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Conceptualising Child Wellbeing: A case study in a Hong Kong private school

Stephanie Howdle-Lang

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

University of Bath

Department of Education

July 2022

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Stephanie Howdle-Lang

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I am the author of this thesis, and the work described therein was carried out by me.

Stephanie Howdle-Lang

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Dedication

For my beloved late husband, Paul Howdle-Lang,
who always believed I would do this one day.

He would have taken enormous delight in being, once again, right.

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Abstract

Research in Hong Kong has revealed low levels of child wellbeing (CWB), but has been largely conducted with children over the age of 10 using self-reported responses to adult assigned indicators. There is, to my knowledge, no qualitative research that has taken account of how younger children conceptualise wellbeing. This study addressed the lacuna in child standpoint research (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016) into conceptualisations of CWB in Hong Kong.

A case study was undertaken in one Hong Kong private school, using Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of human development. In exploring the context of the case study school, the macrosystem of societal norms privileged in a globalised, neoliberal hegemony was explored through policy analysis. In the school, an empirical study employed a Mosaic approach. Children generated data in the form of photographs, writing, discussions and drawings, analysed the data and constructed their own conceptualisations of wellbeing based on what they found.

At policy context level, the conceptualisation of wellbeing was found to broadly align with a focus on individual wellbeing. The documentation indicated the devolution of responsibility for CWB from governmental level, first to schools and then to individuals. Children were found to be represented as adults-in-waiting and the schools' role was implied to make children responsible for their own wellbeing conforming to a neoliberal market-driven economy.

Children's conceptualisations of wellbeing had some points of resonance with policy understandings, with evidence of children accepting responsibility for their own wellbeing. There was a dissonance, however, as children also perceived wellbeing to be community-based and all aspects of it to be interconnected.

This study contributes to global research into how children understand wellbeing and provides possible approaches for engaging young children in data collection and analysis, thus privileging, above all, their voices.

List of Abbreviations

ATL	Approaches to Learning (International Baccalaureate)
BPNT	Basic Psychological Needs Theory
CP	Career Programme (International Baccalaureate)
CUWB	Children's Understanding of Well-being (project)
CWB	Child Wellbeing
DP	Diploma Programme
DSM-V	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)
EAs	Educational Assistants
EDB	Education Bureau (of Hong Kong)
HK	Hong Kong
IB	International Baccalaureate
IBLP	IB Learner Profile
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCWeB	International Survey of Children's Well-Being
MYP	Middle Years Programme (International Baccalaureate)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PERMA	Wellbeing Theory: Positive Emotions; Environment; Positive Relationships; Meaning; Accomplishment
PPCT	Person-Process-Context-Time bioecological model of human development
PWB	Psychological Wellbeing
PYP	Primary Years Programme (International Baccalaureate)
RQs	Research Questions
RWB	Relational Wellbeing Theory
SAR	Special Administrative Region (of People's Republic of China)
SDT	Self Determination Theory
SWB	Subjective Wellbeing
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VP	Vice Principal
WPR	What's the Problem Represented to Be

Chapter 1: Introduction, background and context

1.1 Rationale and focus

Wellbeing has been a topic of interest for those attempting to understand the nature of human existence for millennia. Historically, wellbeing has sometimes been defined as different from happiness and sometimes as intrinsically linked with it (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016). It has been mobilised in different discourses, disciplines and fields, including psychology, health, self-help, politics, economics, education, child development and human geography (Camfield, Streuli and Woodhead, 2009; Soutter, A.K., Gilmore and O'Steen, 2010; Soutter, A., Steen and Gilmore, 2014; White, 2015, 2017). However, a universal definition of wellbeing does not exist beyond a broad application of the construct referring to a good quality of life. Even the approach to assessing quality of life varies, including the possibility of subjective report, consideration of external indicators or a combination of methods. Despite the difficulties of arriving at a consensus on defining and measuring wellbeing, the concept emerges in policy and research as important for both economic and sociological reasons and relevant to both the present lived experience and the future capacity of individuals to exist in and contribute to society. Perhaps because of its perceived role in constructing self-sustaining individuals, the importance of wellbeing has been elevated in recent years, contributing to an increased emphasis worldwide on the role that schools assume concerning children's wellbeing.

Wellbeing is often studied as part of the field of psychology. In recent years there has been a shift from the pathological approach to psychology to the currently popular positive psychology approach (Brown and Dixon, 2020). This was closely accompanied by a shift in educational policy across the developed world as global values and norms began to influence policy making. Policy and practice in schools were previously focused on the pathologies of individual students and ameliorating them, which rested heavily on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-V). The move was towards a 'salutogenic approach' (Weare, 2010, p.25): a broader-ranging, whole school approach with the intention of improving all students' wellbeing and mental health, regardless of their starting point.

Notwithstanding the associated difficulties of agreed definitions, and approaches to measurement, children in Hong Kong (HK) are consistently found to have low levels of

wellbeing (see, for example, Lau and Kühner, 2020; Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2021; Save the Children, 2021). However, research into child wellbeing (hereafter CWB) in HK has usually been undertaken with children aged 10 and over, with results collected through tools including questionnaires and surveys. Consequently, the findings reflected the perspective and purpose of the researchers who selected the indicators and constructed the tools. Children have been unable to share their viewpoints or comment on the relevance of adult chosen indicators.

In recent years, the sociology of childhood has shifted from considering children as adults-in-waiting to situating them as social actors in their own right (Christensen and Prout, 2005; Ben-Arieh and Kosher, 2019). CWB research globally has developed significantly, with researchers working to address the deficit in child standpoint research in CWB (see, for example, Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016; Moore and Lynch, 2018; Fane et al., 2020; Fattore, Fegter and Hunner-Kreisel, 2021). Research challenges with children are often attributed to the language and cognitive ability of the subjects, as well as to logistical difficulties in the process (Ben-Arieh and Frønes, 2007a; Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson, 2007; OECD, 2009; Fane et al., 2020). With the shift in theoretical perspective, innovative methods have been trialled to address these challenges.

Context is important when considering wellbeing (White, 2015, 2017). Large-scale survey instruments such as the International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB) (Rees et al., 2020) have contributed significant knowledge to the field, as it is important to consider the impact of wide-ranging influences at national and global levels. However, large-scale quantitative studies do not give the depth of understanding of context that small-scale, qualitative research can bring (Ben-Arieh, 2021). The project *Children's Understandings of Well-being – global and local Contexts* (Children's Understandings of Well-being, 2019) has been attempting to address this gap with the numerous research projects conducted using its protocol. There is a place for large-scale and small-scale research in this field.

My role in supporting student wellbeing in an HK private school system has involved working with children at every stage of wellbeing, from young children with suicidal ideation to those who are flourishing and every stage in between. I have become more

aware of the lacuna in CWB research in HK, where children below the age of 10 are not engaged in research into their wellbeing or their perspectives on it.

My focus for the study was to engage children aged 4 – 10 in research into their conceptualisations of wellbeing. I took account of both the local and global context in a case study based in HK. My intention was not to replicate the many studies in HK into the level of CWB. Instead, my intention was to address the more fundamental question of how children in one HK private school understood wellbeing and to consider the implications of this on schools' policy and practice.

1.2 Context and background

This study took place in a private school in HK, which is known as Horizon School for this study. The empirical research was conducted in Autumn 2021. An explanation of the context of HK and the world at the time the study was undertaken is relevant, as contemporary events have implications for the study. Equally important is some background about this type of school and its drivers to contextualise the research and enable readers to consider the transferability of the empirical method.

1.2.1 Context of Hong Kong

Political uncertainty

HK, originally a British Colony, was formally returned to the People's Republic of China in 1997 and has since operated under the "one country, two systems" model of government. Under this model, as a Special Administrative Region (SAR), it retained limited autonomy defined by the Basic Law, including different legal processes from the rest of China. In February 2019, the HK government proposed a bill that would enable the extradition of suspected criminals to the Chinese mainland to face trial. In June 2019, as the bill was due to come into force, mass protests took place in HK, with an estimated 1 million of the city's 7.5 million population on the streets (Mathews, 2020). The protests continued and escalated through 2019, with acts associated with the social unrest resulting in business and school closures for two weeks in November 2019. Generally, the population aligned with either the protesters or the establishment. The distrust and antipathy between the two factions manifested in social groups, families and work settings (Chow, 2019; Law, 2019; Ng, R.M.K., 2020). Members of the police force were seen as allied with the establishment. Horizon School, which included children from

police families, witnessed children playing “protesters and police” in the playground, while outside the school, bills were posted advocating active discrimination against children whose parents were police officers.

Throughout HK, there was an increase in emigration linked to the uncertainty and instability in HK (Keegan, 2019; Yau, 2019). An economic downturn resulted in financial concerns, reduced wages and staff redundancies which contributed to a significant drop in the overall wellbeing of the population (Ng, R.M.K., 2020; Shek, 2020).

Pandemic

As the political landscape evolved, the COVID-19 pandemic began to emerge. The first case was reported in HK in January 2020. This resulted in the immediate closure of all schools. School closures continued sporadically throughout the 2020–22 academic years, with most students receiving less than six weeks of in-person schooling from February 2020–March 2021. At Horizon School, in-person teaching was replaced with online teaching, yet access to education and socialisation opportunities were limited by campus closure and other social distancing measures implemented by the government.

There was no complete and government enforced lockdown in HK, as in other countries, yet agency was removed from many students by parent-imposed lockdowns, exacerbated by the work-from-home requirement for many government and business employees. This lack of autonomy affected both adult and child wellbeing as they were restricted in their ability to impact their situation (Behzadnia and FatahModares, 2020; Cantarero, van Tilburg and Smoktunowicz, 2020). Children’s freedom was limited, and they were even less able to play outside the home than during the protests. Children require non-verbal cues on how to manage their emotions from the adults around them (WHO, 2020) and were therefore likely to have experienced the same sense of concern, loneliness, anxiety and low mood as their parents and carers.

Children, their parents and schools had to find new ways of working under rules introduced for health reasons. Face masks, ruled illegal in HK in 2019, became compulsory when outside the home. The obligatory wearing of masks contributed to the sense of disconnection from society as the ability to read facial expressions was reduced, and relatedness and social connection were limited.

Summary

The combined effect of the evolving political landscape and the response to the pandemic had a significant influence on the base level of wellbeing of adults and children in HK. Trust in the government broke down, and trust between groups and members of the population was eroded. Physical distancing, mask-wearing, work-from-home regulations and school closures all contributed to a reduction in relationship building and social interaction. Fear and anxiety over potential violence linked to the protests and health concerns grew, resulting in a wary and uncertain community. The backdrop to these events, on a larger scale, was a political hegemony that focused the responsibility for each member of society away from community and government and onto individuals. The growth and prevalence of a neoliberal hegemony is particularly relevant as a context that shaped the impacts of these events.

1.2.2 Neoliberalism and globalisation

The broader, global backdrop to this study was an established neoliberal hegemony operating at all levels of society. Neoliberalism can be viewed as an approach to economics, politics, policy-making and market forces, and simultaneously as a manifestation of culture in the individual psyche, a change in our ways of perceiving and responding to the world we live in (Ball, 2016a; Rodgers, 2018). Ball (2016a, p.1046) disaggregated between neoliberalism with a lower-case *n* as being related to identity and personal interactions, and the economic policy of the capitalised Neoliberalism: the ideology operates both as a form of institutional governance as well as upon subjects' motivations, interactions, performances and outcomes (see Rose, 1990). International economic and political think tanks and agencies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) supported and promoted the promulgation of Neoliberal ideals in their recommendations, policies and direction (Davies and Bansel, 2007; Ball, 2016a; Lee, 2020).

A vital feature of a Neoliberal market economy is the “responsibilisation” of individuals – the relocation of responsibility from the state and onto the individual, including the responsibility for societal wellbeing (Wright, 2012; Juhila and Raitakari, 2016; Keddie, 2016; Juhila, Raitakari and Hall, 2017). Following this logic, children’s future wellbeing and employability are conflated (Duffy, 2017). Furthermore, Neoliberal subjects are

reconfigured, through technologies, apparatus and knowledge, to perceive themselves as a commodity to be developed and maintained for the common economic good (Davies and Bansel, 2007; Rodgers, 2018). An example of how this manifests in society and operates in governmental policy-making can be seen in the 'Learning through Life' reform (Hong Kong, 2000). The reform of the HK education system was published in 2000 and summarised in this document of recommendations. The recommendations were adopted, and implementation began shortly after publication. As part of the process of creating this document, the Education Commission in HK consulted with members of the public to write an aim for education for the 21st Century. The concluding phrase stated that students would become people "willing to put forward continuing effort for the progress, freedom and democracy of their society and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large." (Hong Kong, 2000, p.4). There are three points to draw out from this. The first is how students were constructed as having responsibility for the growth and development of the society in which they live: this complies with the neoliberal notion of relieving the state of responsibility and placing it in the hands of individuals. The second and related point is how children were constructed for what they would become rather than what they currently were. Both these points form a central part of the government's stance on education in HK. The third point to note is that this statement was agreed upon with members of the public. That this statement emerged from a consultative process indicates how widespread the neoliberal ethic is in HK.

1.2.3 Wellbeing in schools in a globalised neoliberal society

The pervasiveness of the neoliberal discourse throughout economics and governments across the globe is specifically relevant to a consideration of schools because it forms part of the overarching climate in which schools exist. Schools are positioned as part of a free market, or a quasi-market (Ng, V., 2012, p.125) in which parents have the choice of educational establishment for their child, although those choices are not necessarily wholly based on educational criteria (hence the term quasi-market). At a governance level, under a Neoliberal model of education, decisions are made by or for schools to form a productive and self-regulating workforce (Connell, 2013). One impact on schools of the growth of neoliberalism is the increasing variety of types of schools available, including the differentiation in their governance and aims. This is replicated in HK (Chang and McLaren, 2018).

The neoliberal hegemony, closely associated with globalisation, significantly influences how wellbeing is inculcated into varying discourses, how it is understood and mobilised. Following a neoliberal ethic, educational institutions are one mechanism by which individuals assume responsibility for their own wellbeing. Schools perceive that they need to address wellbeing to help children to learn; neoliberalism requires schools to encourage children to assume responsibility for their own wellbeing; a society operating following a neoliberal ethic will promote the individual assumption of that responsibility for the benefit of the nation in the first instance, and then more globally.

Despite a continued trend towards globalisation, national governments largely retain and often extend control of the education system for their own countries, purposefully creating future citizens and workers for their own nations (Green, 2006). However, neoliberalism and globalisation have engendered a globally mobile, affluent middle class who, operating within the quasi-market of education, seek opportunities for their children. When they are able to do so, parents living outside of their passport countries seek to send their children to schools identifying as “international” (MacKenzie, 2010; Ng, V., 2012). Several studies have been undertaken researching why local parents (with the requisite capital) may select an international school for their child. It is recognised that categorising parents as “local” can be problematic and frequently inaccurate. For example, MacKenzie (2010, p.108) noted that many students in international schools come from bicultural families, perhaps with one parent from the host country and one not.

Furthermore, expatriates may be long-term residents of the country. For example, in HK, Private Independent Schools (PIS) were set up to serve “primarily the demand for school places from local families seeking an alternative to public sector schools” (Hong Kong, 2020f). This was seen to be achieved by mandating that the percentage of Permanent Residents (PR) who formed the student body did not fall below 70%. However, Permanent Residency could be applied for after seven years of visa-related residence in the city and did not require the applicant to relinquish their original citizenship or passport. For the purpose of setting up PIS, the government considered PR holders as local, but based on passport and country of origin they may not have been.

Reviewing the published literature on why “local” parents send their children to international schools, MacKenzie (2010) identified eight common factors that impacted

parents' decision-making process. Of particular interest for this study is that one of the factors was “the affective dimension”, or an indefinable sense of the feeling of a school (Bowe, Gewirtz and Ball, 1994). According to MacKenzie (2010) and Ng, V. (2012), the sense that children would be happy in a school was a key aspect of the affective dimension for parents. Child wellbeing was a contributing factor in parents’ choice of school. Local, affluent parents selected international schools for their children for various reasons, including wellbeing.

1.2.4 Horizon School in context

Like many schools in HK, Horizon School marketed itself as international, offering a non-local curriculum. This is often considered one of the features of an international school (Hayden and Thompson, 2013; Bunnell, Fertig and James, 2017; Wigford and Higgins, 2019). In the case of Horizon School and many similar schools in HK this non-local curriculum was informed by the International Baccalaureate (IB) (Chang and McLaren, 2018). The IB was widespread in HK, as demonstrated in the review of the educational landscape in HK I conducted (Appendix 1).

The IB acknowledged that it privileged a Western individualist approach (Walker, 2010), yet HK was generally recognised as a culture that embraced collectivism over individualism (Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede Insights, 2022). HK, however, acted as a bridge between Eastern and Western thought (Chang and McLaren, 2018), with aspects of both individualism and collectivism evident in the culture (Lam, G. and Yeung, 2017). The widespread implementation of the IB framework in many HK private schools and some government-funded schools indicated this diversity in HK.

Horizon School mirrored this bridging role. Although over 90% of its students were listed as Permanent Residents of HK, only 65% identified as Hong Kong (Chinese), and of these 6% held a foreign passport, mainly from Western countries, predominantly Canada. Despite Hofstede’s assertion, individualism and collectivism were not easily distinguished in HK in general and in Horizon School specifically, because of the presence of and interaction between different cultures both in mass media and personal exchanges (Lam, G. and Yeung, 2017). Furthermore, as Leung and Bond (2014) pointed out, the social axioms of a country are not necessarily reflected in an individual. It is still worthy of note that the students at Horizon School were operating in and, primarily, of a culture that was more collectivist than individualist, at a time when pressures had been brought to bear on

that collectivism by the breakdown of trust between the establishment and the population.

Operating in an educational environment driven by neoliberal market forces, Horizon School and the umbrella organisation it was part of placed a high value on wellbeing. The school used both its own framework for wellbeing and aspects of the IB programmes it delivered to exemplify this commitment.

In this chapter, I have set the context for the following study by outlining the socio-historical events in HK and their potential impact on wellbeing. This included positioning Horizon School in the neoliberal quasi-market for education, seeking to promote wellbeing and inherently involved in producing a self-regulating workforce.

1.3 Research questions

In reviewing the literature, I noted a dearth of child standpoint wellbeing research in HK alongside a proliferation of theories and frameworks defining and conceptualising wellbeing in general and, more recently, CWB specifically. To address the emerging gap between the theoretical and practical for HK children, I therefore addressed these research questions in the study:

- RQ1 How is child wellbeing presented in policies and guidance at the local, national and international levels?
- RQ2 How do children in one private school in HK conceptualise child wellbeing?
- RQ3 What are the points of resonance and dissonance in these understandings of child wellbeing, and what are the associated implications for policy and practice?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two constitutes a literature review exploring wellbeing generally and CWB specifically. I consider the different paradigms that have emerged in the study of wellbeing before using a bioecological model of human development as a framework to consider the various facets of three theories of wellbeing. CWB is situated in the literature with a review of recent research in the field and a reflection on how it compares to the theories of wellbeing already explored. Wellbeing is considered on a continuum from individual to interdependent. Finally, the preceding discussion is

synthesised into a framework for research in CWB in schools using the bioecological model as a lens.

Chapter Three describes how empirical research was designed to address RQ1 and 2. I explain the two phases of the research and the methodologies adopted within each. I give a rationale for the choice of research methodologies and address issues of ethics, power imbalance and trustworthiness while maintaining integrity in research with children.

Chapter Four is divided into three parts. The three parts present and analyse the findings from the research. RQ1 is addressed in the first and second parts of the chapter. Here, the findings from the analysis of governmental guidance and research into organisational level expectations are presented and compared. The final part of the chapter presents the findings of children's lived experience and understanding of CWB, thus addressing RQ2.

Chapter Five synthesises and compares the findings using the continuum presented in Chapter Two. The varying conceptualisations of wellbeing as individual, interactional and interdependent are examined. Points of resonance and dissonance are presented, and the findings are discussed in relation to the theories introduced in Chapter Two.

The thesis ends with Chapter Six, in which I suggest the contribution to knowledge made by the study. I take the opportunity to discuss the study's limitations and the possibilities for transferability and extension of research. I finish the thesis with my thoughts on creating wellbeing cultures in schools.

Chapter 2: Literature review

I divide this chapter into three parts. First, I consider the history of the study of wellbeing before comparing and contrasting three theories of wellbeing using a bioecological model of human development. I end this section by summarising the dichotomies of the concept of wellbeing unearthed in the literature and presenting a working definition for the purpose of the research.

In the second part of the chapter, I situate CWB in the literature. I compare recent research into CWB to the synthesis of the theories of wellbeing using the bioecological model, considering the ways that CWB may be measured.

In the final part of the chapter, I synthesise the previous two sections to present a framework for considering CWB in schools. The framework is based on Bronfenbrenner's model and expanded with *a priori* codes for the data analysis.

2.1 Wellbeing theories: moving away from a binary understanding

Wellbeing as a concept has been evident in philosophical, academic and psychological traditions for thousands of years. As would be expected with such a thoroughly examined construct, it has been defined in many ways as it has been woven historically through multiple disciplines and discourses.

2.1.1 Subjective Wellbeing and Psychological Wellbeing

Two schools of thought around wellbeing emerged in Greek philosophy: hedonism and eudemonia. Hedonism is often associated with the modern psychological construct of Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) and eudemonia with Psychological Wellbeing (PWB).

Associated with a hedonic paradigm, focusing on happiness and a pleasant life, SWB relies on a relatively straightforward method of determining life satisfaction for individuals using a scale or simple questionnaire (Ryan and Deci, 2017; White, 2017). SWB uses self-report to measure levels of wellbeing through three components – the presence of positive mood, life satisfaction and the absence of negative mood (Ryan and Deci, 2001; Chen et al., 2012; Dinisman and Ben-Arieh, 2015). When responding to SWB surveys, respondents rank their satisfaction level with their own lives (White, 2017). In a neoliberal society which places the responsibility for success in life on the individual,

respondents are essentially asked to rank their own level of success in creating a life in which they take joy.

PWB represents another approach to understanding wellbeing (Chen et al., 2012). In contrast to SWB, PWB focuses on eudemonic wellbeing or the pursuit of a meaningful and fulfilled life, alternatively termed functioning well (Seligman, 2007) or positive functioning (Waterman, 1993). Although eudemonia and hedonism are often seen as different paradigms, Waterman (1993) empirically demonstrated that the two paradigms correlated, each representing a different aspect of wellbeing that coexisted: eudemonia is linked with utilising skills and being challenged, whereas hedonic pleasure derives from activities that involve being relaxed and not facing problems that required solving. Seligman's (2011) Wellbeing Theory (PERMA), focused on the wellbeing of the individual, combined SWB and PWB, acknowledging the place of hedonic happiness alongside the pursuit of meaning. In the book detailing the theory, he set out the aim that 51% of the global population should be "flourishing" by 2051 (Seligman, 2011, p.240).

The concept of wellbeing is often shaped by its measurement. The choice of indicators, selection of assessment means, and decision about which wellbeing outcomes are under scrutiny indicates what is guiding the research and what the researcher believes about wellbeing. Both SWB and PWB are measured by self-report. Ryff (1989) refers to the measurement undertaken in developing her Theory-Guided Dimensions of Wellbeing as structured self-report, based on a series of pre-defined indicators. The approach of pre-defining indicators in both SWB and PWB studies is common (see, for example, Ryff, 1989; Ryff and Keyes, 1995; Ryan and Deci, 2001; Peterson, 2004; Ryan and Deci, 2017; OECD, 2020b), and exploring the indicators gives further insight into the way that wellbeing is conceptualised. Table 2.1 summarises the key components of four wellbeing theories that draw on both PWB and SWB paradigms, leaning more towards PWB. These four theories designated aspects of wellbeing drawn from theoretical and empirical knowledge bases.

