3.8
Pat Pumpkin	m	4.0	4.0	4.6	4.3

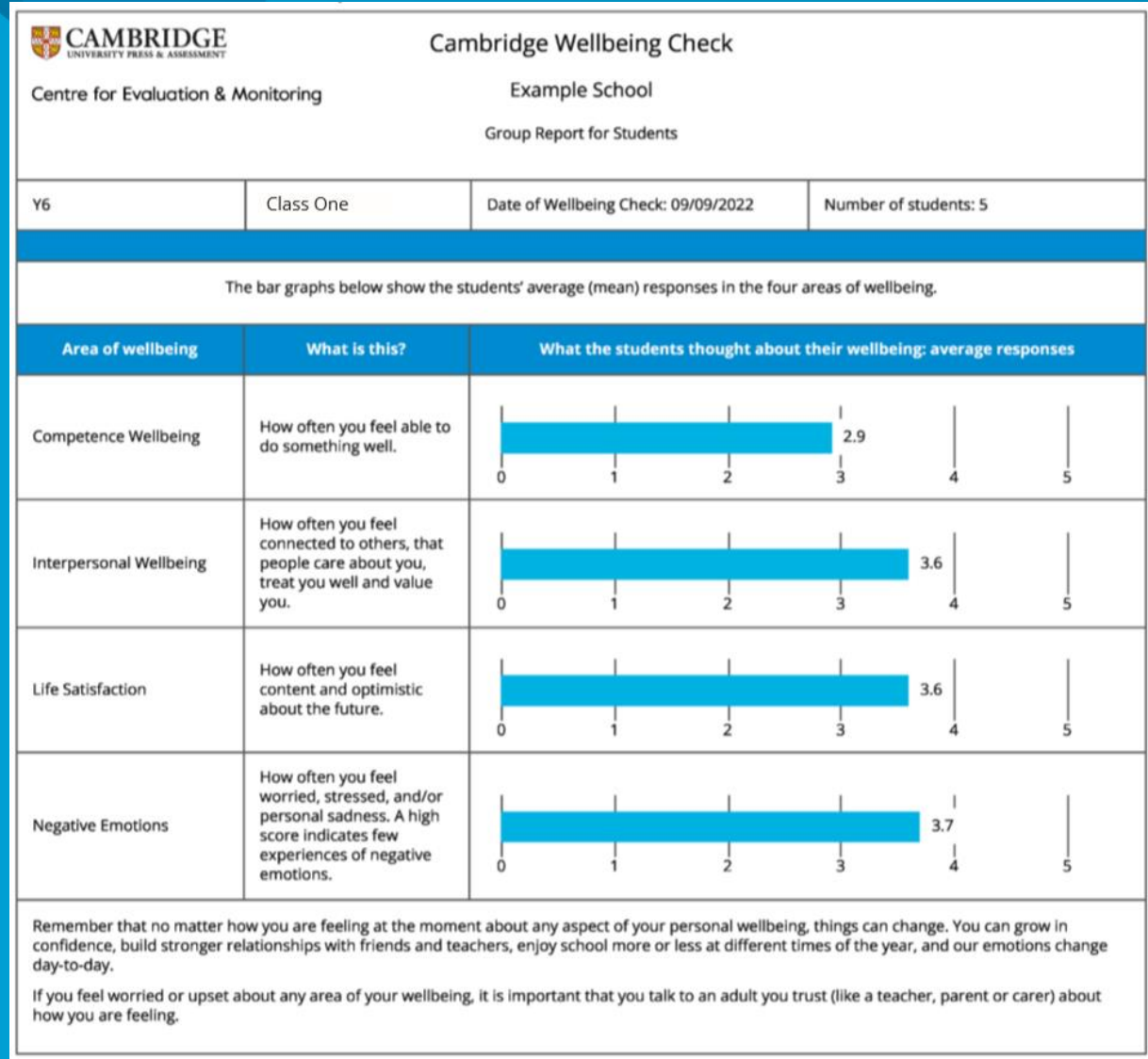
# The reports

- **Class Gender Split Report for Teachers** showing the mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing, for male and female students in the group.



# The reports

- **Group report for students** showing the groups mean (average) scores in each of the four areas of wellbeing.



# Lesson plans

Pre- and post- check lesson plans for each of:

- Lower Primary (ages 7 – 9) - lower Key Stage 2
- Upper Primary (ages 9 – 11) - upper Key Stage 2
- Lower Secondary (ages 11 – 14 ) - Key Stage 3
- Upper Secondary (ages 14 – 16) - Key Stage 4

## 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 guidance<sup>1</sup>

##### 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 space<sup>2</sup>.

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.

<sup>1</sup> 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, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from the PSHE Association (2009) 'Teacher guidance: teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing'

# Guidance and support



Full guidance to set up and use the assessments



Access to the CEM customer support team by phone and email



Online support hub



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