The nature of the evolution of theory is that of building on precedence, drawing from other theories in development. This can be seen in the evolution of theories of wellbeing. For example, Ryff and Keyes (1995) presented a multidimensional approach to measuring psychological wellbeing guided by the amalgamation of several preceding theories. Six aspects of positive functioning were outlined: self-acceptance, mastery, positive

relationships, life purpose, personal growth and autonomy. Ryan and Deci (2001) recognised the contribution of Ryff's work to the evolution of their theory, while Seligman (2011) acknowledged Huppert's (2009b) significant contribution to his work.

Table 2.1 Summary of components of Psychological Wellbeing Theories

Theory	Theory-Guided Dimensions of Wellbeing	Flourishing	Self Determination Theory	Wellbeing Theory (PERMA)
Author/s Reference	<i>Ryff (1989); Ryff and Keyes (1995)</i>	<i>(Huppert, 2009b; Huppert and So, 2013)</i>	<i>Ryan and Deci (2001, 2017)</i>	<i>Seligman (2011)</i>
	Indicators	Indicators	Factor	Factor
Aspects of wellbeing	Personal growth	Self-esteem		Accomplishment
	Autonomy		Autonomy	
	Positive relations with others	Positive relationships	Relatedness	Relationships
	Environmental Mastery	Competence	Competence	
		Positive emotion Engagement		Positive emotion Engagement
	Purpose in life	Meaning		Meaning
	Self-acceptance	Emotional stability Optimism Resilience		
		Vitality		

In this representation of wellbeing theories, the first two shaded columns include approaches to understanding wellbeing that were definitional in their nature. The components of these frameworks were styled as indicators. Conversely, Ryan and Deci (2001) pointed out that in SDT, the basic psychological needs that they identified (autonomy, relatedness and competence) promoted wellbeing rather than defining it. They also suggested a range of indicators of wellbeing that were separate from these three basic needs (Ryan and Deci, 2001, 2017) which will be reviewed in more depth later in the chapter. Similarly, Seligman (2011) noted that wellbeing was a construct rather than a tangible, measurable entity. Although the five elements of Wellbeing Theory shown can be measured, they are contributory factors to wellbeing, promoting it rather

than defining it. When the elements shown in the table are compared, it can be seen that linking factors exist between them. They affect individual wellbeing, and these theories form part of the group named “personal wellbeing” by White (2017).

The content has been arranged in Table 2.1 to show where there is convergence between the theories explored. The theories represent hedonic and eudemonic paradigms in their selected indicators or factors. For example, *Positive emotion* and *Engagement* from PERMA have been linked because they are the only two aspects assessed subjectively (Seligman, 2011, p.16) and are therefore placed in the same row as the hedonistic construct of *Enjoyment* from Griffin (1986). Engagement is also assessed subjectively and characterised by experiencing a flow state defined by Csikszentmihalyi (2014). For Csikszentmihalyi, flow was experienced by being utterly lost in an activity, losing track of time and external factors. Waterman (1993) equated the flow state with what he termed “personal expressiveness”, which he asserted was indicative of eudemonic wellbeing rather than hedonic wellbeing. However, this aspect of wellbeing is subjectively assessed and usually associated with the hedonic paradigm. Seligman (2011) clarified this by explaining that positive emotions are subjectively evaluated in the present moment, while engagement is assessed subjectively in retrospect. These are good examples of how SWB and PWB merge in wellbeing theories.

2.1.2 Wellbeing measurement: subjective and objective

Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) defined a series of binaries for conceptualising wellbeing. One of these binaries framed wellbeing as measured either subjectively, as with SWB and PWB, or objectively. Objective measurement of wellbeing tends towards tangible indicators. Commonly used objective measures of wellbeing are poverty, household income, access to quality education and access to resources (Axford, 2009; OECD, 2009; Camfield, Streuli and Woodhead, 2010; Donnelly et al., 2020). Indicators for these aspects of wellbeing can be externally catalogued, measured and assessed. They are often the indicators used by economists and politicians and frame wellbeing as material.

Although the axis defined by Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) situated subjective and objective as a binary concept, the reality is more complex. Subjective measurement acknowledges the importance of individual perspectives on wellbeing and can enable context-specific analysis, taking account of particular cultural perspectives. For example, in HK, children often live in small, high-rise apartments with limited access to outdoor

space. The experience of accessing and enjoying play for them would look very different to the ball games and outdoor activities described by children in Australia in research by Fane et al. (2020). Taking a subjective approach to measuring this concept of wellbeing ensures that the child's perspective is considered. An external measure such as access to outdoor space might appear more generalisable and transferable between contexts in terms of what contributes to wellbeing, yet it will not clearly represent how the subject feels about their access to space. Camfield, Streuli and Woodhead (2010) noted that objective and subjective measures could be inherently linked, giving the example of high levels of anxiety, which cannot be measured except by self-report, causing observable physiological symptoms in the sufferer. Similarly, they recognised the emotional importance that could be placed on material objects.

In practical research, objective measures of context (such as income, standards of living, environmental factors and connections to others) are often compared with individuals' self-reported happiness (Janik Blaskova and McLellan, 2018) and researchers draw conclusions about how different aspects of life and different contexts impact on the happiness of individuals and, by extrapolation, whole populations and societies (i.e. Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009; Graham, Comin and Anand, 2018; OECD, 2020b). Comparing objective and subjective measures of wellbeing is often used to inform policy review and decision-making in situations where the wellbeing of a population is the desired outcome.

This synthesis highlights convergence in how wellbeing is understood and measured by researchers in the field. It is not possible or, indeed, desirable to entirely delineate subjective from objective, hedonism from eudemonia, or SWB from PWB when considering wellbeing.

2.1.3 A bioecological approach to comprehending wellbeing

I used Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development as an organiser to establish points of resonance and dissonance in how wellbeing is presented in the literature. Bronfenbrenner's work is arguably the most comprehensive and widely used framework for integrating contextual influences with psychological processes. I chose to use Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development in its evolved form (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). This extends beyond the understanding and exploration of *contexts* often perceived as the focus of the earliest iteration (Rosa and

Tudge, 2013). Several studies use or suggest Bronfenbrenner's *contexts* to organise an understanding of the different spheres in which wellbeing is impacted or evolves (see, for example, Amerijckx and Humblet, 2014; Soutter, A., Steen and Gilmore, 2014; Janik Blaskova and McLellan, 2018; Brockevelt et al., 2019; Halliday, 2019; Wigford and Higgins, 2019). Context is important when considering wellbeing in education, and the *context* aspect of the model is suitable for understanding the spheres of influence on the wellbeing of both individuals and communities. However, although the understanding of context is useful, wellbeing theories can be viewed through the lens of each part of Bronfenbrenner's evolved model. Therefore, I have considered this iteration most valuable to use.

PPCT is the acronym used for the four interrelated elements of Bronfenbrenner's evolved model: 1) *proximal process* which are the interactions between an individual and their immediate environment and which are the driving force of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1999; Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006); 2) the individual *person* at the heart of the model, with their attendant biological and psychological characteristics; 3) the *contexts* in which human development takes place, from immediate (microsystems) to distant (macrosystems); and 4) *time* which includes personal chronology as well as a familial and socio-historical perspective.

The *proximal processes*, a central part of Bronfenbrenner's model, can be seen in the interventions of psychological approaches to developing wellbeing as attempts to impact the wellbeing development of the *person* at the centre. Using an earlier model which did not place the same focus on *proximal processes* would negate the ability to make this comparison.

Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner's model recognises the importance of relationships for the developing human being (Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006; Janik Blaskova and McLellan, 2018), both in the person's interactions with others and in the relationships within and between *contexts*. A focus on relationships resonates with all the models and theories of wellbeing considered. Overall, it is the whole model that presents a valuable and revealing tool for comparison.

The PPCT bioecological perspective is complex, simultaneously focusing on the role of the individual, their contexts and interactions between contexts, people and objects over

time (Eriksson, Ghazinour and Hammarström, 2018). It is well suited to considering the multifaceted conceptualisations of wellbeing in the literature. Employing the PPCT framework as a lens in the literature review aligned with the selection of a case study approach in the empirical research. The complexity of a matrix of influences on human development indicated by the bioecological viewpoint supports a study that privileges the potential for a wide variety of interwoven factors and influences that contribute to understandings of wellbeing.

2.1.4 Three theories of wellbeing

To understand how CWB is conceptualised, I first analysed wellbeing theory and then applied the insights from this to research linked to wellbeing. In this way, I applied general wellbeing theory to CWB research in particular, enabling an examination of the unique components of CWB research, distinct from the wider theory. I focused on analysing three theories of wellbeing using the PPCT model: Seligman's Wellbeing Theory (PERMA), Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), with a particular focus on Basic Psychological Needs Theory and White's Relational Wellbeing Theory (RWB). As previously indicated, PERMA and SDT were developed from preceding work in the field and combined elements of PWB and SWB. Both theories are commonly used when applying wellbeing in education and represent the evolving literature in wellbeing and positive psychology.

PERMA was the grounding theory for the first explorations of embedding wellbeing in schools – what has become known as “positive education” (Norrish, Williams and O'Connor, 2013; Norrish, 2015; Seligman, 2017), and has been used in other research into wellbeing in schools (see, for example, Gilani, 2015; Kern et al., 2015; Lambert D'raven, 2016). Self Determination Theory has also been commonly used in educational models of wellbeing (Robinson, P., 2016; Street, H., 2018). Like PERMA, it represented an approach to understanding wellbeing that related to the factors that contributed to it rather than the indicators that defined it. RWB contrasts with the more traditional ways of seeing wellbeing as measurable in either individuals or societies through a series of indicators. It is not yet commonly used in schools, and it has been included in this comparison for the divergence it brings in perception.

Wellbeing Theory: PERMA

PERMA was developed from Authentic Happiness Theory as the representation of the field of positive psychology advanced by Martin Seligman. Positive psychology developed from a much longer history of psychologists looking to promote and develop the positive parts of life, working towards fuller functioning in those members of the population who were not classified as having a mental illness. PERMA brought together several different aspects of the field, including the concept of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014) and the use of character strengths (Peterson, 2004). The five key elements of the theory, as outlined in Table 2.1, are Positive Emotion, Engagement, Meaning, Relationships and Accomplishment. Although often referred to as PERMA, this acronym only reflects the five key components of the theory. It eliminates what Seligman considered to be the factor that underpinned all components – character strengths. PERMA has also formed the basis of many schools' approaches to implementing wellbeing, often called "positive education" (Seligman, 2011; Norrish, Williams and O'Connor, 2013; Kern et al., 2015; Norrish, 2015; Seligman, 2017). Consistently in the literature related to PERMA and positive education, the benefits to academic success are exhorted as a happy by-product of focusing on wellbeing in schools (see, for example, Seligman et al., 2009; Seligman, 2011, 2017). Huppert's indicators of flourishing (Huppert, 2009a; Huppert and So, 2013) were also subsumed into PERMA, and indeed formed the title of the book published to expound on the then-nascent theory.

Self Determination Theory: a macro-theory of motivation

Ryan and Deci's Self Determination Theory is a theory of motivation. SDT comprises six mini theories, the fourth of which is Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT). This proposed that there are three basic psychological needs – competence, autonomy and relatedness. These three needs run throughout SDT and are recognised in Ryff's earlier work on the domains of wellbeing. SDT was initially a theory of motivation, but Ryan and Deci (2017) later recognised that the three basic needs also impacted wellbeing and psychological health (p.21). Ryan and Deci (2017) argued that the satisfaction of the need for competence, the need for autonomy and the need for relatedness is inherent to wellbeing, correlating higher need satisfaction with enhanced wellbeing and higher need frustration with diminished wellbeing. The first proposition of BPNT stated that the satisfaction of the three needs is "essential to optimal development, integrity, and well-being" (p.242).

Relational wellbeing: wellbeing as process and interplay

RWB represents a significantly different viewpoint than PERMA or SDT, as its focus is not the individual but society as a whole. It provides an interesting counterpoint to the more individualistic SDT and PERMA, and its complexity echoes the complexity of the PPCT model. White (2017, 2018) outlined three key themes of RWB. The first was the balance between individual autonomy and the collective group, and the constant ebb and flow of this balance. The second was societal structures – policy, politics, economics and culture, for example. The third and final theme was the natural environment, focusing on the physical context of natural rather than built environments. It represents a departure from the other two theories of wellbeing considered. It sees wellbeing as a process rather than a state of being as it is represented in PWB and SWB theories (White, 2015), and as such, does not include indicators for wellbeing. Epistemologically interpretivist, it recognised the importance of context, noting that understandings of wellbeing are constructed as a result of social and cultural mores, anchored in time and place.

This study sought to establish what wellbeing meant for a particular group of people in a specific place. More importantly, it sought understanding during a time period with a unique conglomeration of influencers on wellbeing. Rather than abstracting from this context, RWB offered the opportunity to embrace it. It is here that the value of RWB lies when considering different ways to conceptualise wellbeing.

2.1.5 Person characteristics: Wellbeing of individuals

In Bronfenbrenner's model, the individual is at the centre. Each person, and those with whom they interact, has unique cognitive, psychological and behavioural characteristics, which Bronfenbrenner labelled as *force* (or *disposition* (Rosa and Tudge, 2013, p.253)), *resource*, and *demand* (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.811). Force characteristics can be generative and influence the development of the individual – for example, a child's willingness to engage with and persist in progressively more complex activities could have a positive effect on their development. Oppositely, they can also be disruptive – for example, shyness might have a detrimental effect as the child will be less likely to engage in *proximal processes* involving interacting with another individual. Resource characteristics include, for example, ability and knowledge. These characteristics extend or limit the ability of the individual to engage in *proximal processes*. Finally, demand characteristics are those characteristics that invite or discourage engagement from others

within the environment. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) gave examples such as a calm or a nervous disposition in a baby.

In Table 2.2, aspects of the three wellbeing theories have been mapped to the *disposition*, *resource* and *demand* characteristics. These are both characteristics of the developing individual and outcomes resulting from *proximal processes* (Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), effectively forming a loop where both feed into each other in the ongoing process of human development. In the table, *dispositions* include both characteristics and outcomes.

In PERMA, wellbeing manifests for the individual in having good relationships, meaning in life, a sense of accomplishment in one's endeavours, engagement with something meaningful and positive emotion. Seligman stated that using character strengths underpins and enhances all aspects of PERMA (2011, p.24), so examples of the character strengths which might support dispositions, resources and demands are also included in the comparison. Seligman asserted that only the elements of positive emotion and engagement are assessed solely subjectively, while relationships, meaning and accomplishment have a measure of external judgement applied to them. Many of these aspects are performative in nature. SDT has a more outward-looking slant to individual development, including engagement with others. Wellbeing is still seen as an individual pursuit but is less performative. Although RWB acknowledges the importance of an individual, in this theory the individual is always considered in relation to others and in the balance between individuality and community. In considering social identity building as means of fostering wellbeing, Brown and Shay (2021) used the RWB ontology to argue for a schooling wellbeing approach of relationship building within and between communities. This use of RWB exemplifies the notion of wellbeing embedded within relationships.

Table 2.2 *How the individual is perceived in wellbeing theories when compared to the person element of the PPCT model*

Bioecological theory of human development	PERMA *indicates that it forms part of the acronym	SDT	RWB
Dispositions <i>i.e. curiosity, persistence, gratification delay, impulsiveness, aggression, apathy</i> Can set proximal processes in motion, encourage or dissuade them.	Individual: - Vitality - Meaning* / purpose - Self-determination - Life satisfaction - Positive Emotion* - Engagement* / interest - Self-esteem - Optimism/ hope - Resilience - Gratitude - Physical health and activity Individuals using their signature character strengths Particularly relevant character strengths: - <i>Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence</i> - <i>Curiosity</i> - <i>Perseverance</i>	Taking an interest in, learning about and mastering inner and outer worlds. Individual: - Vitality and energy - Sense of and concern with meaning - Clarity of purpose - Access to and exercise of human capacity - Integrate inner and outer inputs into coherent actions - Subjectively reported happiness - Low anxiety/ depression symptoms - Less defensiveness - Open, welcoming of novelty, reflective - Awareness - Self-regulation	Individual existing as part of a web of relationships - Open-mindedness Social cohesion (beyond the individual) Collective Shared values Safety and security Relationships to: - Meet needs - Distribute goods Relationships with: - Work - Others - Environment - Something larger than yourself
Resources <i>Ability, experience, knowledge and skill required for proximal processes</i>	Accomplishment* Character strengths i.e. - <i>Judgement</i> - <i>Leadership</i> - <i>Self-regulation</i> - <i>Teamwork</i> - <i>Love of Learning</i>	Development of competence	Cultural connotations Societal processes
Demands <i>Invite or discourage reactions from social environment</i>	Engagement* Positive Emotion* Character strengths i.e. - <i>Social Intelligence</i> - <i>Self-regulation</i>	Development of autonomy	Individuals existing in a balance between autonomy and belonging

The full list of character strengths with definitions written by children at Horizon School can be found in Appendix 4

The importance of relationships

Relationships and relatedness are critical aspects of all three theories. PERMA and SDT differ slightly, as relationships within PERMA are inwardly focused – they look to address

the needs of the individual. In contrast, relatedness in SDT is more considerate of the individual engaging in mutually beneficial relationships with others. It is more outwardly focused in believing that humans are deeply social beings who assimilate and internalise social expectations from their environment. Reciprocity is implicit in this conceptualisation of how relationships and relatedness impact wellbeing. Where Bronfenbrenner's model, PERMA and SDT hold the individual at the centre, however, RWB is distinct in maintaining a focus on the web of relationships within which an individual exists.

In educational contexts, relationships under PERMA might manifest as having a social group of friends and how those relationships affirm the child and contribute to their sense of belonging and hence wellbeing. In SDT, the importance of the group of friends is the mutually beneficial relationships between the children, for example, helping each other out. Relatedness is equally concerned with contributing to others and society and with being supported by others and society (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Through an RWB lens, wellbeing does not manifest in the same way. Individuals exist as part of a web of relationships, and the context of those relationships is highly relevant. Because wellbeing is fluid, outcome-based measurement is not appropriate. Rather, gaining as close an understanding as possible of how people are doing on their own terms will allow the construction of a picture of how wellbeing is emergent in a particular context (White, 2015), such as a school. This picture could then enable inclusive discussion in which the participants, even if they are measuring their own wellbeing, think relationally and decide together on possible areas for action.

There is work that develops the binary of individual/collective. For example, in his definition of wellbeing, Prilleltensky (2016) recognised three potential sites where wellbeing can manifest – in the individual, in relationships and in the community or society and that it can exist in each of these sites discretely and yet interdependently.

PERMA is inward-facing, focused on improving one's individual wellbeing with the assumption that this will contribute to societal wellbeing in the longer term. SDT is inward and outward-facing, recognising the importance of links to social groups and contributing to them. However, despite this subtle difference, the two theories are, at their core, individualist.

RWB doesn't negate the needs of the individual and recognises that psychological and material, social and symbolic needs are met through the allocation and movement of resources. However, the focus is on the relationships that cause this distribution to take place. The relationships are not a contributor to wellbeing, as in PERMA, nor are they part of reciprocity which enhances wellbeing for all, as in SDT. In RWB, relationships enable other issues to be addressed – societal, environmental and economic processes that can improve life. Relationships are wellbeing rather than an outcome of it. From this perspective, relationships manifest in Bronfenbrenner's *contexts* rather than in interactions of the *person*.

2.1.6 Proximal *processes*: How wellbeing manifests and develops

The pathways to human development, the driving forces behind it, are the *proximal processes* of Bronfenbrenner's model. These are an individual's interactions with people, objects and symbols in their immediate context on a protracted and repeated basis (Bronfenbrenner, 1999; Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

When wellbeing is considered an individual asset, as in PERMA and SDT, the interactions that contribute to the growth and development of wellbeing are proximal processes. RWB also identifies processes that manifest in relationships and contribute to enhancing wellbeing. Table 2.3 gives some examples of activities that constitute *proximal processes* contributing to wellbeing in each of the theories.

Table 2.3 Activities contributing to wellbeing that might constitute proximal processes

Theory	Activity
PERMA	Positive Psychology Interventions i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What Went Well - Kindness exercise - Signature strengths exercise - Strength spotting - Mindfulness
SDT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do important activities well (competence) - Endorse their actions (autonomy) - Connect with others (relatedness) - Falling in love (relatedness) - Finding purpose (autonomy) - Discovering a new skill (competence) - Involvement in nature - Mindfulness
RWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciative curiosity - Building community - Collaboration - Interaction with the natural world

PERMA and positive psychology suggest a range of interventions that can impact individual wellbeing, with some examples given in the table. The Greater Good in Action website (Greater Good Science Center, 2021) details over 70 different individual practices to enhance wellbeing. Seligman’s book, *Flourish* (2011), is similarly full of examples of intervention strategies and programmes, such as the Penn Resiliency Programme. This programme is one example of many programmes utilising PERMA, which value, promote and teach resilience skills to students (Seligman, 2011). Others include the Positive Psychology Programme (Seligman et al., 2009) and Geelong Grammar School’s Positive Education model (Norrish, 2015). These programmes include interventions that are examples of *proximal processes* deliberately implemented to enhance wellbeing under PERMA. They are practices that an individual can repeatedly undertake. Although the practices may involve others, this involvement is usually for the benefit of the individual undertaking the practice, and any residual benefit to the other person might be regarded as at best a positive side effect (such as the gratitude letter (Seligman et al., 2009, p.144; Norrish, 2015)). The possibility of framing some of these *proximal processes* as building relationality and contributing meaningfully towards the social cohesion exemplified in RWB is not expounded upon.

The difference between PERMA and SDT is that PERMA explicitly points to practices and interventions that can enhance specific elements of individual wellbeing. The practices are prescriptive, and in being prescriptive they reduce autonomy and give an impression

of the individual needing guidance, of requiring leading to their own wellbeing. SDT, on the other hand, promotes activities which enhance autonomy, competence and relatedness. While some examples are given, these are not couched in terms of practices to undertake but rather as aspects of life that will enhance wellbeing. Many of them connect with those in RWB. Appreciative curiosity (RWB) can be enhanced by mindfulness (SDT). Connecting with others (SDT) is linked to building community and collaboration (RWB). There are some clear links between these two theories' approaches to wellbeing.

However, there are also differences in perspective. In SDT, "involvement in nature" is an activity that can be engaged in. In RWB, positively engaging with the natural environment is important, but the natural environment is considered part of *context*, with its own processes and constraints. It responds to human interaction with it but is also outside human control (White, 2017, p.131). Interaction with nature is included as a process because of the recognised benefits to wellbeing, but like most aspects of RWB this interaction forms part of a larger picture, recognising the contextual relevance of the natural environment as well as human interaction with it.

PERMA and its recommended processes are prescriptive, specific and performative, while SDT and RWB are more open, generic and flowing. When considering wellbeing in an educational context, PERMA would tend towards implementing programmes, approaches and interventions that it considers promote individual wellbeing at a developmental level appropriate to the child. Seligman gives specific examples of this in the Penn Resiliency Programme and the Geelong Grammar Positive Education lessons (Seligman, 2011). SDT would promote need-responsive approaches to education, such as autonomy-supportive teaching (Reeve, 2016; Ryan and Deci, 2017; Cheon, Reeve and Vansteenkiste, 2020; Reeve, 2021), which promotes student choice. Ryan and Deci (2017, p.369) specifically note that autonomy-supportive teaching approaches typically also support the need for relatedness and competence. These are still practices exercised at an individual level, however, even if the classroom practice is replicated throughout the school. RWB, meanwhile, would promote relationships and may involve review, within the school, of what strategies might best support the development of that relationality.

2.1.7 *Time*: Wellbeing as a journey or a destination

The *time* element of the PPCT model refers to the life course of an individual as well as to significant personal or socio-historical events across a person's life (Bronfenbrenner,

1995; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006; Rosa and Tudge, 2013). The socio-historical events described in Chapter One form a background for understanding wellbeing in relation to this study.

Time is relevant when considering the nature of wellbeing as a static state to be achieved or an ongoing process. As previously mentioned, two of the components of PERMA (positive emotion and engagement) are recognised to be elements of SWB (Seligman, 2011, p.16), representing a state of hedonism that can be experienced in the moment. SWB is focused on individual happiness in the present and therefore could be argued to provide short-term understandings of wellbeing, rather than taking a longer view that encompasses the wellbeing of individuals and societies over lifetimes and generations. In more general terms, happiness can be seen as an achievable state – an endpoint that can be reached. This paradigm might provide a series of snapshots of wellbeing which can be extrapolated to a longer-term understanding but will not provide a broader consideration of the state of wellbeing over the course of decades. When considering CWB, this becomes increasingly relevant, as a child at the age of 4 may have a different perspective on the elements and nature of wellbeing than at age 11.

The other elements of PERMA (positive relationships, meaning and accomplishment) are related to a PWB perspective, as are autonomy, competence and relatedness in SDT. A PWB angle focuses not on happiness in the present moment but on living a fulfilling and meaningful life in the longer term. Amerijckx and Humblet (2014) identified a binary between understanding wellbeing as a state or as a process. They equated the hedonic tradition of SWB with a state of wellbeing and the eudemonic PWB with process. However, there is academic disagreement about this. For example, despite the difference in chronological viewpoint between PWB and SWB, White (2015) argues that both see wellbeing as a state rather than a process. Atkinson (2013, p.139) similarly suggests that any individualistic understanding of wellbeing positions it as an endpoint that can be reached.

Wellbeing can and does change throughout life's course – for example, using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scales, environmental mastery generally becomes more robust in older individuals, while purpose in life and personal growth decline. Self-acceptance, however, has a slight variance with age (Chen et al., 2012). Similarly, studies have found that SWB tends to decline from childhood to adolescence (Dinisman and Ben-Arieh,

2015). Additionally, indicators for wellbeing can change for children throughout their development. The needs of babies and very young children to be provided with the basic physiological needs alongside a loving and nurturing context evolve as children develop their own ways of managing demands and strategies for resilience. They become less dependent on their families and interact more with external groups – such as school (Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson, 2007).

The nature of wellbeing as manifesting differently at various stages of life, therefore, problematises the PERMA assumption that it should be considered as a state to be achieved, instead aligning with the SDT and RWB emphasis upon the changing nature of the person, their environments, and their state of wellbeing at different stages of life. Following Bronfenbrenner's model, therefore, assessing wellbeing against specific indicators infers that such indicators must take account of life stage and context.

2.1.8 *Context*: Where does the responsibility for wellbeing lie?

When considering wellbeing through the lens of *context*, it is necessary to broadly differentiate between CWB and adult wellbeing because context and responsibility for children differ from those for adults. Before considering the question of responsibility for CWB through the framework of the model, I will first briefly explain the *contexts* of the PPCT model.

The microsystem is the immediate *context* in which the person engages in *proximal processes*. The microsystem, more specifically, is the “complex of relations between the developing person and environment in an immediate setting containing that person” (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p.514). A person may be a part of several different settings. A school child in HK, for example, might be a member of a school, playground, home, grandparents' home, scout troop, tutoring centre and gymnasium. All three wellbeing theories examined resonate with Bronfenbrenner's view of settings for microsystems – family, school, workplace, home, peer groups, teams and neighbourhood- as places where proximal processes and relationship building occur.

Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem constitutes the interactions between microsystems – a system of more than one microsystem (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). Two-way communication and participation between family and school would fall into this category, for example (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). In PERMA, this might involve the interactions

between home and school that some of the interventions in a positive education model include – for example, a discussion between parents and teachers about when students show their signature strengths in action (Norrish, 2015).

The exosystem is an extension of the microsystem, as a system of systems. However, in this case, the setting may indirectly impact the person, even though they are not directly involved in it. One example, for a child, might be a parents' workplace affecting the home (Rosa and Tudge, 2013). Parents' requirements to work long hours, for example, might impact the HK child. During the protests, parents who were police officers might have been engaged in potentially dangerous work which children heard about or witnessed. This exosystem activity can have a significant impact on the emotional stability of the child. Other components of the exosystem might include media and communication, government agencies, resource distribution services, transport and informal social networks (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p.515). Multi-media would also fall into this category, including the increased use of certain platforms for communication and learning during school closures.

The macrosystem is comprised of the ideologies and values of countries and cultures, often represented by the policies and laws of nations. These subsequently impact the other *contexts*. The procedures and approaches to implementing national policies on wellbeing at a local level manifest in the exosystem, either at the local authority or school level. This then impacts more directly on the child in the school. Policy relating to wellbeing might be relevant at a school, district, state, national or international level. The creation of policies takes place in the macrosystem, forming part of the cultural and political backdrop to a child's life; the child does not (or rarely does) participate within the governance settings that draw up the policy, but they impact the child nevertheless in shaping the actions schools initiate. Regulations and expectations linked to policy implementation might occur at a district or state level, operating in the child's exosystem. The implementation at a school level, meanwhile, may directly impact the child in the microsystem of their school or playground, or even in the mesosystem of the interactions between their school and home lives.

A short-term example of this in HK would be the policy of preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus resulting in the closure of schools. This affected two microsystems of the children, effectively transferring one of the microsystems from a physical space to a

virtual one. It also had an impact at a mesosystem level in the interactions that had to take place between home and school to facilitate a new online approach to learning, in email communications between parents, teachers and school leaders, for example. Furthermore, a new microsystem emerged, of a home environment which represented for some children both their school and their parents' work environment, bringing the interactions between the two in the mesosystem into sharper relief.

The individual responsible for their own wellbeing

PERMA describes how individuals can increase their wellbeing by adopting different strategies and approaches. Seligman argues that this will positively influence the peace, prosperity and health of society. Still, the impetus and the expectation lie with the individual, and represents an individual taking action for their wellbeing in the microsystem, perhaps supported by other, more knowledgeable individuals such as teachers or parents. Seligman stated that the goal of PERMA was to increase the amount of flourishing apparent both in individuals and "on the planet" (2011, p.26). In practice, what was meant by this commitment to global flourishing is a world full of *individuals* of whom a significant number all experience positive wellbeing in the microsystems they inhabit.

Neoliberalism makes each individual responsible for their own wellbeing and gives individuals responsibility to enlist support from other social actors or support mechanisms. In terms of promoting the free-market economy, a neoliberal imperative would include the movement of funds to address issues of increasing wellbeing – for example, payment of psychologists or psychiatrists or the fees associated with taking part in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programmes.

Other social actors sharing responsibility for individual wellbeing

In SDT, wellbeing also resides at a mesosystem level. For example, people feel relatedness when they feel cared for. This could manifest as children feeling cared for when there is communication about them between their *contexts* – the relationships that develop in the mesosystem. SDT also considers how schools and families can create autonomy supporting environments to impact the individual's wellbeing positively. Similarly, from a PERMA perspective, those employing interventions with students bear some responsibility for the wellbeing of those they teach.

Responsibility for wellbeing at a governmental level

Seligman (2011) argues that the measurement of individual wellbeing should be the critical factor considered in political decision-making to positively impact mass personal wellbeing. From a PERMA and SDT perspective, macrosystem policy would impact the school microsystem or the mesosystem relationships between school and home. This would contribute to or detract from individual CWB. CWB would be measured subjectively and objectively in the microsystem and mesosystem to contribute to curriculum policy in the exosystem. The responsibility for wellbeing still lies at the individual level under this model, however, impacted by the decisions and structures in the exosystem and macrosystem.

Scott, K. (2012) warns explicitly against wellbeing becoming the responsibility of those at a local and individual level – the microsystems and mesosystems. Supporting this approach, in RWB relationships are the purview of everyone in society, from the community level to policymakers providing the societal structure through which relationships can manifest and change. The interplay of societal, personal and environmental processes all have implications for political decision-making, but they also help to understand wellbeing at the level of an individual. It also becomes incumbent upon the individual to consider their role in society. RWB adherents would argue that individuals already perceive their wellbeing as inherently linked to their family and community, embedded in the microsystem, mesosystem and exosystem and influenced by the macrosystem. RWB grew from studies in human geography, sociology and developmental studies, which goes some way towards explaining the importance of context and the significance of relational flow that is evident in this theory. The role of policymakers and government in assuming a duty to contribute to societal and economic wellbeing is an essential aspect of RWB, which does not place this responsibility solely on the individual and their network of support. This role for all members of society and societal structures effectively rejects a neoliberal imperative of the “responsibilisation” of the individual.

2.1.9 Reflective analysis: The dichotomic nature of wellbeing

Earlier in the chapter, the dichotomies of the hedonic and eudemonic states of wellbeing were introduced and the points of convergence between these two paradigms were identified. In this section, I have further explored dichotomies that appear in the

literature by focusing on aspects of the three theories of wellbeing examined. I explored the notions of where and how wellbeing manifests, how it is developed and whose responsibility it is considered to be. I also discussed the opposing ideas of wellbeing as embedded in and evidenced through relational interaction, and wellbeing as exhibited in each individual person.

The lens of time was used to review the process view of wellbeing juxtaposed with the static view of wellbeing – the idea that wellbeing is either fluid or static. Linked to this is the contrast between wellbeing as perceived in a singular moment and wellbeing as considered over a longer time span and the impact that socio-historical events can have on wellbeing.

The theories of wellbeing that have been examined extend beyond the dichotomic, yet they can be considered on a continuum from individually focused to communally focused, as illustrated in Figure 2.1. PERMA aligns with an understanding of wellbeing that manifests in and is controlled by each individual, with external support as needed. SDT, while focusing on the individual, extends to include others in an interacting web of individuals affecting each other's wellbeing. The basic psychological needs that SDT promotes are, according to Ryan and Deci (2017), interdependent and reactive to context and external factors. RWB represents a different way of thinking about wellbeing, considering it within the relationships between people and involving the natural world in an interdependent wellbeing experience. The RWB theory of wellbeing most aligns with the definition of wellbeing I have adopted, representing an evolution of the concept that incorporates influences from all spheres. However, SDT contributes a complementary perspective in considering how individual wellbeing as a component of this web might be influenced by the satisfaction or negating of three specific needs. The PPCT model, which perceives the impact of multiple factors on human development, similarly recognises the interrelatedness of different influences.

Figure 2.1 Comparative continuum of wellbeing theories from individual to interdependent



Understanding wellbeing requires a researcher to consider that it might exist simultaneously in the hedonic and the eudemonic tradition, be measurable both subjectively and objectively, and apparent in the short and the longer term. Wellbeing is not only evident in relational interactions or the individual but inherently and essentially in both. The duality makes it difficult to define, yet embracing the duality enables a broader perspective that accepts and builds on the notion that wellbeing means different things to different people and that all those understandings can be taken as valid within the framework of conceptualisations that exist.

While dichotomies are apparent throughout the literature, I argue that moving beyond the dichotomies to a broader spectrum perspective of wellbeing is necessary. For the following investigation, I took a comprehensive understanding of wellbeing to include aspects derived from both hedonistic and eudemonic traditions. However, I break with the achieved state perspective and follow an RWB understanding that wellbeing is an ongoing process, and the indicators of an individual's wellbeing will vary throughout the life span, dependent on a range of factors. Wellbeing is not, however, solely an individual pursuit. The engagement of society in striving for well communities is an intrinsic part of the construct, and neither individual nor societal wellbeing can stand alone.

Wellbeing is taken to be a construct. It presents both as outcome indicators in individuals and through dynamic processes in societies, fluctuating across time and manifesting in day-to-day satisfaction and leading mutually fulfilling lives.

2.2 Child Wellbeing as an independent area of study

To this point, the examination of wellbeing has encompassed both wellbeing as applied to the general population and CWB more specifically. The constructs discussed can be considered relevant in adult and child wellbeing when nuances of context and presentation are considered. However, a recent development in wellbeing research has been to study CWB as distinct from adult wellbeing.

2.2.1 The construct of childhood

An area of divergence on how wellbeing is explored and understood differently for children and adults centres on how children are perceived. In some political and economic discourses, children are situated as adults-in-waiting. In economic and policy terms, CWB is relevant because of the impact it has on the future citizen that the child

will become. In this paradigm, the subjective wellbeing of the child in the present is less important than their potential for attending to their own wellbeing needs in the future. Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) noticed that children were aware both of the nature of wellbeing as existing in the present and being relevant for the future, reflecting the neoliberal discourse. They found that children aged between 8 and 15 recognised that undertaking some activities such as working towards academic goals might not benefit their happiness in the present moment but could contribute to it in the future. Extending this idea, Drake et al. (2021) conducted research with 8 – 16-year-olds and found that the importance of learning as a “gateway” for their future, including in the job market, contributed to their sense of wellbeing in the present. CWB research generally seeks not to entirely remove the status of children as “becoming”; instead, the sociology of childhood is expanding to incorporate both present state wellbeing and future wellbecoming (Ben-Arieh, 2007, p.9).

2.2.2 Assessing wellbeing for children: the use of adult-selected indicators

Another point of divergence in CWB and adult wellbeing has been how it is assessed. While externally measurable indicators of wellbeing can be assessed without input from the child, measuring wellbeing from a subjective perspective requires input from the individual under study. Historically, one approach to establishing the subjective wellbeing of children had been to seek parental opinion rather than engaging with the child directly (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016; Brockevelt et al., 2019). This is a significant difference from the approach adopted in measuring subjective beliefs about wellbeing in adults, where wellbeing is assessed based on the views of the individual rather than those of a third party. This approach would also tend to result in an adult perspective on CWB, not honouring the child’s viewpoint. Surveying adults to establish children’s subjective wellbeing is an example of the societal structures privileging adult opinion over child, noted by Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) when considering children’s agency. The approach emerges from an adult-in-waiting perspective of children, where children do not have the capacity to be social actors or agents themselves. Early attempts to undertake research that reflected a child standpoint faced criticism for not fully reflecting children’s perspectives even when seeking their input (Fernandes, Mendes and Teixeira, 2012; Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016). This discrepancy is being addressed in more recent research (see, for example, Fane, 2017; Moore and Lynch, 2018; Fane et al., 2020; Street, M., 2020; Fane et al., 2021).

Research based on externally assessed needs and survival indicators focuses on the child's future wellbeing (or wellbecoming) rather than on quality-of-life wellbeing in the here-and-now (Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson, 2007). As Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) argued, addressing both wellbeing and wellbecoming requires change at the level of the macrosystem. Quantitative surveys into wellbeing undertaken with older children, such as one component of the PISA tests, are beginning to have force in the political arena (OECD, 2017, 2019, 2020a). However, these are conducted and presented with a specific agenda of enhancing economic stability through the promotion of CWB. As yet, however, qualitative research with younger children is not reflected in policy review processes.

Both objective and subjective approaches to measuring wellbeing generally consist of a predetermined set of indicators assigned by experts in the field, sometimes added to in the course of the research, as with Fane et al. (2020). Recent work has examined the extent to which children's understanding of wellbeing resonates with adult-defined measures. For example, Alexandre et al. (2021) and Bhomi (2021) explored the importance of the adult-assigned indicators of safety for children's wellbeing and found that it did resonate as crucial with the children in the contexts they were researching. Safety and security have also featured in the work of Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016), constructing a child-standpoint view of wellbeing. External indicators may resonate with children. However, the selection of these indicators, which may also include aspects such as economic conditions, health, housing and access to quality education (Ben-Arieh and Frønes, 2007b; OECD, 2009), will often demonstrate how wellbeing has been defined, as well as the discourse, discipline or purpose that the research falls into. For example, the OECD report *Doing Better for Children* (OECD, 2009) explicitly states that it takes an economic perspective in seeking to focus on future wellbeing and demonstrates this with the indicators it selects.

2.2.3 Children's perspectives on wellbeing

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1990) asserted that children are entitled to have their voices heard when decisions are being made about their welfare; Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) noted that this statement marked a shift towards considering children to be individuals in their own right, rather than adults-in-waiting. This perspective is becoming more apparent in the literature and

empirical studies into CWB (for example, Crivello, Camfield and Woodhead, 2009; Moore and Lynch, 2018; Fane et al., 2020).

Childhood to adulthood is a developmental continuum. A child does not, overnight, become an adult and children's development into adulthood is influenced by the values and norms of those around them. There is an inevitable overlap in child and adult conceptualisations of wellbeing. Research conducted with pre-school children by Fane et al. (2020) revealed that child-derived indicators of their own wellbeing closely matched adult-assigned indicators for CWB. The six adult-defined indicators that emerged from Fane et al.'s (ibid) investigation of the literature were:

- Feeling happy, loved and safe
- Being physically healthy
- Opportunities for learning
- Material wellbeing
- Social participation
- Relationships

Two additional indicators were added after conducting research with children: opportunities for play and children's agency. Moore and Lynch (2018) had also identified play as important for children's wellbeing in their work with children, and more recently, its preeminent importance to children has been noted by Stoecklin (2021). Similarly, Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) identified children's agency as a factor in CWB in a study of children aged 8 – 15. In this study, agency manifested as relational, impacted by how children were positioned in adult-child relationships.

In all these examples, undertaking research with children revealed essential features of their wellbeing not previously recognised by adults. This contributed to the understanding of children's wellbeing in both the present moment and for the future.

2.2.4 Child wellbeing: Reflective analysis

CWB is inherently linked with the child's prospects to take up a significant role in keeping society economically healthy (OECD, 2009), particularly from a neoliberal perspective. CWB has been equated with wellbecoming (Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson, 2007; OECD, 2009; Fane et al., 2020; Drake et al., 2021), predominantly from a political

perspective where the education of the child for their future employability is highly relevant. Through a neoliberal lens, the impetus would be on making the child responsible for their future employability by making them responsible for both their own wellbeing (in order to achieve educational results) and their wellbecoming (to be ready to enter society as an economic subject). The relevance of this is that wellbeing is not just about SWB in the here and now, or even PWB over the course of the life span, but also what the opportunities are for wellbeing to continue into the future and impact positively on the child when they move into adulthood. In educational terms, this often translates as children being inculcated to develop technologies of the self which give them a sense of agency over their own wellbeing while making them feel responsible for it themselves. Resilience, optimism and hope are all future-focused aspects of wellbeing theories, with a trajectory of results in the future rather than in the present. The managing director of the IMF recognised the economic imperative for resilient individuals when she wrote, “only if people are more resilient, will we be able to build a more resilient economy that works for all” (Georgieva, 2020).

Qvortrup (2014, p.689) asserted that researchers must decide between addressing social policy for the future wellbecoming of the child or politics to preserve the current wellbeing of the child in childhood. I would argue that it is possible to honour the state of children’s wellbeing in the present whilst simultaneously considering policies that may impact positively on the child when they reach adulthood. As children have demonstrated their understanding of both the present and future nature of wellbeing (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016), engaging their perspectives on policy is relevant and honours their voice. The challenge lies only if divergences surface, where meeting the needs of one will hamper the needs of the other.

Reflecting the variation in adult wellbeing research, CWB research takes varying perspectives. For example, in exploring CWB, Moore and Lynch (2018) conceptualised wellbeing for children as hedonic, exploring the concept through happiness. Fane (Fane et al., 2020; Fane et al., 2021) focused on children’s perspectives on indicators of wellbeing, framing the construct in terms of how it is assessed. More reflective of a bioecological stance, Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) considered CWB to be complex, investigating the overlapping realms of wellbeing identified in research with children as relevant to CWB. The complexity of wellbeing is evident in the definition I outlined at the end of

section 2.1. This discussion of the research into CWB demonstrates that the same complexities are present here. This is further evidence of the value of the PPCT bioecological model of human development to explore theories of wellbeing generally and CWB more specifically.

2.3 Part Three: A framework for research into CWB based on the PPCT model

Building on the usefulness of the PPCT model to understand the complex nature of wellbeing conceptualisation, I used it to create a framework for considering wellbeing in an educational setting. I present here a codebook for research into CWB drawn from the literature and organised into a framework based on the PPCT model.

The research questions presented in the introduction emerged from the literature review, focusing on understanding children's conceptualisations of wellbeing with an awareness of the attendant influences on the children and the different ways these conceptualisations might manifest.

Contexts are used in two ways in this research approach. First, they provide potential sites of research, as expanded in the following chapter. Second, the *contexts* form part of the framework for *a priori* codes. I created eleven *a priori* codes based on the literature review and categorised them according to the PPCT model. Tables 2.4 and 2.5 below, show each code where it is located in the framework, and summarise its source in the literature. The more extensive version of the codebook can be seen in Appendix 6.

In table 2.4, the *person* and *process* sections of the framework are presented. Some codes appear in both *person* and *process* sections of the framework. Learning, for example, can result in knowledge which is a resource falling into the *person* element. However, learning is also formed of *proximal processes*, which can be enhanced or hampered by other characteristics and dispositions of the *person*.

Table 2.4 Précis of a priori codebook for considering CWB: Person/ Process

PPCT	a priori code	Source
Person	Positive emotions	In PERMA – subjectively measured. The work of Fane et al. (2020) utilised <i>happy, loved and safe</i> as wellbeing indicators. Moore and Lynch (2018) explored wellbeing through happiness as a mechanism by which very young children could be supported to understand wellbeing. Ascribed to SWB and a hedonic paradigm, experienced in the moment.
	Dispositions	Person characteristics in the PPCT model that encourage the engagement with proximal processes. The list of sub-codes is based on PERMA and SDT , including character strengths, gratitude, persistence, self-regulation.
Person/ Process	Learning	From Fane et al. (2020) as one of the indicators of CWB. Also evident in Moore and Lynch (2018) when it takes place during play. In SDT links to gaining competence, and in PERMA to accomplishment. The connotation in PERMA is that to accomplish is to conclude, whereas the intention of this code is that it is ongoing and not a completed state.
	Physical health and activity	Indicated in Fattore et al. (2016 p.46) as health; specified by Fane et al. (2020) as physically healthy - an adult assigned indicator. Could be measurable by external report.
Process	Play	Emerged from the work of e.g. Moore and Lynch (2018), Fane et al (2020) and Stoecklin (2021). For Moore and Lynch (2018) play was participation in occupation and included fun. In this research play and fun were differentiated inductively. Data can be coded as play and fun, but fun can be coded without the data being attributed to the code play.

Context and *time* categories feature in table 2.5. In addition, two elements cross *process* and *context*. Relationships and children’s agency manifest both as *processes* and in the patterns of activities, roles and interactions that take place in a setting (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), making them an inherent part of the context. This placement also reflects the differing perceptions of relationships within PERMA, SDT and RWB and takes account of the impact that relationships can have on agency. The *context* category has not been split into separate systems because its codes may feature within or across systems. Material wellbeing, for instance, relies partly on the income of children’s caregivers. During the combined pandemic and political changes in HK, many families saw a difference in their circumstances, impacting their income and ability to continue paying school fees. Thus, one of a child’s microsystems (school) was impacted or changed by actions in the exosystem or macrosystem. Similar arguments can be applied to a child’s sense of safety and security, particularly during the HK protests.

Table 2.5 *Précis of a priori codebook for considering CWB: Process/ Context/ Time*

PPCT	<i>a priori</i> code	Source
Process/ Context	Relationships	Apparent in all examined theories of wellbeing – PERMA , SDT , RWB and emerges in the work of researchers in the field including Fattore et al. (2016), Moore and Lynch (2018) Fane et al. (2020). Includes relationships and connections with friends, other peers, family, teachers and other adults in the microsystem, as well as interactions in the mesosystem. Includes love, friendship, cooperation and collaboration.
	Agency	In SDT , stated as autonomy. Noted by Anderson and Graham (2016) as being a contributor to increased wellbeing. Also added by Fane et al. (2020) following research with children - the opportunity for children to exercise agency in their own lives.
Context	Material wellbeing	Externally measurable indicator referenced by i.e. OECD (2009) and Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2007). Economic wellbeing as part of material wellbeing is evidenced in Fattore et al. (2016) as featuring in children’s understanding of wellbeing. Fane et al. (2020) include material wellbeing as an adult assigned indicator. Can be evidenced in the microsystem but impacted by the exosystem and macrosystem.
	Safety and security	Part of Fane et al’s (2020) triptych of feeling happy, loved and safe. Externally measurable indicator used by i.e. OECD (2020), this measure is also recognised by children through the work of Fattore et al. (2016 p. 46), Fane et al. (2020), Alexandre et al. (2021) and Bhomi (2021). Includes elements of feeling safe and being safe and can manifest and be impacted in the microsystem, exosystem and the macrosystem.
	Community	Particularly relevant in RWB , sense of community is indicative of the presence of wellbeing. Fane et al. (2020) refer to one element of this as social participation, while Moore and Lynch (2018) as having friends to play with, doing and being together. Community features as part of the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem, and can cross these systems as well.
Time	Future focused	CWB as preparation for adult wellbeing features in economic discourses i.e. OECD (2009). Resilience, hope and optimism all feature in PERMA , and are all examples of learning from failure and believing that there will be better times ahead.

Within the *time* category, the only pre-assigned code is “future focused”. This code is intended to reference resilience, hope or other aspects of wellbeing identified in the study that recognise that wellbeing can have implications or resonance in the future. However, when using the framework, attention should be paid to socio-historical events which may impact perceptions of wellbeing.

The *a priori* codebook presented here serves as a start point for research into CWB. The codebook was created with the intention that inductive codes would be added during data analysis at macrosystem, exosystem and microsystem levels. The complete codebook in Appendix 6 includes codes added inductively during research. The following chapter details the research strategy employed at each of these levels.

Chapter 3: Research Design

This chapter principally sets out the rationale and methodological approach adopted during each of the three phases of the research. Before commencing the description of methodological approaches, I consider my position concerning the research and the philosophical principles underpinning the study. Ethical considerations are addressed throughout the rationale and methodological summary of the fieldwork. I conclude the chapter by summarising the ethical implications and how they were addressed, considering notions of trustworthiness, validity and integrity.

3.1 Position of the researcher

Before addressing the underpinning principles of this research, I want to acknowledge my own position in relation to it, as recommended by Cohen (2018) and den Outer, Handley and Price (2013). The inherent subjectivity that researchers bring to qualitative research is valuable but should be acknowledged (Clarke and Braun, 2013). I outline my own position so that I can recognise how the research reflects that position.

A fundamental tenet of my researcher identity is that I have been operating in a neoliberal hegemony throughout my life. I went from school to university and into work in the field of education with a backdrop of implicit competition and the cult of the individual. I felt responsible for my own education, economic security and emotional stability. Consistently having operated with school systems in which market forces were endemic, I now work in HK. Here, market forces are implicit in government promotion of parental choice for schools, impacted directly by the availability of disposable income.

Following my husband's death, I took personal responsibility for my grief, including undertaking a "Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction" course to counteract emotions I felt I had no control over. I went on to train as a mindfulness teacher for children, believing I was providing valuable tools for life, rather than technologies of the self that contributed to the creation of neoliberal subjects (Reveley, 2013, 2015a, b). Over the last decade my school role has evolved from "pastoral" to "wellbeing" and I have engineered this change as I worked with colleagues to embed wellbeing in the school. Only in more recent years have I considered the broader socio-political context of what had prompted this move towards promoting a wellbeing approach, and I have to acknowledge the latent fury and

disappointment when I became aware that some of the interventions that we were implementing were supporting a performative neoliberal imperative.

These are small pieces of a bigger puzzle, yet they contribute to my recognition that, like Ball (2016a), I have become a neoliberal subject and that I have contributed to the promulgation of this hegemony. Becoming awake to this, I seek to resist the performativity and individualisation of neoliberalism by leading and teaching in ways that promote community, character and humanitarianism (Hargreaves, 2003; Ball, 2016a, b).

As a result of this rage against a faceless machine, I am conscious of the critical theory slant of my methodology. Participatory research, as employed in the study, is often orientated toward taking social action (Lapan, 2012) and the Mosaic approach was developed to enable very young children to have a voice in policy (Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014; Rogers and Boyd, 2020).

Above, I have outlined my position as a researcher in terms of my personal background. Before I consider my ontological and epistemological perspective, I must also reflect on my position in the school where the research was undertaken. In my role as the Vice Principal (VP) at Horizon School I have been responsible for wellbeing in the Primary section for over a decade, albeit under different nomenclatures. My understanding of my position in relation to wellbeing in school as well as my location as a neoliberal subject evolved as I undertook the modules of the Educational Doctorate study leading to this thesis. As a researcher and as an educator my perspectives changed with time, as is usual (Rowe, 2014; Holmes, 2020), and this occurred alongside my work at the school to embed a culture of wellbeing.

Throughout my time as VP in the Primary section, I have worked closely with my counterpart in the Secondary section as we deliberately and intentionally sought to make wellbeing a focus for the school, encompassing all members of the school community. I was instrumental in designing and implementing a three-year process through which the school community developed an understanding of wellbeing, resulting in the framework and model for wellbeing now in use throughout the school and applied to all areas of school life. I have been, and continued to be throughout the research, deeply committed to and engaged with all aspects of the school that contribute to, detract from and are otherwise related to wellbeing. As the school's approach to embedding wellbeing has

developed, I have sought to continue to enhance our understanding of the impact that this direction has had on our students and our community, through engagement with children, staff and parents. This undeniably contributed to my choice of direction for this thesis. It also contributed to other activities that were taking place in the school concurrent with the research. Undertaking this study represented an unmissable opportunity to use the framework for my empirical research as a tool to guide further information gathering outside of it. Therefore, at the same time as I was undertaking the empirical research with four classes in the Primary school, other classes were undertaking similar but modified activities that I had designed. The design of the research tools for the empirical study took place first, yet I acknowledge that I was aware, whilst designing the tools, that I would be modifying them for use by others with larger groups of children. I consulted with the children in the research groups about the tools we used and encouraged them to suggest others. My intention in this was to not limit them to using only the approaches that I had planned for them, since I had acknowledged that I had a dual purpose in mind when considering how to gather information.

I had a vested interest in the information gathered through the engagements that took place in all classrooms, as I hoped this would help to guide the direction that the school took when we considered the next stages of developing our stance and approach to wellbeing. I attempted to mitigate any influence this vested interest might have on the results of the empirical research by deliberately not reviewing the output from the other class engagements until the empirical research for this study was completed and written up. This was a challenging decision which represented a tension for me. In taking this action, I mitigated the chance that I would be influenced by data gathered outside of the group who had consented and assented to be engaged in the research. However, I also delayed the review of additional data and therefore the planning of the next stages of the school's development. My compromise was to work with my counterpart to begin strategically planning based on the data I had engaged with, with the expectation that I would revise the plan when I was able to review the data gathered outside of the empirical study.

My comprehensive knowledge of the school environment, my intense familiarity with the historical evolution of how wellbeing was developed and represented at the school and my role in the school all might constitute me as an insider to the context (Rowe, 2014).

However, I developed an awareness throughout the research that I was simultaneously fulfilling an insider role and an outsider role more aligned with a dynamic and situational identity (Mercer, 2007; Mason-Bish, 2019). A continuum of outsider to insider positionality such as that outlined by Herr and Anderson (2005) does not sufficiently encompass the complexities of my multiple roles when undertaking this research. Although the children and I shared the school community, they occupied a very different role in that community than I did. I was an outsider to some of the language they used with each other – for example when the Year 6 students were discussing their favourite YouTubers or aspects of social media that they engaged with. Similarly, although I knew the layout of the playground and had been involved in designing and creating specific play spaces and scheduling times for play in these areas, I was an outsider to the children’s knowledge of internal playground rules and etiquette about who played where at which times. That the children were willing to share these insights with me did not constitute me as an insider to their world, but my status as an insider to the community and my knowledge of how the school functioned logistically and culturally enabled me to ask pertinent questions and afforded me a status of trusted outsider to the children’s experiences.

I began the research hoping that it would afford me an insight into the ways that CWB was conceptualised and allow me to apply that insight to the evolution of the wellbeing model in school. The results of the empirical study and analysis have offered insight into the approach we take in the school to support wellbeing. However, the process of undertaking the research and the insights from the children have also led me to consider how we assess CWB and the wellbeing of the community as a whole. My responsibilities as wellbeing lead, the values and beliefs I bring to the role and my perceptions about our future wellbeing direction as a school are changing once again as a result of the research and the findings. This represents another shift in my positionality as I continue to evolve as a person, as a researcher and as an educator.

I have detailed here how an emancipatory approach to the research evolved, and how my own position in the school was relevant to both the research and the next steps suggested by it. In section 3.3.4 I will explore the relevance of my hierarchical role in the school and the mitigation of that as part of the research methodology. However, the

beliefs that underpin the research were broad and included ontological and epistemological principles that guided the selected methodology. I explore these next.

3.2 Philosophical traditions of the study

To foreground my research design, I set out my ontological and epistemological beliefs, particularly about the construct of wellbeing. I have briefly described how I recognised how my own lived experiences affected my engagement with wellbeing interventions. As demonstrated in the literature review, the larger concept of wellbeing is complex. I believe that this is because wellbeing as a construct is created in the experiences and the perspectives of individuals and the communicated perceptions of others. There is no single definition of wellbeing, although groups may have some shared understandings. In practice, the components of wellbeing or the relative importance of different components might vary for everyone within a group. Furthermore, the understanding of wellbeing is contextual. Part of this context will be a shared site, yet each individual will also bring their own cultural and familial perspectives to their understanding of wellbeing. The ontological stance that wellbeing is a mutable and socially constructed concept influenced my research design as I sought ways to understand CWB from the perspectives of the individuals conceptualising it.

I was epistemologically informed by child standpoint theory in the research decisions and design, drawing on the work of Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016), among others. The beliefs that underpin this are founded on the notion that, like wellbeing, childhood is a social construct rather than a natural one (Skelton, 2008; O'Neill, 2014). Developmentally, children are constantly engaged in meaning-making, and children of all ages have valid and authentic context-specific understandings and views of their lived experiences. They are capable of articulating their own beliefs, perspectives and opinions and much recent research involving children has been underpinned by the UNCRC, which recognises the rights of children to hold their own views and influence decisions that are made about their lives (for example, Ben-Arieh and Kosher, 2019; Alexandre et al., 2021; Savahl, Adams and Benninger, 2021). However, there have been relatively few studies that consult with children about their understandings of wellbeing (Fattore, Fegter and Hunner-Kreisel, 2019), and even fewer conducted with children under the age of 8 (Andresen, Bradshaw and Kosher, 2019). A research design that heard and honoured

children's perspectives was epistemologically appropriate, and the selection of participatory methodologies supported my critical theorist leaning.

In addition to a reflexive awareness of the socio-political context that contributed to my perspective starting this study, I was also conscious of my academic background. My skills tend heavily toward verbal and linguistic (Clark, 2005a). In common with many adults, and children over the age of 6 (Rouvali and Riga, 2019, p.1000), I have lost most of the hundred languages of children posited by Malaguzzi (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 2012). Having worked in primary schools for my entire adult life, I am aware of the nuances of childhood communication that escape me. My awareness that children communicate in ways that are lost on adults was also a contributing factor to the methodological principles adopted in this research.

3.3 Methodology

The overall aim of this study was to understand how children conceptualised CWB in a private international school in HK, and how this related to policy and practice. A case study approach was adopted, with Horizon School as the unit under focus.

3.3.1 Case study research benefits and limitations

The inherent engagement of the researcher within the context was one of the benefits of adopting a case study approach, as well as the range of sources that could be drawn on to gather data (Yin et al., 2006; Baxter and Jack, 2008). Developing a complex picture of how children conceptualise wellbeing required drawing on various methods. The use of varied sources, including documentation, visual, spoken and handwritten sources in the course of the study is typical of case study research (Baxter and Jack, 2008). It was particularly relevant to a study adopting the complex PPCT model as a framework, enabling an understanding of the intricacy of the case. Case study research is undertaken within the community being studied (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2012), demanding an understanding of social relationships within the case. These features of case study research were also particularly relevant to this study.

I accept that there are limitations to a case study approach. A limited capacity for generalisation is inherent in a method which focuses on one specific environment. I have attempted to mitigate this with rich description aiming to enhance reader agency in generalisation (Simons, 2015). I intend for others reading the outcomes of this study to be

able to decide if there is resonance with their own circumstances. The features of Horizon School that may enable comparisons to be considered are:

- established with a mandate from the HK government to provide affordable private education to local children.
- has a high percentage of HK permanent residents.
- operated within a large organisation of schools, including both Primary and Secondary sections.
- classified itself as an international school and authorised as an IB School

The researcher in case study research operates in the setting. In this case, I worked at Horizon School, which was pragmatically useful and enabled the flexibility of approach and responsiveness to situation required for case study to be effective (Grauer, 2012). However, I acknowledge the propensity for observer bias (Cohen, 2018) within case study research. I took steps to recognise and manage the reflexivity inherent in the study by seeking confirmation and adjustment from the participants when the study was concluded.

3.3.2 Defining the case

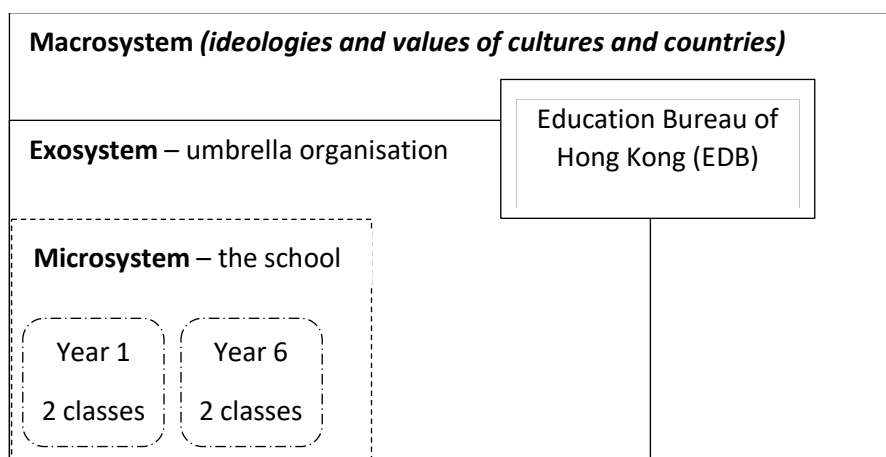
A crucial step in case study research is selecting and defining the case (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Pragmatically, the school selected for the study was the one in which I worked. This afforded me an ease of access that Yin et al. (2006) asserted is a reasonable criterion for case selection. This was particularly relevant with the COVID-19 control measures being implemented and altered at short notice in HK and in the umbrella organisation. Furthermore, my school role enabled me to conduct this research as part of the standard school operation, preventing children from being excluded because of unavailability outside school hours.

This was a nested case study as described by Thomas (2011) and Thomas and Myers (2015). In this type of case study, the nested elements (in this case, two classes within two year levels) are elements within a wider case (Horizon School) (Figure 3.1). Data were gathered from all children who had given assent in two classes per year level, with further data collected and analysis undertaken with six children from each of these classes. The cases were representative of the wider year level, as classes were reconstructed each year considering the distribution of gender, English language proficiency, level of

academic need and diversity. The nested study draws its integrity from including elements in the wider case (Thomas and Myers, 2015). The classes' location in Horizon School is an integral part of the wider picture.

Stake (2013) and Yin (2013) noted the likelihood of external influences on the bounded unit of the case and in this study, the boundary was permeable, resonating with Bronfenbrenner's model. The outer systems had an impact on the microsystem of Horizon School. External influences included policies of the umbrella organisation, expectations from the accrediting organisation and some governmental expectations from the HK EDB.

Figure 3.1 The case study in relation to Bronfenbrenner's contexts



I framed the case using Bronfenbrenner's *contexts* as a guide (Figure 3.1). The EDB straddles the exosystem and the macrosystem because it had relevance in both contexts. For example, the implementation of a free-market approach to educational provision with parent choice and fee-paying schools demonstrates how neoliberalism manifests in HK. This is evidence of the EDB representing the macrosystem. Meanwhile, the EDB requirement that Horizon School maintain a minimum 85% Permanent Residents falls into the exosystem as a policy that impacts the microsystem of Horizon School.

A documentary analysis preceded case study fieldwork which took place in HK. An enriched group interview supported by documentary review examined the influences of the umbrella organisation. Meanwhile, the perspectives of the children in the case were investigated through participatory research in which the children were constituted as co-researchers, as advocated by Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell (2014). This approach to data collection was influenced by the Mosaic Approach (Clark, 2001, 2004,

2005b, 2011; Clark and Moss, 2011). The principles of the Mosaic Approach are in accordance with my epistemological beliefs: children have valuable opinions that they are able to share (Greenfield, 2011; O'Neill, 2014; Rogers and Boyd, 2020). Offering children a variety of ways of communicating their perspectives, the Mosaic Approach enables children to share their views without relying solely on verbal and linguistic skills.

3.3.3 Power imbalance

Participatory research often has a critical theory slant (Cohen, 2018), seeking to address the power imbalance inherent in research undertaken *on* rather than *with* the subjects of research. Similarly, the Mosaic Approach was designed to give children a voice and its final stage is specifically orientated to change policy that affects the children participating in the study (Rogers and Boyd, 2020). However, the potential for power imbalance in research undertaken with children is significant, even within a participatory approach. Children fall into familiar behaviour patterns with adults, particularly in school where the formula of how children and adults interact is generally hierarchical. Furthermore, in Asian cultures, there is an expectation of child compliance with adult requests (Harcourt and Conroy, 2005). This study took place in a school in Asia with a large culturally Asian population. Despite the capacity of participatory research to address a power imbalance (Sixsmith et al., 2007; Parsons, 2016), the potential for imbalance to emerge was something I constantly kept in mind.

Morrow and Richards (1996) suggest that one means of reducing a power imbalance is building trust and relationships with children. This process began before research with classroom visits, storytelling and joining in playground games. Ethically, an ongoing approach to seeking, negotiating and confirming assent from children was adopted. However, the possible power imbalance meant that I had to be aware of small nuances of body language, such as children turning away or demonstrating discomfort with the situation, as I could not rely solely on verbal assent.

3.3.4 Significance of researching in my own work setting

There are both challenges and strengths to conducting research within one's own context. I have recognised the potential power imbalance inherent in adults conducting research with children above. My own position as a member of the senior leadership team of Horizon School had the potential to heighten the significance of positional power imbalance with the children. I mitigated this with the Year 1 children by intentionally

spending time in the Year 1 learning space for the twelve weeks between the start of the term and the start of the research. I used this time to engage with children's role plays, participate in child-initiated discussions and respond to questions posed by the children in order to familiarise the Year 1 children with my presence. My role in the school enabled me to do this before fieldwork started because I was already *in situ* and these activities could constitute part of my job. With the Year 6 children, I was more specific and deliberate in how we discussed our varying roles. The school has practices in place to encourage student voice, so the children were used to sharing their views and opinions. These practices included deliberately taught intelligent disobedience (Chaleff, 2015) lessons, where children are taught to question instructions that do not make sense to them. There was also a junior student council which considered issues relevant to the children, and children also contributed within planning and reflection meetings with teaching teams. There was a culture in the school of children being encouraged to ask questions of adults including the school director, sometimes by letter or email and often in person. As an expectation within a student enquiry school culture, adults who received questions from children took the time to answer and engage in discussion with them. Furthermore, as an IB school, Horizon adopted an inquiry-based pedagogy and encouraged children to recognise and strive for lifelong learning (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2013). Having a deep awareness of this culture of the school was indispensable. I started the research knowing that the school encouraged children to share their honest views and I was able to encourage the children to do the same thing during the research, giving examples of the practices already in place in the school. With all the children, I explicitly defined how my role working with them as a researcher and my role as VP were different. With the Year 1 children, I took a specific puppet dragon with me to indicate the times that we were doing research, and with the Year 6 children we agreed together on a magnet I would take to the classroom to place on the board to indicate when we were involved in research. This helped to mitigate any conflicts that may have arisen if my differing roles in their classroom were confused. One of the benefits of being a known, familiar adult to the children engaged in the research was that they did feel comfortable to be open with me.

Table 3.3 shows the number of children who withheld their assent to take part in the research, even when parental consent was given. The fact that children in each Year 6 class indicated that they did not wish to take part in the research indicated that the

children did not feel pressure to engage in the research if they did not wish to, suggesting that my role in the school did not influence their decision.

Familiarity with the context also supported the fieldwork itself. For example, a comprehensive understanding of the timetable and curriculum construction as well as knowledge of the school site supported me in understanding the creative opportunities available in the school in certain locations. This was particularly relevant during the research when the children referred to the creative opportunities they had in school, including art lessons, using the music room and facilities and the area designated for hands-on designing and making, often referred to as tinkering or 'maker' education (Korhonen, Kangas and Salo, 2022). My knowledge of the campus and curriculum enabled me to link photographs taken of the areas related to these activities with comments and annotations made by the children. These were later verified by member checking. The process of research was more efficient because I could readily make connections between my knowledge and what the children were sharing.

Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2012, pp.129-130) have acknowledged the risk of overlooking potential findings when working in an environment with which the researcher is very familiar. This danger was mitigated by engaging the children in member-checking the data throughout the data generation and analysis process, and there were times when the children corrected my assumptions. For example, I had assumed that a particular reference to taking the bus home by one child was linked to a desire for independence, as many children in the school take the public buses or trains home. The child corrected my assumption as the bus was provided by school, rather than public transport. What the child valued in that situation was the opportunity to sit quietly and reflect on the day before arriving home.

Researching in the school in which I worked required reflexivity in my approach yet represented an opportunity for in-depth research as an insider with its attendant benefits of contextual knowledge of the setting (Teusner, 2016) and the potential to use the results from the research to impact future decisions in the setting which, as previously discussed, is an important feature of participatory research (Rogers and Boyd, 2020).

3.4 Research Design: Policy analysis

Wellbeing is formally and systematically mobilised in education through policy, and policy reflects the values and norms of the macrosystem. I conducted an analysis of policies and documentation relating to wellbeing from four countries, including HK, and one not-for-profit educational foundation (the IB), with the specific intention of establishing a broad overview of the macrosystem and exosystem in which schools in HK are operating.

UNESCO (2013) defines education policy as a “broad statement that sets out the government’s main goals and priorities” (p.7). However, policy for education can manifest outside the auspices of national government and is found at every level of education (Ozga, 2000; Vidovich, 2007). For this analysis, policy was considered to be a process rather than a product (Ball, 1993, 1994; Hyatt, 2013). This is because policy directives are not created in a vacuum but in response to public discourses and events. The task of policy analysis is to excavate the cultural values and assumptions that underpin the textual documents that are the product of the policymaking process.

While seeking to situate the discussion in HK, I took a comparative approach, drawing parallels between other nations and international bodies to establish commonality and difference. A comparative review of wellbeing policy can direct the detection of policy influences at both a supranational and national level, providing context for considering schools’ freedom to design and deliver school-based policy attending to CWB.

I employed a post-structural analysis called “What’s the Problem Represented to Be?” (WPR) (Bacchi and Goodwin, 2016). WPR is premised on the idea that the problem constituted in policy can be discerned from the solution suggested by that policy, albeit still open to varied interpretation (Bletsas, 2012).

3.4.1 Sampling

The agencies included in the documentary analysis were the IB (a not-for-profit educational foundation) and the education departments of the governments of England, Australia, Ireland and HK. Horizon School follows the IB curriculum framework and is required to follow IB programme stipulations and guidance.

HK was included in the policy analysis because this is where Horizon School is located. The “problems” represented in wellbeing documentation from HK government bodies form

part of the macrosystem of the values of the wider HK community in which Horizon School sits, as well as contributing to the exosystem in the policy requirements for schools.

The HK education system manifested the neoliberal hegemony in its increasing decentralisation, enhanced flexibility of management at the school level and a focus on diversity and choice for parents (Kwok-Chun and Bray, 2000). This decentralised, context-specific approach was also evident in other countries in the implementation of mental health programmes. Weare and Nind (2011) conducted a review of mental health interventions in schools in ten different countries, in which they cautiously noted the benefits of a flexible and non-prescriptive “bottom-up” approach (Weare and Nind, 2011, p.i66). These benefits included the empowerment of communities and the involvement of those who accessed the programmes, resulting in embedded and sustainable practices at the ground level. Weare and Nind (*ibid.*) noted that this approach was commonplace in Australia and European countries but less in the US, which undertook a more prescriptive approach.

Both Australia and England had a significant impact on the values and beliefs of educators in HK, as well as taking similarly decentralised approaches to managing schools and implementing programmes. Australia is geographically relatively close to HK and was counted in the same IB region (Asia-Pacific). It also had an influence on both private and public education in HK.

Finally, Ireland similarly adopted a decentralised approach to the implementation of wellbeing approaches in schools. It was included in the policy analysis because its policies and guidance made specific reference to the theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems model. This resonated with the lens used to view wellbeing throughout this paper, and the inclusion of Ireland brought an added theoretical dimension to the policy analysis.

Documentation was selected by first referring to other research in the field including Cooker et al. (2016); Hargreaves et al. (2018); Brown and Carr (2019); Dix and Sniedze-Gregory (2020); Donnelly et al. (2020). This helped to identify key documents for research. These documents referred to others, which were also analysed. The complete list of documents included in the analysis numbered 28 (see Appendix 2).

3.4.2 Method

The WPR approach to policy analysis suggests that policies attempt to solve a perceived problem. The strategies adopted by or recommended in policy are manifestations in documentation of what the problem is perceived to be by policymakers (Bacchi, 2012). The proliferation of policy and documentation related to wellbeing indicated a problem – the lack of wellbeing (McLeod and Wright, 2015, p.6). Analysing policy and related documentation specifically linked to CWB with a WPR lens enabled me to further refine an understanding of how wellbeing was disaggregated into different problems in its representation in the documentation.

In analysing the policy and guidance documentation, I focused on two aspects – the rationales for implementing a wellbeing approach in schools and the strategies recommended to achieve this.

First, I reviewed the rationales that bodies gave for an increased focus on wellbeing, using the WPR approach to establish the problems represented as related to wellbeing. Then, I analysed the documentation for guidance and expectations that manifested as strategies to address the problems outlined for CWB. I used these and the recommended strategies for addressing concerns about CWB in schools to guide discussion with the umbrella organisation.

3.5 Research Design: Fieldwork

3.5.1 Exosystem research: the umbrella organisation

The umbrella organisation operated as one aspect of the exosystem for Horizon School, providing expectations, policy and quality control. I undertook an enriched group interview with leaders from the umbrella organisation. An enriched group interview is a term applied to group interviews which include stimulus to support engagement with the purpose of the interview (Scott, D. and Morrison, 2006). Although the terms are often used ubiquitously in the literature, it differs from a focus group in that a key purpose of a focus group interview involves observation and interpretation of the social interaction between the interviewees.

As the study commenced, the umbrella organisation released strategic guidance documentation directly linked to wellbeing. When analysing the data gathered in the

group interview, I referred to the specific requirements laid out in the public-facing documentation produced.

Sampling

Six senior leaders of the umbrella organisation were invited to join the group interview and all consented to participate. Four leaders were invited because they had overview of the education and strategic planning of the organisation, which had wellbeing as a focus in its strategic planning. Two leaders had direct responsibility for wellbeing with job descriptions covering inclusion, equality and diversity, wellbeing, child protection and safeguarding, constituting specialised knowledge (Smithson, 2020). Six participants aligned with the smaller end of the recommended size for focus groups (i.e. Robinson, J., 2020), which was appropriate for practical reasons of population size as well as methodological ones. A smaller group size allows deeper discussion with a group experienced in the field (Smithson, 2020). The group interview literature cautioned that outspoken members of a group might be more likely to dominate the conversation. This may cause the group to come to accord with the louder voices guiding the consensus, or the group may deliberately share the agreed public position (Knight and Arksey, 2012; Taylor, 2016). In this instance, I wanted to hear the organisational ethos, so this was a benefit rather than a deficit of the approach.

It remained important that the participants did not feel they would be compromised by their participation in the research. The participants were recruited by email invitation, and their opportunity to withdraw from the research or decline to be involved was made clear in the participant information sheet. All those invited to join the research had a higher hierarchical position in the umbrella organisation than the researcher, so issues of power creating pressure to take part was not a concern.

Method

The policy review that I completed before the fieldwork suggested outcomes for CWB in schools common across the policy contexts. Drawing on this information, the literature and the *a priori* codebook, I created fourteen index cards displaying key themes in CWB on one side. These were drawn from the three main theories of wellbeing (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Manifestations of wellbeing either as outcome or process drawn from the theories of wellbeing

PERMA	SDT	RWB
←————— Meaning/ purpose —————→ ←————— Relationships —————→		
Self-determination Engagement ←————— Life satisfaction —————→ Positive emotions		Sense of community Safety and security
Resilience Positive self-image Optimism/ hope Physical health and activity Gratitude	Vitality/ energy Self-regulation Reflectiveness	

To further provoke discussion, I added the outcomes to the reverse of the index cards as related concepts (Appendix 4). The group were asked to select from and rank the index cards. Next, I provided the group with strategies frequently recommended in policy to support CWB. I asked them to consider which they felt were used effectively in organisation schools. The purpose of these activities was to prompt discussion of the stance of the umbrella organisation related to CWB.

The group interview was filmed for later transcription and observation of how the cards were moved around during discussion, allowing me to focus on moderating the discussion during the session. In transcription, to protect the identity of the participants, all were given pseudonyms.

3.5.2 Microsystem research: Horizon School

Horizon School serves children aged 5 – 18, but the study took place only in the Primary section. As previously discussed, younger children's voices are not often heard in this field. By sampling from Year 1 and Year 6, I could also consider differences between the younger children who were new to Horizon School and the older children, many of whom had been with Horizon School from their first year.

Before commencing participant recruitment, I met with school leaders. As a VP in the school, I could act as a gatekeeper to give access to the children in the school. However, to mitigate the ethical dilemma of this conflict of interest, I revoked my gatekeeper status for the purpose of this study. I met with the school Principal, the Head of Primary and the other Primary VPs. Once consent had been obtained from the Horizon School leadership

team, consent was sought from the class teachers. Ensuring that multiple gatekeepers were fully informed was intended to negate the potential difficulties in voicing concern or withdrawing consent that might arise when the researcher is personally known to the gatekeepers (Tinson, 2009).

Participant recruitment

The case study data collection took place with whole classes and with small groups. The classes were randomly selected from those whose teachers had agreed for them to take part. The aims of the research complemented the engagement with wellbeing initiated by the school, and there were discernible benefits for the children in being involved with the research activities. To ensure that children were not denied these benefits by being in a class who were not participating, activity plans were provided for all teachers so that non-participant classes and individuals who had not received consent could still contribute to the school's ongoing exploration of wellbeing. The work produced by these classes and children was not included in the data analysis, and I did not see it or discuss it with the class teachers until the data analysis was complete. However, the views of the children not involved in the research were given due credence by their class teacher and contributed to the school review of wellbeing that was being undertaken concurrently with the research. In this way, their voices were not discredited by omission.

Smaller group data collection and analysis also took place in groups of six children, one group from each class. Had fewer children wished to be involved in the focus groups, this number would have been reduced, but all children who gave their assent wished to be involved in the smaller group research.

In qualitative research, it is not relevant to discuss sampling as the results will not be representative of the wider group (Cohen, 2018). However, there was a selection process employed for deciding who would be in the smaller group, bearing in mind that the aim of qualitative research is for each individual to bring their own perspective. The strategy was chosen in order to offer the greatest opportunity for rich and deep data (Cohen, 2018). The application of a non-probability quota sampling strategy was selected only to ensure that completely random sampling did not result in a gender imbalance which would not have given the depth and richness of information required. Other strata were considered but not utilised because the aim was not to create a representative group, only to provide the richest source of Information. Each small group of six children

included three boys and three girls, proportionate to the numbers in the class and year level.

In Year 6, an additional stratum was added. Due to the political situation and the ongoing pandemic restrictions, a significantly higher proportion of Year 5 students left at the end of the 2020-21 academic year and 10% of each Year 6 class were new to Horizon School. A stratum was included to ensure that they were represented in the smaller group because their views on wellbeing were important and they may bring a significantly different perspective than children who had been in Horizon School for longer. Each small group in Year 6 included one child who was new to Horizon School in August. All children new to Horizon School had given their assent. Within the strata, children were randomly selected to join the small group. All those randomly selected in the first instance assented and continued to assent throughout the study.

To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used in all field notes and transcriptions. Children were invited to select their own pseudonyms. This strategy was deliberately selected to enhance children's sense of ownership and agency. In Year 1, children asked the researcher to choose pseudonyms for them. The groups, pseudonyms, age at the time of the study and number of years in Horizon School can be seen in Table 3.2. Classes and groups were labelled 1.1 and 1.2 (Year 1) and 6.1 and 6.2 (Year 6) for the purposes of reporting.

Table 3.2 Children’s groups, pseudonyms, gender, age and years in school

Group	Pseudonym	Gender	Age at time of study in years	Number of years in the school prior to current year
1.1	Albert	m	5	All new to the school
	Bernard	m	5	
	Carolyn	f	5	
	Kelly	f	5	
	Matt	m	5	
	Veronica	f	4-5	
1.2	Anna	f	5	
	Bobby	m	4-5	
	Cathy	f	4	
	David	m	5	
	Ella	f	4	
	Frank	m	5	
6.1	Elizabeth*	f	10	5
	Jack*	m	10	5
	Obama*	m	10	5
	Pumpkin*	f	10	0
	Sarah	f	10	4
	Tom*	m	10	5
6.2	Amelia	f	10	5
	Eternal*	m	10	5
	Luke	m	10	4
	Mia	f	10	5
	Oliver	m	10	5
	Ruby	f	10	0

*indicates self-selected pseudonym

Luke selected a pseudonym that was his own name with one letter changed. We agreed on this alternative.

Agency and assent

The CWB literature suggested the importance of agency (Fane et al., 2020), and involving children in the research was a deliberate strategy to increase their agency and autonomy, contributing to their wellbeing (Fane et al., 2020; Drake et al., 2021). However, there was an inherent ethical conundrum in that seeking consent from parents could deny agency to children if parents withheld consent and the child wished to participate in the research (Coyne, 2010; O'Neill, 2014). Seeking adult consent suggests that children are incapable of making an informed decision about their involvement and is a manifestation of adult power over children’s decision-making. One Year 6 child whose parents had denied consent expressed their discontent that the data they generated could not be included.

However, for the purpose of current university ethical practice, informed consent was sought from all parents whose children were in the classes selected to take part in the study. This included information shared in both written and presented forms (Appendix 3). It was made clear that no reason was required for choosing not to be involved or opting out of the research.

Assent was also sought from all children engaged in the study. The numbers of consent and assent forms that were returned are shown in Table 3.3. However, although assent from the children was initially sought through stories (Year 1) and presentations (Year 6) to explain the research, it was continually negotiated with children throughout. I followed the advice of Parsons (2016) and Renold et al. (2010) to maintain an awareness of children’s engagement. Assent can be seen on a continuum from fully assenting through involvement to dissenting (Ericsson and Boyd, 2017, p.302) and may be communicated in various ways. I remained alert for both verbal and non-verbal cues that children were no longer assenting (Harcourt and Conroy, 2005), including more obvious (refusal to speak, head shaking, putting head down) and less obvious (turning body from the group, responding with short or no answers). On one occasion with Group 1.2, a series of requests to go to the toilet or get water suggested that assent was being withdrawn. However, when I suggested that we returned to the classroom and resumed our research another time, the children were adamant that they wished to stay. Instead, we played a game before returning to the research. I also used questions that the children asked as an opportunity to explain what was happening and to continue to establish assent.

Table 3.3 Number of consent forms distributed and returned

	Number of students in class		Number of parental consents		Number of student assents from those eligible	
	female	male	female	male	female	male
Class 1.1	13 f	15 m	11 f	15 m	11 f	15 m
Class 1.2	13 f	15 m	13 f	13 m	13 f	13 m
Class 6.1	13 f	15 m	12 f	13 m	11 f	12 m
Class 6.2	14 f	14 m	14 f	10 m	11 f	8 m

As with the leaders and for the same reasons, small group discussions were videotaped, and the children's assent was always sought before videotaping commenced.

Method

Fieldwork took place in Horizon School, sometimes in class and sometimes in other areas of the school, guided by the children. The Mosaic Approach uses a range of methods for children to communicate. The data generated by these tools are then collated to construct a picture of the world from the perspective of the children. The tools adopted in this study were informed by the Mosaic Approach and were task-orientated. I planned a series of sessions with a range of tools intended to invite open-ended questions and encouraged the children to share other data collection methods, although none specifically did. I explained the research as being about wellbeing, which could mean feeling happy, loved, safe and part of our school community. I explained to the children that they might have their own ideas about what wellbeing was and that I wanted to know their ideas.

Whole class data collection

The first stage of data collection took place with the whole class. After explaining the research and the notion of ongoing assent, we explored what wellbeing might mean. Children were invited to undertake a documenting activity, showing on paper the people, locations, activities and objects that were important for wellbeing. Paper, crayons, pens and pencils were provided, and children were invited to show as much or as little as they wished using any method they wanted. Although the task was set, agency was given in the approach that children selected. In Year 1, most children drew pictures with additional words, although one child drew a cartoon and some drew maps. In Year 6, timelines, lists, prose and mind maps were all produced. To limit the opportunity for misinterpretation inherent in a drawing task (Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2014) the researcher asked questions and annotated the representations the children were producing.

Small group data collection

Tools for the small group sessions were selected with an awareness of three criteria. Cognisant of the experiences of Stewart-Tufescu et al. (2019) when children disengaged from a study because the instruments in use were considered boring, tools had to be fun and engaging. At the start of each session, I explained what we would do and asked the

children for their input and opinions of the tool we were using. A second criterion was that the tools were iterative – the children could make changes to them if they wished to. The last criterion was that the tools offered a mix of oral, visual and written activities as an initial starting point. To ensure that the children in the group were comfortable together to make discussion and interaction easier, as recommended by Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell (2014), we started each of these sessions with icebreaker games as well as re-establishing assent and understanding of what the research was about.

Discussion in response to stimuli

Small group interviews with children can be enhanced with more interactive approaches often evolving into conversations (Wiltz and Klein, 2001; Greenfield, 2011). Children can benefit from having a guiding activity such as a prompt for discussion (Stewart-Tufescu et al., 2019). Between the whole class and small group data collection sessions, I reviewed the data that the children had produced. Following Fane et al. (2018, 2020) I used the data to curate a set of 16 emoji to stimulate discussion (Appendix 4). The emoji were selected based on Fane et al. (2018) and supplemented by themes emerging from the data. Children were asked to choose an emoji to talk about. The session evolved as children asked to select more than one, make another selection or add other contributions.

Child-led tours

Children were invited to take me to places in the school that were important for wellbeing. The child-led tours offered a more dynamic activity and facilitated relaxed conversations about the places the children chose to visit (Greenfield, 2011). As we walked, conversations were instigated by and between children about the places we were visiting and the reasons for their selection.

Photography

Each child was given a device that they were familiar with (an iPad) to take photographs of the places we visited on the tour. Individual devices were provided because of the increase in agency for children making their own decisions about where and when to take photographs (Dockett, Einarsdóttir and Perry, 2011). In their roles as co-researchers, the children were encouraged to consider how to maintain anonymity with the pictures, and they either audio recorded, wrote or had me annotate explanations of the reasons for

taking their photographs. Audio recordings were transcribed to accompany the photographs.

Data analysis

One of the key activities in the fieldwork with children was the data analysis session. Power differentials that manifest in research with children can be most evident in the exclusion of child voice at this point (Sixsmith et al., 2007; Pinter and Zandian, 2015). A participatory approach to research includes children in all aspects of research, including the meaning-making of analysis (Dockett, Einarsdóttir and Perry, 2011), while case studies are enhanced when data are collected and analysed concurrently (Yin et al., 2006). In order to involve the students, I followed the recommendation of Dunphy (2012), scaffolding the analysis for the children but guided by them so that we worked together to create meaning. For example, the Year 6 children curated their own photographs during one session, removing some and annotating others. As the fieldwork progressed, I curated the data gathered and created a bank of samples of the data. These included:

- Samples of the documentation produced by the children in whole class sessions
- Words and transcripts of conversations and focus group discussions
- Photographs taken by children with transcripts attached

Children were asked to discuss the data gathered and sort them, creating themes. For Year 6, during a subsequent session, children were invited to reconsider the themes that they had created. This served as a form of member checking (Grauer, 2012) of the data that had been collected, checking and rechecking what we collectively believed about CWB and how school supported or did not support it. In discussing CWB, we also reviewed which themes the children believed were attended to in the school environment and which needed more attention. During data analysis with the children, I added inductive codes to the codebook.

Data dissemination

When children are asked about their participation in research there can be a sense that their involvement ends abruptly at the end of the fieldwork (Pinter and Zandian, 2015). Working together on data analysis was one way to counter this. A further step was to offer children the opportunity to share their findings with members of the community. Children were asked if they wished to share what we had discovered, who they thought

needed to know the information and how they thought it would be best to share. While not forming part of the fieldwork, this was a critical stage for participatory research, giving the children the opportunity to feel that they had a voice and that they had used their voice.

3.6 Data analysis and comparison

Data analysis was an iterative process during policy analysis and fieldwork. At the conclusion of the fieldwork, I had three sets of data for comparison against one another, set in the three *contexts* of the microsystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. I compared the findings from each context using the lenses of the PPCT model and the *a priori* codebook with inductive additions. From this, I found places of resonance and dissonance in the conceptualisations of CWB.

The comparison and contrast of the data generated from each phase of the research constituted an inferential stage, as defined by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008). It involved the process of interpreting the findings from and across each phase of the research and the conclusions I drew from data interpretation. As has already been described, CWB themes that I identified in the literature and strategies that I identified in the WPR analysis at a policy level were used to inform the enriched group interview in the umbrella organization. In this way, the inferences I drew from the data analysis at the policy level impacted the data-gathering process with the umbrella organisation in a feedback loop identified by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008). The final stage of the research was to integrate the findings from each phase to form meta-inferences (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2008). To achieve this, I identified a set of categories or themes that indicated how CWB was understood at each level of the research, from macrosystem to microsystem. As previously described, each phase of the research was conducted using different methods in a pragmatic approach to method selection endorsed by Greene and Caracelli's assertion that "...what will work best is often a combination of different methods" (1997, p.8). Using different methods in this way to explore different phases of the study was undertaken with the intention of enhancing the scope and breadth of the study, identified as an *expansion* intent by Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989). However, the study was also undertaken for the purpose of seeking divergence (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010, p.9) in order to more deeply investigate the conceptualisations of CWB. To compare and contrast the findings at each phase, I wrote

the categories onto index cards and arranged these in three columns representing each phase of the research. McFeetors (2017) noted the importance of a researcher's intense engagement with their data, and this resonated with the approach I adopted. I had a deep familiarity with the data from engaging with it during analysis and I used this to identify links between categories and themes in each column, drawing on specific examples from each phase of the research. I identified instances where the same or similar categories featured in all three phases of the research, although sometimes the language used to define a category varied. In these instances, my rich knowledge of the data enabled me to see connections in a way that I could not have done if I had relied only on the category headings I used. For example, the younger children talked about the importance of places and activities promoting calm feelings. Older children spoke specifically about strategies such as meditation to help them find balance and be calm and these aligned with descriptions of self-regulation in the other phases of the research. I also found examples of categories which featured in only two or one phase of the research, representing places where there was a misalignment between the conceptualisations of CWB. Although Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) considered that checking for integrative efficacy was not applicable for a qualitative strand of mixed method research (p.115), I believe that it was relevant for this study. Here, I use integrative efficacy to refer to the extent that inferences made in each phase (rather than strand, as Tashakkori and Teddlie recommend) of the research contributed to meta-inferences consistent with the theories examined. To this end, Bronfenbrenner's PPCT theory was the lens through which I compared the categories from different phases, whilst maintaining a simultaneous awareness of the three wellbeing theories of PERMA, SDT and RWB.

3.7 Ethics, trustworthiness and integrity

Ethics were critical in this research as it involved young children, so the consideration of ethical implications have been evident throughout the chapter. This has included fulfilling the requirement for written parental consent while continually seeking and renegotiating child assent both verbally and non-verbally, which is particularly relevant with the young children involved. Also discussed have been the protection of anonymity, including teaching the children involved in the research about this and increasing their agency by involving them in selecting their own pseudonyms and anonymising data they were

collecting. I have also explained the consideration of power dynamics in the research process and the use of alternative gatekeepers. Furthermore, participants and, where appropriate, their parents/carers were informed about data storage procedures including the relevant security measures taken and compliance with local HK law. All participants were offered the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time and their data at any time up to anonymisation. No one chose to withdraw themselves or their children from the study. Throughout data collection, I maintained an awareness of ethical speed bumps (Ericsson and Boyd, 2017) – the moments that highlighted particular ethical issues in the research. The concern expressed by Luke that he wanted to be recognised for his part in the research and felt that the use of a pseudonym would prevent this, and the displeasure exhibited by a child whose parents had denied consent to be involved were examples of this.

The notions of validity and reliability are not commensurate with a qualitative case study approach. Similarly, the post-structural analysis of policy was conducted with a recognition that there is more than one way of perceiving the “problem” represented by the documents analysed. More relevant in this paradigm are trustworthiness, credibility and authenticity (Laverty, 2003; Cohen, 2018). At the start of this chapter, I recognised the difficulty of generalisation from a case study. Qualitative research such as this has validity in its uniqueness, yet I have used thick description to enable reader agency in generalisation. I recognised my own position before beginning the research, and acknowledged that I cannot separate myself from this position. I ameliorated concerns about interpretive validity (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007) in the research with children by conducting the data analysis with the children and confirming my final findings before submission. I have also addressed the challenges of power imbalance that can surface in work with children and the steps that were taken to address this.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter I have detailed how I designed the study to address RQ1 and RQ2. RQ3 will be addressed in the synthesis and discussion of the findings from the research undertaken. I described how I structured the study and undertook data collection and analysis.

I began the chapter by giving my own epistemological standpoint. I acknowledged my reflexivity in approaching the data, and I ended it by summarising how ethics, reliability and validity were considered throughout the research. The particular ethics related to engaging with young children in research were examined in more detail, including specific measures taken regarding this. This contributes to the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 4: Findings and analysis

In this chapter, I present the findings from the research in two phases. Phase Two encompassed empirical research at the local level. First, I present findings from the documentary analysis. I present the findings from research with the umbrella organisation second, and finally the findings from research undertaken in the school. During the research, I added inductive codes to the codebook presented at the end of Chapter Two (available in Appendix 6).

4.1 Phase 1: Findings from documentary and policy analysis

4.1.1 Rationale for wellbeing

Values and societal norms influence policy creation and implementation in the local context. Seeking the problems that a wellbeing approach in schools is intended to address gave insight into how CWB is conceptualised at a macrosystem level and six broad themes emerged from the WPR analysis:

- economic considerations: poor CWB impacts detrimentally on individual and national financial stability
- resilience development: poor CWB lowers capacity to recover from adversity
- academic benefit: poor CWB results in lower academic outcomes
- nurturing positive emotions: poor CWB is an outcome of lower levels of positive emotions in the child
- relationship networks: poor CWB contributes to ineffective and unfulfilling relationships
- community building: poor CWB reduces the capacity of communities to thrive

Tables 4.1 and 4.2. indicate which documents included each of these themes as a rationale for a wellbeing approach. Only documents which specifically gave a justification for implementing wellbeing programmes, curriculum or approaches were included in the tables.

Table 4.1 What is the Problem Represented to Be in documents containing a rationale for a wellbeing approach (Australia, England, Ireland)

Country/ body	Categorisation within PPCT model	Time			Person	Process Context	Context
	Problem represented Name of document	Economic considerations	Resilience development	Academic benefit	Nurturing positive emotions	Relationship networks	Community building
Australia	The National Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (in draft) (Australia, 2020)	X	X		X	X	X
	Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (Australia, 2018)	X	X	X		X	X
	The Early Years Framework for Australia (Australia, no date-a)	X	X	X		X	X
	Framework for School Age Care in Australia (Australia, no date-b)	X	X	X	X		X
England	*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (Great Britain, 2019b)	X	X	X	X	X	
	Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools departmental advice for school staff (Great Britain, 2018)		X				
	Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper (Great Britain, 2017b)	X		X			
	Promoting Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing (Lavis and Robson, 2015)		X	X			
	A Whole School Framework for Emotional Well Being and Mental Health <i>and</i> Supporting Resources for School Leaders (Stirling and Emery, 2016b, a)	X	X	X		X	
Ireland	*Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (Ireland, 2019)	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Guidelines for Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle (Ireland, 2017, 2021)	X	X	X		X	X
	Best Practice Guidance for post primary schools (Ireland, 2018a, b)				X	X	

Table 4.2 What is the Problem Represented To Be in documents containing a rationale for a wellbeing approach (Hong Kong, IB)

Country/ body	Categorisation within PPCT model	Time			Person	Process Context	Context
	Problem represented Name of document	Economic considerations	Resilience development	Academic benefit	Nurturing positive emotions	Relationship networks	Community building
Hong Kong	*Learning through Life reform proposals (Hong Kong, 2000)			X			
	*Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools (Hong Kong, 2016)			X	X		X
	*General Studies Curriculum Guide for Primary Schools (Hong Kong, 2017a)		X			X	X
	*Personal, Social and Humanities Education (Hong Kong, 2017d)		X				X
	Mental Health of Adolescents (Hong Kong, 2017c)	X		X			
IB	Why wellbeing matters during a time of crisis (Balica, 2020)		X	X		X	X
	MYP/ From Principles into Practice (International Baccalaurate Organisation, 2021)		X	X			X
	PYP PSHE scope and sequence (International Baccalaurate Organisation, 2009)		X			X	X
	The Learning Community (International Baccalaurate Organisation, 2018)		X		X	X	X
	What is well-being (Balica, 2021)	X	X	X	X		

Economic considerations

When considered through the lens of the PPCT framework and codebook, the first three themes fall into the element of *time* (Rosa and Tudge, 2013), focusing on future wellbeing. Economic justifications for focusing on CWB fell broadly into two categories. The first was the potential contribution to economic stability and national growth of mentally healthy, independent individuals (Ireland, 2017). This would be facilitated by ensuring that young people grew into mentally healthy, employable adults (Stirling and Emery, 2016a) and corresponds closely with a neoliberal perspective that individuals are responsible for their own capacity to support themselves and their families. The second justification was the economic benefit of addressing wellbeing in childhood to prevent

future mental health needs from being a drain on social services (Australia, 2020). This sentiment also appeared obliquely in English documentation, referencing the societal cost of mental health issues that are not addressed early (England, 2017b). The economic reason for focusing on CWB was not as prevalent in the IB and HK documentation as in the English, Irish and Australian.

Resilience development

The theme most commonly represented in the documentation was resilience. Having the skills to face life's challenges (Ireland, 2019) and manage adversity were cited frequently and consistently in much of the documentation as a reason for promoting CWB in schools. Resilience was framed at an individual level, including in the Irish Wellbeing Policy Statement (Ireland, 2019) which generally took a more RWB perspective in much of its rationale. In English, HK and IB documentation, it was the responsibility of schools to create resilient individuals, reflecting a neoliberal economic imperative. The onus was placed on the individual to develop a positive attitude, maintain their own mental health and cultivate the ability to ask for help when needed. The focus was on building for the future.

Academic benefits

Closely linked to the notion of the economic value of a mentally healthy population are the academic benefits of wellbeing in schools. A significant number of the documents analysed made reference to improved academic outcomes for those with good CWB. If children had good wellbeing, they would have better academic outcomes which would enable them, in the future, to be successful (for example Ireland, 2019, p.8) or contribute more to society (Hong Kong, 2000; Balica, 2021). This framed education as the means to achieving a stable future for the individual or to enable the individual to contribute to society.

Nurturing positive emotions

This theme falls under the *person* element of the PPCT model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), although links are made to the resilience boosting impact of positive emotion: there is also a *time*, future-focused aspect. Happiness and positive emotions are often linked to the hedonic paradigm and understood through subjective wellbeing. All policy contexts made links between the capacity to learn and children having confidence, enjoying learning and being optimistic. Irish documentation, however, noted that

“...emotional wellbeing may be understood as an educational end in and of itself” (Ireland, 2019, p.12), and in the Australian rationale happiness was closely linked with relationships (Australia, 2020). However, none of the documentation specifically addressed nurturing positive emotions in others - the problem was represented as a lack of individual positive emotions. As will become apparent when the strategies to achieve wellbeing are examined, there was an expectation that CWB was measured. Elevating the importance of positive emotions as part of CWB made it more possible to reify, quantify and rank as a simple survey can establish self-reported positive emotions relatively easily.

Relationship networks

Relationship networks are developed through protracted *proximal processes* with others and enabled by structures within the *context*. This theme presented a conundrum. Unfulfilling relationships were represented in the documentation as both an outcome and a cause of poor CWB. PERMA recognises the importance of good relationships for promoting individual wellbeing and it was largely this perspective that was represented in the documentation (i.e. Australia, 2020). The IB referenced the importance of relationships for wellbeing, based explicitly on the PERMA model (Balica, 2021) while the Irish documentation recognised the need for a significant adult in a child’s life (Ireland, 2019). The focus was on how fulfilling relationships can be for the individual rather than the mutually beneficial communal relational web that is a feature of RWB.

However, in some of the documentation across all the policy contexts the problem represented was reversed: not relationships impacting on wellbeing, but good wellbeing contributing to fulfilling relationships. For the IB, the focus was not on wellbeing as an individual commodity. Rather, it focused on building strong relationships and communities where everyone assumed shared responsibility for wellbeing (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2018). Following an RWB theoretical stance, wellbeing would be emergent in strong communities.

Whilst the problem was largely represented to be unfulfilling relationships, the concept of relationships is so intrinsically linked with wellbeing that the documentation does not always differentiate between whether relationships contribute to wellbeing, or wellbeing contributes to relationships. The symbiotic nature of this pairing is much more affiliated with an RWB lens on wellbeing and is closely linked to the final theme identified in the documentation, of community building.

Community building

The final theme manifests in the *contexts* of the PPCT model, particularly the microsystems and mesosystems: the importance of relationships and building community. When aspects of wellbeing are considered through a *context* lens, the responsibility for wellbeing shifts from the individual to a more communal approach.

In the English documentation, good CWB would enable young people to be successful, happy adults who made a meaningful contribution to society (England, 2019b, p.5). This perspective is more interactional than entirely individual, as making a meaningful contribution to society positively affects others. Both the IB and HK also brought an interactional slant to the focus on community involvement, noting that service to the community enhances a sense of belonging (Hong Kong, 2016; Balica, 2021). However, the aim is not to develop dynamic wellbeing that is emergent from relationality (White, 2015), but rather the individual benefit of engaging with the community. Irish documentation noted that the “capacity to cope in the face of adversity” (p.10) could be enhanced by the individual having supportive relationships and communities. Similarly, the Australian strategic framework (Australia, 2020) spoke of strengthening resilience at the community and family level (p.13), with the purpose of providing support for families and children when needed. Although this might be considered to be a more community-based approach to CWB, the impetus was groups facilitating wellbeing for an individual or a group of individuals, still situating an individualised object of focus (the child).

However, as belonging is a group construct, there is an inherent emphasis on the common good. Community building is similar to relationship networks in that there is a symbiotic relationship. For the IB, the benefit to the individual of contributing to the community was only one aspect. Wellbeing was considered to be built in community, and community built through wellbeing. The IB considered that its programmes valued wellbeing and sought to encourage pupils to become active and valuable members of communities locally, nationally and globally (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2021).

One feature of the way that community building was understood in the documentation from Australia and Ireland, in particular, was that of belonging. Children needed to feel that they belonged in order to have wellbeing – the implication is that more needs to be done to enhance children’s sense of belonging (Ireland, 2017, 2019, 2021; Australia, no

date-a, b). Belonging entails ensuring that students feel that they are part of both their own setting and a wider community.

Reflection

In summary, these six themes evidenced that wellbeing in the policy contexts examined was broadly conceptualised as an individual outcome. Impact by the community on the individual, or by the individual on the community is secondary to addressing individual wellbeing. Although relationship networks and community building featured in the themes, they did not assume the same level of importance across the policy contexts as the more individually focused themes.

Through the lens of the PPCT model, CWB is largely considered in the documentation in terms of its relationship with the future. The focus was generally not on the child in the here-and-now but on the positive impact of good wellbeing on the adult-in-waiting. Policy and documentation related to wellbeing in schools were focused on the individual, whether that was the future of the individual, the current state of the individual or the impact that their contexts could have on them. Even relationships and community were primarily portrayed as beneficial to the individual.

4.1.2 Strategies advocated to support CWB in schools

Further analysing the documentation from each context gave deeper insight into how CWB was represented. Policy contexts recommended strategies to address CWB in schools. The strategies and programmes recommended were tangible representations of policy, aligning with a theoretical perspective.

The strategies have been split into five broad themes, and Table 4.3 shows: the strategies that were recommended within each of these themes; the number of policies or guidance documents that recommended this strategy; and the aspect of PPCT that the strategy most aligned with. A breakdown of the recommendations by country/body is available in Appendix 2.

Table 4.3 Strategies recommended in implementing a wellbeing approach across Australia, England, Hong Kong, Ireland and the IB

	Strategy recommended in implementing a wellbeing approach	Number of documents recommending the strategy	PPCT
Whole school	Contextually relevant – schools given freedom to adapt dependent on identified school need	24	Context
	Whole school approach/ culture of wellbeing	22	Context
	Targeted intervention or support for students with higher needs	17	Person/ Process
	Strong relationships in the school	17	Process/ Context
Staff	Staff: professional development	21	Person (staff) or Context
	Staff: wellbeing of school personnel	11	Person (staff) or Context
	Leadership: Designated person in the school responsible for implementation of a wellbeing approach.	18	Context
Students	Learning and teaching: Curriculum expectations	19	Process/ Context
	Learning and teaching: Implementation of evidence-based programmes	14	Process/ Context
	Engagement of student voice	14	Context
Review	Implementation of a review and monitoring cycle	12	Context
Community	Community involvement, including parents/ caregivers and the wider community	21	Context
	Recognition of the involvement of external bodies – i.e., local and national government, NGOs, faith groups	16	Context

The strategies recommended largely fall into the *context* element of the PPCT model. The documentation indicated that the strategies should mostly be enacted by the school, although some relied on interactions beyond the school, such as community building. This is relevant because of how it placed the responsibility for wellbeing on the school as well

as on the community. I explore the implications of these strategies in greater depth below.

Whole school approaches

The strategy most recommended in the documentation for addressing wellbeing in schools was contextual relevance – schools were given the freedom to adapt their approach dependent on school needs. Even within HK, where policy implementation was largely mandated, this flexibility was written into policy (Hong Kong, 2016, p.8; 2017d).

Reflecting the global shift towards a salutogenic approach, all policy contexts recommended that a whole school approach was adopted, but this would be supplemented by targeted interventions for those with a greater level of need. This was intended to contribute to contextual flexibility, as schools were able to adapt their approach to the needs of their students.

A whole school approach is one that includes the culture of the school, creating an environment of belonging. This extended to the recommendation that schools construct their own policies around wellbeing and, in the case of Ireland, to ensure that all policies generated in schools were explicitly linked to wellbeing (Ireland, 2019, p.16). At the time of the study, Ireland had entered a phase of educational development where explicit importance was being placed on learning for and learning about wellbeing (Ireland, 2019, p.21). This included the ongoing rewriting of curriculum documents and guidelines to support addressing wellbeing in the culture, relationships, policy and curriculum of schools. The Irish guidance was that the collective wellbeing of school, community and society at large should be considered.

In an IB context, the key area of focus was the development of the whole child. An IB education should be holistic, nurturing child development and including both intellectual and emotional aspects, promoting the importance of relationships and collaboration within a learning community (Hare, 2010). This manifests in the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills, in certain attributes of the IB Learner Profile (IBLP), and in the expectations for creating learning environments and cultures of wellbeing. The IBLP is a list of attributes which IB schools seek to develop in all learners. These attributes are intended to encourage members of the school community to respect themselves, others and the world around them. Of particular relevance for wellbeing are the attributes of *balance*;

and *caring*, which focuses on the development of empathy, compassion and respect. The description of what balance means in IB schools was: “We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.” (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2013). A recently released document entitled “The Learning Community” endorsed the commitment to community building. Intended to support the implementation of the Primary Years Programme (PYP), this document included an outline of how wellbeing might manifest in a school and strategies that could be undertaken to support this (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2018). The guidance recommended developing a shared understanding of wellbeing, supporting student agency, and “promoting a safe and caring culture throughout the community – including online” (ibid., p.5).

As previously discussed, relationships are considered both a reason for implementing a CWB approach and a strategy to achieve CWB, symbiotic in nature. Strong relationships in the school contribute to a positive school culture which is part of a whole school wellbeing approach. The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework stated the importance of a culture that fostered positive relationships and recommended fostering caring and respectful relationships between students, peers and teachers, between teachers, and between teachers and parents (Australia, 2018). Similarly, the IB expected that all members of a school community prioritised people and relationships, assuming shared responsibility for wellbeing as well as learning (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2018, p.1). Guidance was given for ways to create opportunities for relationships between members of the learning community – student-teacher, students and peers, teachers with colleagues and parents – for example, teaching constructive student-peer feedback on work; engaging students with the planning process (also linked to student voice); using focus groups with parents; implementing peer mentoring and peer coaching with teachers.

Other than targeted intervention, which focuses on applying specific proximal *processes* to the *person*, the strategies within the *whole school* category lie in the *context* element of the PPCT model, and they are largely intended to address the *microsystem*. However, the relationship-building that was promoted also evidenced the importance of the interactions between children’s microsystems.

The next category of strategies addressed a specific group of people within the context – the staff.

Strategies linked to staff

Three of the strategies recommended for CWB in a school focused on staff: professional development to upskill staff to deliver wellbeing interventions or to develop a wellbeing approach; the wellbeing of staff themselves; and the leadership of a wellbeing approach within a school.

There was an expectation, particularly in English documentation, that professional development enabled staff to learn how to support students with mental health challenges (Lavis and Robson, 2015; Weare, 2015; Stirling and Emery, 2016a, b).

The strategy least represented in the documentation is *staff wellbeing*. This strategy relates closely to an RWB perspective, creating a context for wellbeing to exist throughout the institution and society as a whole. The Irish documentation specifically recognised that promoting staff wellbeing was one of the factors that had a positive impact on CWB even when children had been exposed to factors that might detrimentally impact wellbeing (Ireland, 2019, pp.12-13).

Finally, there was a general expectation that there was some form of leadership for CWB in a school. This ranged from an expectation for an appointed individual to take responsibility for CWB, as in the Australian, English and HK documentation, to an expectation that there was shared and distributed leadership for addressing CWB, with everyone holding responsibility for wellbeing across the school community, as in the Irish and IB documentation.

When considered from the viewpoint of the child, addressing the wellbeing and professional development needs of staff, as well as addressing leadership, had an impact on the microsystem *context*. It also involved activities, such as professional development, that may take place in the exosystem but impact the microsystem of the child. However, if the lens shifts from the child to the staff member, these strategies become ones that impact both the *person* and the *proximal processes*. For example, in Australia, Ireland and the IB, the professional development recommended included approaches that would also contribute to developing staff relationships, such as professional learning communities, study groups and professional networks.

For the purposes of this study, with a focus on CWB, these strategies remain ones which impact the overall context. However, the reality is far more complex. All individuals in a school influence *each other's* development and context, reflecting an RWB perspective of how wellbeing moves in and through communities.

Strategies linked to students

The group of strategies that are linked to students tend to focus more on the *person* and *processes* elements of the PPCT model.

Curricula requirements for wellbeing: skills and attributes

One area worthy of further exploration is the expectation for schools to implement curriculum to support the delivery of wellbeing related learning outcomes. In all policy contexts, it was a requirement that a curriculum was in place. HK and Ireland provided curriculum expectations in the form of aims or targets and outcomes (Ireland, 2000; Hong Kong, 2017a, d), although the Irish curriculum was under review. In the new iteration, Ireland intended to update the Social and Personal Health Education curriculum to Fostering Wellbeing, which indicated how the policy context influenced wellbeing in schools. England and Australia required that curricula were in place, including guidance regarding what should be included. In England, this incorporated statutory guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education (England, 2019b), and non-statutory guidance such as the Character Education guidance (England, 2019a). The IB provided an exemplar scope and sequence for primary-age students (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2009) and stipulated teaching of the ATL skills and embedding of the IBLP.

Whether exemplar or stipulated curricula were provided or not, across the contexts there were expectations for schools to engender particular skills and attributes in their students. Tables 4.4 (*person* and *process*) and 4.5 (*context* and *time*) show these skills and attributes coded using the codebook presented at the end of Chapter Two and assigned to an element of the PPCT model. Also indicated are the policy contexts in which they appear. Some skills/attributes have two codes based on how they were referenced in the documentation. The sub-codes for *dispositions* in the codebook were updated as a result of this policy analysis.

Table 4.4 Skills/attributes recommended in curriculum guidance, the country that recommended the skill/attribute and its code and assignment in the PPCT model (Person and Process elements)

Skill/ attribute	Code	PPCT	Australia	England	Hong Kong	Ireland	IBO	
Commitment	Disposition	Person	x	x	x		x	
Courage	Disposition			x	x	x		
Dignity	Disposition				x	x	x	
Emotional management / intelligence	Disposition			x	x	x	x	
Generosity	Disposition			x				
Honesty/ trustworthiness	Disposition			x	x	x	x	
Humility	Disposition			x				
Integrity	Disposition			x	x	x	x	
Perseverance/ persistence	Disposition			x	x	x	x	
Positive values	Disposition				x	x	x	
Self-awareness	Disposition						x	x
Self-esteem, self-confidence	Disposition			x	x	x	x	x
Self-identity	Disposition			x			x	x
Self-control, self-regulation, self-discipline	Disposition			x	x	x		x
Self-worth, self-respect	Disposition				x		x	x
Agency	Agency, Relationships	Person/ Process	x			x	x	
Autonomy	Agency, Relationships		x		x		x	
Active/ physical/ healthy	Physical health and activity		x	x	x	x	x	
Caring	Relationships	Process	x	x	x	x	x	
Help seeking	Learning		x			x	x	
Kindness/ compassion/ empathy	Relationships		x	x	x	x	x	
Personal safety/ protective behaviours	Agency		x		x	x	x	
Problem solving	Agency, Learning		x	x	x	x	x	
Responsibility	Agency, Relationships		x	x	x	x	x	
Self-control, self-regulation, self-discipline	Relationships, Learning		x	x	x		x	
Self-management, self-motivation	Relationships, Learning				x	x	x	

Table 4.5 Skills/attributes recommended in curriculum guidance, the country that recommended the skill/attribute and its code and assignment in the PPCT model (Context and Time elements)

Skill/ attribute	Code	PPCT	Australia	England	Hong Kong	Ireland	IBO
Respect	Relationships, Agency	Context	x	x	x	x	x
Collaboration	Relationships, Agency		x		x	x	x
Belonging	Community		x	x		x	
Connection (with people and the world)	Community		x			x	x
Interdependence	Community		x		x		x
Open-minded	Community				x	x	x
Sense of justice	Community		x	x	x		
Willingness to contribute to the common good	Community				x		
Coping skills	Future focused	Time	x	x	x	x	x
Resilience	Future focused		x	x	x	x	x

Belonging and connection were coded with ‘community’ and included in the element of *context* because they were group constructs, only existing with the existence of the community. “Sense of justice” was given this code because the implication was that “sense of justice” was for group justice rather than individual justice. In HK documentation it was listed as a social value and linked with the common good and interdependence (Hong Kong, 2014), while in the Australian documentation it was specifically linked to social justice (Australia, no date-b). In the English documentation, it was considered a personal value, but it was recommended to be developed through social action and active citizenship (England, 2019b).

The grouping of the skills/attributes in this way shows that the majority of taught elements of the curriculum across policy contexts promoted an individualistic notion of wellbeing. They were skills that could be taught to or exercised by one person in developing themselves. There are far fewer skills that would either impact positively, if incidentally, on others, or that would support in developing a communal context for wellbeing. The skills/attributes were recognised at an individual level and, as the individual matures, they were made responsible for themselves. All policy contexts included the skills labelled as “future focused”, supporting an economic rationale for implementing a CWB approach.

Supplementing the curricula: resource hubs and evidence-based programmes

A strategy recommended to supplement curricula is the implementation of evidence-based programmes. These can be viewed as the deliberate manufacturing of *proximal processes*. The same can be said of any learning and teaching that takes place consistently. All policy contexts made this recommendation with variations in the number of programmes suggested and the level of guidance provided. The governments of Australia and England endorsed websites of resources providing lesson plans, programmes and support for wellbeing learning and teaching. For Australia, The Student Wellbeing Hub (Education Services Australia, n.d.) included examples of practice, presentations to share with parents and online professional development options. It also gave access to programmes and activities for teaching aspects of wellbeing. The Be You website (Beyond Blue, 2021) was more focused on professional development and offering resources to support the implementation of a whole school approach, but it also offered links to other endorsed programmes. The PSHE Association website (PSHE Association, n.d.) in England was recommended to support wellbeing relevant learning and teaching. It fulfilled a similar role to The Student Wellbeing Hub with a range of resources and programmes, including curriculum design, lesson plans, programmes and links to other endorsed and reviewed programmes to support wellbeing.

There were two other means of supporting CWB suggested. First, the recommendation of approaches unaffiliated with a particular programme, for example, integrated counselling, peer support or coaching. Secondly, documentation recommended specific programmes. These programmes are listed in Table 4.6, which shows whether the programme was intended to be deployed for and support individual wellbeing or whether it was intended to support wellbeing through relationships (interactional). Of the programmes listed, only three were intended to enhance community as well as individual wellbeing or wellbeing through relationships and were listed as interdependent programmes.

Table 4.6 Evidence based programmes for wellbeing recommended in the documentation, and the level at which they support wellbeing

	Recommending document	Recommended Programmes	How does the programme support wellbeing		
			Individual	Interactional	Interdependent
Australia	The National Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (in draft) (Australia, 2020)	Think Equal (Think Equal, n.d.)	X	X	X
England	Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper (Great Britain, 2017b)	Positive Behaviour Support (The Challenging Behaviour Foundation, 2021)	X		
		Youth Mental First Aid training for teachers (Mental Health First Aid England, 2021)	X		
	Promoting Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing (Lavis and Robson, 2015)	Penn Resiliency Programme (Positive Psychology Center, 2021)	X		
		Classroom Dinosaur Curriculum (The Incredible Years, 2013)	X	X	
		Friends for Life (Friends Resilience, 2019)	X	X	
		PATHs curriculum (PATHS Curriculum, 2012)	X		
		Roots of Empathy (Roots of Empathy, n.d)	X	X	
Zippy’s Friends (Partnership for Children, n.d.)	X				
Ireland	Guidelines for Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle 2021 (Ireland, 2021)	Friends Youth Programme (Friends Resilience, 2019)	X	X	
		Junior Social Innovation Action programme (Young Social Innovators, 2021)	X	X	X
		Resilience Academy (pieta, 2021)	X		
Hong Kong	Mental Health of Adolescents (Hong Kong, 2017c)	Understanding Adolescent Project (Hong Kong, 2020a, 2021)	X		
		Enhanced Smart Teen Project (Hong Kong, 2020b)	X	X	
IB	Why wellbeing matters during a time of crisis (Balica, 2020)	Quality Circle Time (Jenny Mosley consultancies, 2021)		X	X

As well as suggesting some programmes as part of an exemplar of how teaching and learning might be planned (Ireland, 2021), Ireland provided a checklist for schools on how to select appropriate programmes (Ireland, 2018a, b).

The programmes recommended in HK are all created by the HK government, but they are not available to schools that do not receive government funding, so Horizon School does not have access. Meanwhile, the IB has only one programme suggested, in a document published in response to the pandemic. Prior to the paper focusing on wellbeing in a time of crisis (Balica, 2020), the IB made no recommendations for specific programmes to support wellbeing generally or the teaching of PSHE specifically, and it did not recommend the use of evidence-based programmes as a strategy. At a microsystem level, IB schools independently seek programmes to support them in addressing wellbeing. A study into the implementation of the PYP in Australia found that many schools supplemented their wellbeing approach with external programmes and were unaware of the PYP learning and teaching component in the PSHE sample scope and sequence (Dix and Sniedze-Gregory, 2020). This revelation leads to further questions about the extent to which schools are implementing, or perhaps even aware of, the expectations placed upon them.

The final strategy linked to students also related to community involvement: the engagement of student voice. Children's wellbeing is increased when they feel listened to (Anderson and Graham, 2016), so engaging with children to understand their perspective on wellbeing is likely to positively impact CWB.

The suggested strategies linked to students fell into person, process and context elements of the PPCT model, although the common factor is a focus on developing processes which will amplify wellbeing in the students at the school.

Review structures

A further strategy suggested for wellbeing in schools was implementing a review process. The policy guidance for Australia and Ireland specifically required the review of the approach to wellbeing through school self-assessment. For HK, England and the IB, the expectations for wellbeing were embedded into the frameworks for whole school review with Ofsted in England, the IB reauthorisation process or school self-assessment and inspection in HK (Hong Kong, 2016; International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016;

England, 2019c). These reviews were intended to measure how the implementation of wellbeing approaches was contributing to improved student wellbeing and reducing mental health problems, as well as informative procedures for what next steps might be undertaken. They involved reviewing aspects of the school, such as culture and climate, environment and relationships within the school, often through self-assessment.

In addition to reviewing the impact of any implemented wellbeing approaches, schools were encouraged to undertake wellbeing assessments with individual students. Governments made use of health and wellbeing surveys across school-aged populations. For example, the HK government produced its own measure – the Assessment Programme for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO-II) (Hong Kong, 2018a), aspects of which have been used in school self-evaluation for older children (Wu and Mok, 2017). Meanwhile, the Australian government funded an extensive survey of the mental health of adolescents, which was used to inform the NCMHWS (Australia, 2020). The English documentation suggested using assessments of individual wellbeing – for example, the Stirling children’s wellbeing scale, the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale and the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (Lavis and Robson, 2015, p.18). The recommendation was that this data be used to plan activities related to wellbeing and mental health. As an example of the strength of the neoliberal market model for education, there are companies providing wellbeing surveys as a paid service for schools (i.e., PASS from the UK (GL Assessment, 2017), SEW from the Australian Council for Educational Research (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2021), AWE from Australia (Assessing Wellbeing in Education, 2021)).

As discussed in earlier chapters, the measurement of individual wellbeing is complex. There are a number of elements of wellbeing, which fluctuates in response to context. Furthermore, wellbeing is constantly evolving for the individual and for the community. Surveys and questionnaires only provide snapshots of the moment in which the survey is taken. Alternatively, some policy contexts recommended the use of external, objective measures. For example, Australia and Ireland suggested that wellbeing could be measured through school attendance, connectedness and engagement with school (Ireland, 2019; Australia, 2020, p.64). Ireland and the IB recommended supplementing any quantitative data gathered in this way with consultation and open surveys with all stakeholders in the community (Ireland, 2019; Balica, 2021).

Measuring the wellbeing of an individual, usually assessed by self-report against indicators, fell into the *person* or *process* aspect of the PPCT model. However, although measurement of individual wellbeing might be how the strategy is interpreted, the intention in print was to assess how effectively wellbeing needs were met by the school.

Strategies including wider stakeholders: community involvement

All policy contexts referred to the importance of involving parents and caregivers in wellbeing approaches, and of engaging the services of external agencies for support. As previously mentioned, Ireland gave specific guidance on how to assess the suitability of a programme for a wellbeing approach – including external speakers or agencies. Schools and parents/carers working together to support CWB exists in the mesosystem of the *contexts*, where there are interactions between the microsystems in which the student exists.

However, the ways that schools were recommended to engage with the community reflected whether the approach being suggested supported the individual or community building. For example, the English documentation recommended that schools supported parents to develop their parenting skills, and work with parents to promote social and emotional wellbeing for children (Lavis and Robson, 2015). These approaches are about supporting the wellbeing of individuals by increasing the capacity and knowledge of those who care for them. The Irish documentation, meanwhile, recommended that parents/carers were involved with all stakeholders in a review of current wellbeing practice at an information gathering stage, and were later actively involved in promoting wellbeing within the school community (Ireland, 2019). The community consultation and community building in this approach to understanding and developing wellbeing were more aligned with mutual support for wellbeing than individual responsibility.

4.1.3 Summary

In this section, I have presented the findings from a documentation analysis. I examined how wellbeing expectations were enacted in policy and the expectations of five agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, for how that policy should be mobilised at an institutional level.

The WPR analysis revealed a conceptualisation of wellbeing residing in the individual, with concerns expressed for the impact of wellbeing on individual resilience and

academic achievement and the subsequent effect of this on the economy. A neoliberal imperative was apparent in educational wellbeing policies. Neoliberalism inherently focuses on the individual as an economic subject or a potential economic subject. Policy contexts that emphasise the responsibility of the individual to develop and maintain their own wellbeing align with the neoliberal hegemony.

Analysing the documentation revealed a series of strategies recommended to schools implementing wellbeing approaches, falling broadly into five categories:

- whole school approach
- staff related strategies
- student related strategies
- review of the wellbeing approach
- community engagement

The strategies focused mainly on the context in which wellbeing was addressed, and the steps taken within the school to address the wellbeing of the individual *person*, the *processes* enabled to enhance wellbeing for the individual and the engagement of the wider community to support the individual. Overwhelmingly, the focus remained primarily on the individual's wellbeing rather than on wellbeing within the community.

The complexity of policy creation and enactment is acknowledged, using Horizon School as an example. Horizon School fell outside the expectations of the HK EDB for curriculum and exam implementation. However, the school was required to follow certain EDB and government policies, such as the closure of schools during the protests and the pandemic. Horizon School was established under the auspices of an umbrella organisation and had to follow the expectations of the organisation, such as the administration of certain standardised tests. It was also authorised as an IB World School and must adhere to the Programme Standards and Practices (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016), undergoing regular review. These bodies all produce policies and expectations that Horizon School was required to enact, which may all have a bearing on the conceptualisation of wellbeing in the school.

To compare the expectations of the macrosystem and higher levels of the exosystem on Horizon School, I engaged in research with the umbrella organisation, using the findings

from the documentary analysis to stimulate discussion among leaders in the organisation. These findings will be presented next.

4.2 Phase 2: Findings from umbrella organisation

The central office of the umbrella organisation formed a bridge between the macrosystem represented in policy and the microsystem of Horizon School. It framed the ethos of the overarching organisation and provided guidance for the schools under its auspices. The organisation liaised with the EDB on behalf of all its schools, clarifying certain points from EDB communication with schools. In recent years these included clarification about the implementation of aspects of the national security law, such as specific teaching practices, as well as negotiation around school closures linked to the pandemic.

Data collection and analysis at this level were intended to explore the extent to which the views of the leaders of the organisation and the guidance issued to schools aligned with conceptualisations of CWB emergent in policy. To do this, I analysed the strategic priorities guidance document of the organisation and a video about wellbeing produced by the organisation and subsequently conducted a group interview.

4.2.1 Alignment with the macrosystem

The WPR approach to policy analysis revealed a conceptualisation of wellbeing focused on the individual. The value of CWB approaches was seen to lie in how they positively impacted resilience building and academic results. Supporting individual CWB led to good adult wellbeing facilitating positive relationships and thriving communities.

Economic considerations for addressing CWB were not overt in the organisation's rationale. This aligns with the WPR analysis for HK and the IB, the two groups with the most direct influence on the umbrella organisation. HK and the IB tend to be more community focused in their rationales for wellbeing. It could also be argued that the economic focus of the organisation is not that of the nation or the globalised society but rather its own financial stability. Marketing the emphasis that the organisation applies to CWB made it more attractive as an educational option for its clientele of both expatriate families and the local affluent middle-class.

However, other rationales for attending to CWB were referred to in the documentation. Both resilience development and the academic benefits were future-focused reasons for attending to wellbeing, to inoculate the individual against the emotional rigours of life. These were referred to in the short rationale statement in the strategic guidance.

“Wellbeing is evident when individuals perceive they have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet their needs and overcome any challenges. Wellbeing provides life-long advantages in health, school, work and relationships.” ([Umbrella Organisation], 2021, p.14)

Although the phrasing in this statement was the ability to “overcome challenges”, the video specifically mentioned resilience: “Maximising wellbeing when things are going well increases resilience and protective factors.” The organisation considered its role to be preparing children for their futures. It reinforced the individual's responsibility to maintain their own wellbeing, as advocated by the neoliberal hegemony. One of the reflective questions posed to schools was, “How does the school enable students and staff to take greater ownership of their wellbeing?”. A related quality statement indicated that schools should incorporate wellbeing practices to support “all students to become actively responsible for their wellbeing.” The expectation that individuals should be responsible for their own wellbeing was clear. At the same time, the release of responsibility from the broader organisation to schools was also evident. Schools were asked to consider how they were individually enabling both students and staff to take responsibility for their own wellbeing.

4.2.2 The importance of contextual relevance

It is the independent responsibility of each school which I now consider. An important finding from this phase of the research was that the organisation followed one of the strategies extracted from the document review from the previous section. In the documentation and in the interview, schools were given the freedom to address wellbeing as best fitted their context. The quality statements which formed part of the strategic priorities document for the organisation were framed in a way that indicated that the autonomy resided at the school level, using phrases such as, “The school has in place an evidence based... framework” and “The school has policies and structures in place” ([Umbrella Organisation], 2021). It was implied that the organisation expected certain criteria to be met but that each school was responsible for ensuring that the

criteria were met appropriately to the school context. For example, the implementation of a survey of student wellbeing (AWE) was noted as organisation-wide progress, with the understanding that it had led to “school-based data analysis and action planning”. Even as the obligatory use of AWE was being phased out, schools were asked to share ways in which they were assessing student wellbeing, although this was not required to be done on an individual basis (Anon. (pers. Comm.) 25 October 2021). The belief that schools should be given the freedom to adapt based on identified school needs was borne out in the enriched group interview and summarised by Samantha (Senior Leader, Umbrella Group), who said, “You run into difficulty if you think there’s one answer and just apply it across all of our schools, because you would fail. Because the whole point is we should be engaging in thinking about how do we meet the needs of our students and our staff, at the point where they’re at.”

Despite an appreciation of the need for contextual relevance, the central office promoted a particular way of thinking about wellbeing through the documentation and videos produced and through the groups it set up. The steering committee, made up of leaders from a representative group of schools, was creating guidelines to support schools in undertaking an “appreciative inquiry” (e.g. Stowell, 2013; Seaton, 2021) approach to understanding and developing wellbeing, beginning with understanding the wellbeing of staff. They focused on adopting a contextually and culturally relevant approach to understanding wellbeing. Gemma (Senior Leader, Umbrella Group) said that the steering committee's work “is around culture of wellbeing. It’s around appreciative inquiry. So, it’s around gratitude. It’s around building on strengths.” By bringing together school leaders to talk about how their schools were addressing wellbeing, the organisation reinforced its own message about the importance of wellbeing and how it was represented.

4.2.3 Strategies for supporting a wellbeing approach

Recognition of contextual relevance was one recommended strategy for CWB in schools and was particularly pertinent to an organisation encompassing schools with varying demographics. Other recommended strategies were endorsed in the umbrella organisation documentation and referred to in the group interview. Besides the need for contextual relevance, the strategies supported by the guidance from the organisation promoted a whole school culture of wellbeing. In the group interview, it was strategies falling within the “whole school” category (see Table 4.3) that leaders remarked were a

focus for the organisation. However, as the conversation progressed, it became evident that the leaders believed schools focused on strategies linked to students, especially implementing evidence-based programmes. Samantha framed this by saying, “what is it we’re doing in all our schools? Where do we put all the attention? It’s about planning the programmes, planning the activities, and there’s the big challenge. So, what does all of that mean for each individual child...?”

An area of tension emerged around the engagement of student voice. Student voice represented one of the organisation’s strategic priorities. It was an area that the overarching context considered vitally important and was similarly viewed by the organisation. Samantha and Paul (Senior Leader, Umbrella Group) expressed their frustration with seeking evidence of student voice.

Samantha: *[During review meetings with the governors]* I always turn to Paul and say, what is it we’re doing here *[with student voice]*? And we know that there’s a lot happening but it’s...

Paul: But we’re unable to articulate it.

Samantha: And *[student voice]* is... not jumping out in the way that the other priorities are. This is an area that we see a lot happening but we don’t articulate it... If we’re not meeting kids where they’re at and being responsive to their needs, what’s the point of the whole process?

For Paul and Samantha, the missing piece was being able to demonstrate that children were being listened to and their needs responded to. They believed it was happening but had no way of demonstrating this.

Three strategies were not referred to in the documentation. There was no specific recommendation from the organisation that schools should appoint a designated person responsible for overseeing wellbeing. The expectation was that schools would “invest in the human resources... to support wellbeing”, but the specifics of how that would be enacted in schools were unspecified, reflecting the contextually relevant approach taken throughout the documentation. There was also no reference to the involvement of external bodies such as government, NGOs or faith groups. The only references to external groups in the documentation were to individuals or companies with whom the

organisation had a business arrangement to provide a service, mainly professional development providers. Finally, the importance of building strong relationships within the school was not referenced as a deliberate strategy in the documentation but was referred to in the video transcript and was viewed as highly important by the leaders.

4.2.4 Community building and relationships

One purpose for elevating wellbeing mentioned in the organisation's rationale for focusing on wellbeing was the advantage to relationships. The statement implied the benefits to an individual of relationships. In the broader policy review, community building and relationship development were advocated because of their benefits to and support of the individual. One of the strategies recommended at a school-wide level in the documentation examined in section 4.1 was building strong relationships in the school. This did not feature in the organisation's strategic guidance document, although many of the other strategies were supported by this document.

However, both the video and the interview with the leaders presented a different picture. Towards the end of the video, the importance of community building was highlighted, "The greatest asset we have is who we are as people, how we value and accept each and every individual as unique and how we connect and engage with each other." The sentiment of community building shown in the video was also apparent in the group interview. The leaders were invited to select the nine most important index cards from those shown in Appendix 4 and then rank them in a 1, 2, 3, 2, 1 format from most important to least important. The order they eventually agreed on is shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 Aspects of wellbeing ordered according to priority during the group interview



The first index card chosen to be a part of the nine was “relationships”. This was the one that all the leaders agreed on and initially it was placed at the top of the diamond:

Paul: Is that (*relationships*) the top? Because that was the one that we all...

Becky: Chose first.

Paul: ... chose first.

Gemma: Yes.

However, the leaders quickly revised their opinion to place ‘safety and security’ at the top. The need for safety and security above all else echoed Maslow’s hierarchy (Maslow,

2017), which was referenced by Kate (Senior Leader, Umbrella Group) during the initial discussions.¹

On the cards, the words associated with a sense of community were broad-ranging, encompassing a number of individual characteristics which could contribute to community. Paul noted, “The sense of community is just quite open for me, whereas the essence of it is the belonging and the connection.”

Although not clear from the documentation, a sense of community and relationships emerged as important in the group interview. Focusing on staff wellbeing resonated for the leaders beyond Gemma’s explanation of what the steering committee was doing. When considering strategies to support wellbeing, Samantha said, “I think the big challenge for us over the last year and a half has been with the wellbeing of staff.” There was recognition that the staff needed to have good wellbeing in order to support CWB and the challenge of finding solutions that were not simply sticking plasters was evident. The leaders at the organisational level felt responsible for creating a culture of wellbeing “that’s for everyone in the community” (Paul).

4.2.5 Summary

The findings from the policy context level and from the analysis of interviews and documentation at the level of the umbrella organisation revealed some tensions. The policy context broadly aligned with an individualist ontology of wellbeing. Community and social support were referred to in terms of how individuals benefitted from these structures. Responsibility was shifted from government to community and from community to individual. Although these macrosystem norms and values influenced the leaders of the organisation, they were trying to interpret this in a way that they could apply to their own context. The focus on community building and relationships was more evident in the local context than in the broader policy context. Policy, however, is more than what is written and the discourse encompasses what is enacted (Ball, 1993, 1994). At the local level of the umbrella organisation, the documentation produced and the data

¹ Maslow’s theory of development is constructed in pyramid form, with physiological needs including safety and security at the base, followed by safety, love and esteem. Self-actualisation, at the pinnacle of the pyramid, was considered by Maslow to be applicable to mature adults rather than children. Recent work by (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016, p.138) note that this aspect of the pyramid is also highly relevant to children.

gathered from the leaders showed an attempt to mitigate the individualist nature of policy by recognising and incorporating collective wellbeing approaches both within schools and across the organisation.

4.3 Phase 2: Findings from children in Horizon School

In this section, the findings from the research conducted with children are presented. I structure the presentation of findings to align with the PPCT model and through the dual lenses of the children's data analysis and my own observations. The thick description I offer contributes to an analysis of the children's perspectives on wellbeing and how it manifested in Horizon School.

Children's conceptualisation of wellbeing was evident in two main ways in the research. First, the children's analysis led to their creation of themes, giving insight into how they understood wellbeing. Secondly, during data generation and analysis, the children engaged in discussion and activity that revealed implicit aspects of their conceptualisation of wellbeing. In some cases, this supported the themes that the children created, while in others, it evidenced underlying beliefs and assumptions to which the children did not assign themes.

Both Year 1 and Year 6 groups analysed a representative sample of the data gathered. The way that they analysed the data and the discussions that they had while organising it indicated that they did not see specific outcomes for wellbeing, rather that wellbeing was an ongoing component of their lives and their community.

The common themes that the children found in the data are shown in Table 4.7, mapped against the codebook. The Year 1 children created themes, and the Year 6 children extended broad themes by adding sub-categories, giving more meaning to each theme.

Table 4.7 Children's wellbeing themes and sub-categories compared to the codebook

PPCT	Group	1.1	1.2	6.1	6.2
	Code	Theme	Theme	Theme/ sub-category	Theme/ sub-category
Person	Dispositions			being balanced - <i>calm</i>	
	Positive emotions	- fun	- love	fun - <i>happy</i> feelings - <i>being happy</i>	fun
Person/ process	Learning	- learning and teacher - books - showing	- learning - reading (talking)	learning - <i>skills</i> - <i>challenging</i> creativity - <i>learning</i>	learning - <i>reading</i> - <i>writing</i> help - <i>with mistakes</i>
	Physical health and activity	- PE (gym, movement)	- moving, exercise	health - <i>food</i> - <i>exercise</i> - <i>fresh air</i>	health - <i>food</i> - <i>sports</i>
Process	Play/ fun	- play - fun	- playing	fun - <i>play</i> - <i>competition</i>	fun - <i>playing</i> - <i>sports/ winning</i>
Process/ context	Relationships	- friends - learning and teacher	- friends - teachers	being part of a group - <i>friends</i> - <i>teachers</i>	relationships - <i>friends</i> - <i>teachers</i>
					learning - <i>cooperation</i>
					health - <i>friendships</i>
	Agency				
	Balance			being balanced - <i>calm</i> - <i>learning</i> - <i>skills</i> - <i>relaxing</i>	free time - <i>music</i> - <i>reading</i> - <i>playing</i> - <i>relaxing</i>
Creativity		- imagination	creativity - <i>art/ drawing</i>	creativity - <i>art</i> - <i>opportunities to use imagination</i> - <i>music</i> - <i>performance</i>	
Context	Material wellbeing	- food - water		comfort - <i>relaxing</i> - <i>food</i>	
	Safety and security			health - <i>being safe</i>	health - <i>environment (a safe place to learn)</i>
				comfort - <i>safety</i>	
Community		- houses	being part of a group - <i>getting help</i>	learning - <i>knowing and following rules</i>	
Time	Future focused				help - <i>with growing up</i>

4.3.1 Person

The *a priori* codebook indicated positive emotions as a code for the *person* element of the PPCT, and the children created themes for feeling happy and loved. The themes of fun and play implicitly suggested enjoyment and positive emotions. In documentation from all students, children drew and wrote about themselves smiling and happy when playing, or doing activities that they classified as fun. “Fun” was inductively added to the codebook as a positive emotion to account for this.

The children did not construct themes that related specifically to the ‘dispositions’ code, although in the first stage of their data analysis, Group 6.1 created a “social skills” theme, indicating an awareness that people have characteristics (social skills) that contribute to their ability to engage in *processes* (relationships). However, data gathered from Year 6 children indicated their understanding of how dispositions related to CWB. Appendix 5 shows examples from the data of children demonstrating dispositions that appeared as sub-codes in the codebook. Self-regulation skills were apparent in the activities children talked about undertaking to promote calm. Others gave examples of features of self-regulation such as emotion management or maintaining their productivity. They were aware of their emotions and able to take steps to “control your feelings when happy, sad, mad, etc.” (Child 10, Class 6.1). Gratitude was a feature of wellbeing for some children. One of the children used the word “appreciative” - one of the five values that appeared on the Horizon School website as part of the wellbeing approach.

4.3.2 Person/process

Creativity

Another area of wellbeing that children considered important was creativity. Creativity is one of the twenty-four character strengths of PERMA, indicating that in this theory it is considered to be a characteristic. Independently of each other, both Year 6 groups included creativity as one of their themes. The opportunity to use imagination and to be creative featured throughout the data. The space in Horizon School designated for design, exploration and creativity was a place where children went to “tinker” and engage in maker activities. This featured in photographs from all four groups and the children were keen to visit it on their tour. Year 1 and Year 6 children indicated how important this was for them, specifically mentioning the opportunity to make things in their comments.

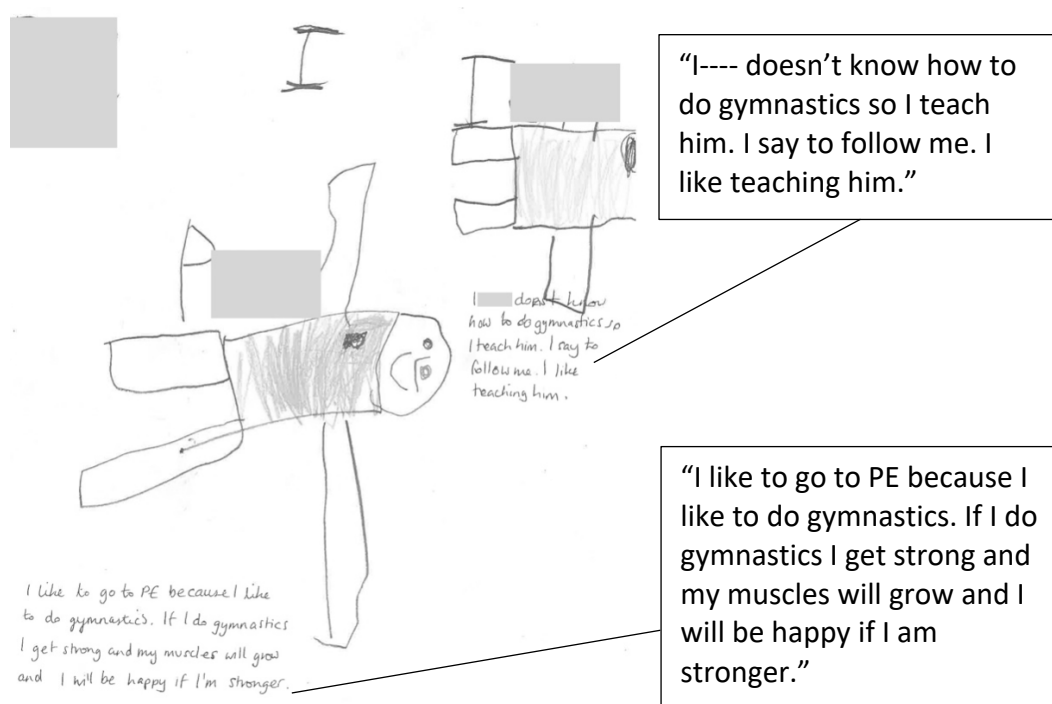
The children recognised all aspects of creativity in their data generation. Art and music featured heavily in the data generated by the Year 1 students, but so did the use of imagination. Thought bubbles were used by Year 1 children when documenting to demonstrate that they were using their imaginations for play. This was also evident in the photographs that children took of their learning areas, including pictures of children playing with toys and games intended to develop imagination. Group 1.2 included “imagination” as one of their themes for wellbeing based on the data.

Year 6 children valued the opportunity to use their imagination but also to experiment with different types of creativity in their art and music lessons. During discussion, Luke (Group 6.2) said, “I definitely can represent myself with music and with artwork.” Sarah (Group 6.1) talked about how she enjoyed story writing, “And I also like to write my own stories and imagine my own endings for them.” Obama (Group 6.1) summed up the sentiments expressed in both Year 6 groups and evidenced in the Year 1 data. “I think it is very important for people, for kids, children, anybody, really to be creative. I think creativity is one of the most important things, otherwise you won’t be able to express your feelings.”

Physical health and activity

Physical health and activity for the younger children were focused on movement and PE lessons. The opportunities for movement and exercise featured in much of the data gathered from the whole class and small groups. The climbing wall in the playground was popular in Year 1 documentation, in small group discussion, in photographs and on the tour, while the gymnasium was important for opportunities for structured exercise. One child particularly noted the link between PE lessons, gymnastics and his future strength. Furthermore, he recognised that he could support a friend in developing the friend’s physical skills as well, which was also good for his own wellbeing. The drawing and explanation by this child in Year 1 (Figure 4.2) demonstrated the interconnectedness of wellbeing.

Figure 4.2 Year 1 child drawing of what was important for his wellbeing



In Year 6, exercise and sports were sub-categories of health, along with fresh air and food. Externally measurable aspects of health, such as access to health care, were considered important by the children and will be addressed later.

Learning

During data analysis, all groups created learning as a theme and considered that learning was important in every aspect of their wellbeing. They enjoyed learning new things and the fun that they associated with learning. They also made links to the way they learned – for example, “with lots of encouragement” and the support they received from teachers. They noted that they enjoyed the challenge associated with learning. During the documentation activity Year 6 children wrote about what was important for their wellbeing: “maths (that is hard)” (Child 15, Class 6.2); “Maths – although sometimes I can’t understand/comprehend it, and it really stretches my thinking (Child 18, Class 6.2). In general, the challenge of learning was something that the children welcomed, although

some mentioned that they were “tired, because of all the school work” (Child 15, Class 6.1) or that “Chinese = dictation² = stress” (Child 13, Class 6.2).

As part of analysing data, the Year 6 students created mind maps of wellbeing (Appendix 5). Both groups noted how “learning links with everything” (Ruby, Group 6.2). For Group 6.1, “skills” and “challenge” were important elements of learning, making clear the links between *proximal processes* and the developing *person*. Group 6.2 included “cooperation” and “knowing and following rules”, noting how important these processes were for them to be able to take part in learning. When talking about what sub-categories they wanted in learning this was apparent:

Mia: The rules.

Researcher: Is that knowing the rules, having rules, following rules... What is it?

Luke: Following rules. And knowing them.

Ruby: Learning them.

Amelia: Cooperating to learn...

Luke: ...because you need to know the rules if you want to follow them.

Amelia: So, cooperating together.

Luke: Yeah, because in PE that’s what we learn.

Amelia: We need to cooperate to follow the rules.

The exchange indicated the importance that the children placed on having structure (rules) to adhere to in their learning and that they believed that this was enabled by them working together. Learning was not simply about acquiring knowledge; it was also about the skills and interactions that took place concurrently.

4.3.3 Process

Play fun

Play was important for the children in both Year 1 and Year 6. During discussion, the Year 6 children recognised the difference between playing organised sports, structured games

² Chinese dictation is an approach to learning and assessment in Chinese language in which children attempt to accurately reproduce Chinese characters in a memorized passage.

and unstructured play. The data suggested that each of these types of play had a place in the children's conceptualisations of wellbeing and potentially additional types that they did not discuss. An initial discussion with Group 1.2 situated learning as an indoor activity and play as an outdoor activity. However, when data linked to art lessons needed to be sorted the children struggled, eventually deciding to put the data between learning and playing. Once they had recognised that learning and play intermingled, they wanted to create a separate category, "fun", which they said included learning and play.

This was supported by a conversation when the children in Group 1.1 were sorting out data. I had asked the children to select any pieces of information they thought were about friends.

Researcher: Are there any others that are about friends? Albert, what's that one about?

Albert: Chinese.

Researcher: Is that about friends?

Albert: So many... Much learning and games and friends.

Researcher: ...Any more about friends? (*Albert chooses a picture of the communal learning space in Year 1.*) You've come back to the hub again. Tell me why you think the hub is a place for friends.

Albert: Because it's a playtime for kids.

The activities that took place in the hub were play-based learning experiences, with some choice by the children about which they engaged with. Learning activities that took place in Chinese lessons and those that took place in the shared homeroom space were classified by the children as contributing to wellbeing during the data collection stage. When we discussed this, it became apparent that the sense of wellbeing came from the interrelatedness of the aspects the children had identified. It wasn't just learning, or fun, or friends in Chinese or in the hub that made it important to them. It was the combination of the three.

4.3.4 Process/context

Agency

The codes within process/context crossed the boundary between these two elements of the PPCT model. Using the code of agency to illustrate how this might happen, during one conversation Group 6.2 were specific about wanting some input into what they learned. They wanted the opportunity to explore areas of interest to them – something they called ‘free time’. What they described was being given time in class to conduct research into something that interested them. The research, online or through books, was the proximal *process*. Luke (Group 6.2) was clear that this was not the same as break time: “In class, you can do more things with the internet, which is like researching on things you are interested in. But, um, like, outside break playtime you can’t do that. It’s mostly, like, playing actively. I like having the active breaks as well.” The *context* that would enable this – which Group 6.2 felt was missing for their class – would be a classroom environment where the teacher facilitated children to research areas of interest to them regularly, and valued their areas of interest. It might also include the freedom desired by other members of Group 6.2 to listen to music while they were working. The children appreciated the teachers who allowed them to do this. Although the children did not create themes specifically relating to agency it was evident from discussions that this was important to them. Elizabeth (Group 6.1) talked about how Horizon School supported wellbeing by “helping us find our passions and our hobbies. Like it give us a little hint on maybe what we want to do when we... grow up.” Elizabeth felt that children’s agency was important when they were experimenting with activities.

Another aspect of agency that the children recognised during data generation but not in their themes was the ability to navigate their own lives within the context of Horizon School. Children took photographs of the Primary Office, stating, “I know there is a place to find my lost things” (Eternal, Group 6.2) and “when something are missing, I can go [there]” (Matt, Group 1.1). One Group 1.1 child took a photograph of the cubby where she kept her bag, saying, “I love this because if [my cubby] is not here I would have nowhere else to put [my bag].” In these examples, child agency was demonstrated through their autonomy within the school, of having a place to put their bag and access it at will and knowing where they could go to locate lost items. There was also a sense of belonging inherent in the association with a space that they considered they had ownership over. Children talked about the freedom to choose their own books in the

library, something that created great excitement among the Year 1 groups both on the tour and in various conversations throughout data generation. Although not appearing as a theme for the children, it was evident that the agency they had was something they valued and, as they got older, something they wished could be extended.

Relationships

As with agency, relationships blur the line between process and context, with some *proximal processes* forming part of relationship development and some developed relationships forming part of the children's *microsystems*. For all the children, friendships were an inherent part of their daily school life. When documenting and photographing areas in Horizon School which were important for their wellbeing, friends featured heavily. Year 1 children particularly talked about playing with friends in the communal learning area, with friends an inherent part of the context they described.

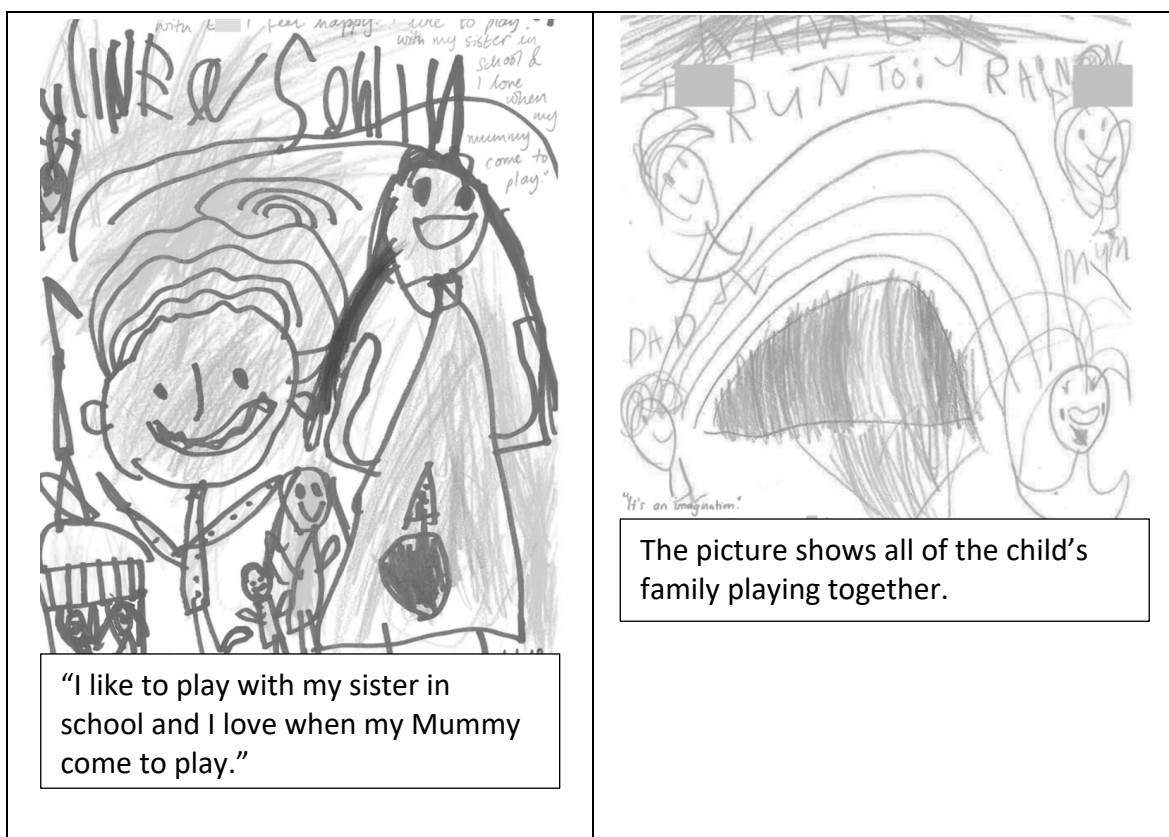
Throughout the data, the children depicted mutually beneficial relationships. Some depictions of friendship for Year 1 children included giving or being given material goods such as gifts or sweets but there were also instances of the children valuing returning these gestures. Anna (Group 1.2) commented on how she enjoyed the art area, saying, "I love the drawing area because it's a very fun place where you can draw and do creative things that you wanna do. And when you do creative things that you wanna do you can give them to the people who you love." (For other examples, see "generosity" in the table in Appendix 5).

Year 1 created two themes which included relationships: 'friends' and 'teachers'. For Group 1.1, 'teachers' were part of 'learning'. However, the whole class documentation for 'teachers' indicated that they were an important part of relationships for children. Teachers were responsible for making children feel better when they were sad and for playing with them. The Year 6 data corroborated this. Besides the children including both "friends" and "teachers" as sub-categories of their themes linked to relationships, there was evidence in the data that teachers made them feel "like we belong there" (Eternal, Group 6.2) and "[that they] care about me" (Child 15, Class 6.1). "It makes me feel safe knowing... the teacher is there to help" (Pumpkin, Group 6.1). In addition, teachers provided entertainment by "making learning like playing" and "making funny jokes" (Eternal, Group 6.2) or "play(ing) a quiz game with us" (Child 8, Class 6.2). They were clear, however, that the relationship with teachers was different from that with friends.

During one data analysis session, the children were categorising the different types of relationships in school. They wanted to make a separate category for friends and teachers as “it’s kind of weird for your teacher to be your friend,” (Luke, 6.2), indicating that he felt that this would be strange. Children valued the relationship with their teachers but did not confuse it with the other relationships they valued in school.

Relationships extended beyond friends and teachers. During data analysis with Group 1.1, Cathy was determined that there should be a separate category for love. She saw this as a positive emotion, although it was also reflected in the references throughout the data to family being important within school for the children. Year 1 children drew pictures showing how much they liked it when their parents came to school to collect them or to play with them (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Images by Year 1 children of their families playing with them in school



During the tour, children in both Groups 1.1 and 1.2 expressed a wish to visit the classroom of their siblings because it was important to them that their siblings were in school. While we were taking photographs, Anna (Group 1.2) saw her older sibling in Year 13. She was very distracted by trying to get his attention, and before she could engage

with the photography, she ran over to say hello and tell him what she was doing. After this she was able to focus.

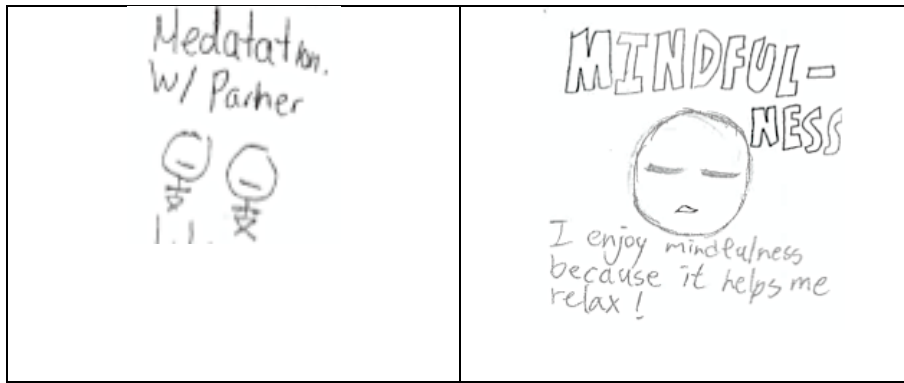
Other adults in the community formed meaningful relationships with children. The children talked about how the school nurse made them feel “safe” and “calm”. Group 6.1 wanted to visit the school director’s office because “he’s important and he talks with us” and “sometimes we go have lunch [with the director in his office]”.

It became evident as we explored the data that relationships were important to the students not because of the value to them individually of having friends or a good teacher, but because of the relational webs within the school community. The children kept referring to different relationships that they had with different people in the school community, sometimes referring to how those relationships overlapped with each other. The inclusion of family in the community and the relational interaction between different microsystems, such as home, school and sports clubs were also important to the children.

Balance

As an inductive code added during data analysis with Year 6, *balance* was a wide-ranging theme for the children. It also reflected the language of the IBLP. Some aspects of ‘balance’ could be linked to the *person* element of the PPCT model. For example, creativity was also associated with balance: “When I drawing and painting and making my art beautiful it makes me very, very, very calm” David (Group 1.2). There were many references by the children to the importance of having an opportunity to be calm and relax. One Year 1 child said, “I love music. I think music is the most calmest place.” Other children talked about the power of music in both Year 1 and Year 6. Two photographs taken by Year 6 students of the piano in the playground were annotated with comments related to how it calmed or relaxed them. In discussion, Tom (Group 6.2) said, “I like to listen to music and calm down whenever I feel stressed, just like Obama said, like maybe some hard school work, and just makes me relax.” In response to further questions, Tom clarified that he used the music to relax, not to listen to while he was studying. Mindfulness practice was taught throughout Horizon School through a range of programmes including Meditation Capsules (Etty-Leal, 2010), Head-Heart Start for Life (Etty-Leal, 2018), MindUp (The Hawn Foundation, 2011) and Smiling Mind (Smiling Mind, 2022). The strategies learned through these sessions were also referenced by the Year 6 children as a way to relax (see Figure 4.4 for examples).

Figure 4.4 Examples of mindfulness practice as important in documentation



References in the data suggested that the *opportunity* to relax and find calm was important to the children rather than the means of achieving it. The strategies they mentioned indicated an awareness of using specific activities or places to self-regulate. “Playing board games makes me calm down when I am angry” (Child 8, Class 6.1) and “whenever I feel upset, angry or lonely during lunch break, I’ll go there and watch people play. It helps me calm down.” (Pumpkin, Group 6.1). Year 6 children also shared that they used reading, music and art to relax. Elizabeth (Group 6.1) valued activities like reading and listening to music to “help ADHD”. During discussion, Obama (Group 6.2) likened the activities to recharging a phone. “Because [Tom’s] like, um, he says it like calms him down but, like, it gives him more energy. So like kind of makes him feel better. So it’s kind of like a way for him to like, basically, take a break and then like recharge kind of thing and then he’ll be ready for the rest of the day or whatever.” The children noted places where they felt particularly calm, such as the nurses’ room or the library, and recognised the importance of what Amelia (Group 6.2) called, “own self time”.

4.3.5 Context

In the PPCT model, *context* refers to the environments in which human development occurs, from the microsystems where the individual spends significant time to the macrosystem of cultural beliefs and shared values.

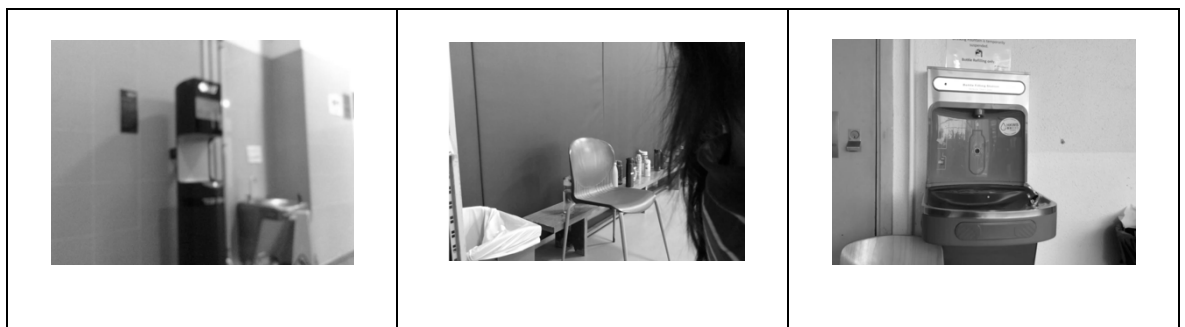
Codes included in the *context* element of the *a priori* codebook were not specifically linked to one context, such as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. Instead, they were assigned to *context* because they linked to aspects of CWB that lay outside the control of the children and were instead impacted by the characteristics of the microsystem of Horizon School or home, interactions between the

two apparent in the mesosystem, or an impact felt from the exosystem. The broader impact of the exosystem and macrosystem in terms of shared values and how this manifests in policy have already been explored.

Material wellbeing, safety and security

As discussed in Chapter Three, material wellbeing indicators can often be objectively and externally measured. They also featured in the children's accounts of wellbeing. For example, access to clean water was an external, measurable indicator of CWB. In the children's accounts, photographs of water bottles and water dispensers in the school were significant in the Year 1 data. Carolyn (Group 1.1) took multiple pictures indicating access to water (Figure 4.5). When given the opportunity to edit her photographs, she explained that she wanted to keep all of them. "I like to fill my water bottle again. I just love to fill my water bottle, even in PE. I love drinking all the water."

Figure 4.5 Carolyn's pictures of water bottles and dispensers



Several weeks later, when we were sorting the data together, Carolyn showed the same belief. We sorted different data on cards, and one of the children had picked up a card.

Researcher: This one, this says, "I can fill my water and it's so cold and refreshing." Where does this go?

Carolyn: We need a new one.

Researcher: Okay. What do we need, Carolyn?

Carolyn: We need, I love water.

Researcher: So I've got food here. Can I put it with food and water?

Carolyn: No!

Researcher: You want a different one that says water?

Carolyn: Yeah.

Researcher: Okay, no problem.

Without naming access to clean water as an indicator of wellbeing, Carolyn was adamant that it was important to her in school. I watched Carolyn refill her water bottle many times when very little water was gone from the bottle. It became apparent that being able to fill her own water bottle rather than having it filled for her by an adult represented an autonomy of action.

Food, too, featured throughout the children's accounts of wellbeing, in every part of the research – in documentation, in photographs, during the child-led tour, in discussions and through conversations. As an external measurable, it is *access* to food that is significant. For the children in Year 1, it was their enjoyment of their food that they indicated was important. Lunch and snacks appeared in the documentation activity and what had been eaten or would be eaten for lunch was frequently a topic during conversation or discussion. By Year 6, the children broadened their focus to include how healthy food was and its availability; this was particularly evident in their documentation. The children recognised the importance of something that could be externally measured without coming up with a specific measure for it. Furthermore, in conversation, the children recognised that Horizon School provided children with the choice about whether they made healthy decisions about their food or not.

Tom: For food. I think [*our school does*] pretty well, 'cause we have quite a few places to buy food now. I think like the food supplies also not, like, not bad.

Jack: I'd like to say, um, uh, it's a bad idea to buy food during school days in, from school.

Researcher: Tell me more.

Jack: Because people are buying cookies constantly every day. First of all, that's junk and it's not good to eat all the time. And it's for secondaries and DP students. If they're in need.

Jack saw it as a bad idea to buy what he considered junk food during the day but believed that the food should be available to the older students "if they're in need". Although he did not label it, he recognised that children were given agency to make choices about

what they ate. This was evidence of the importance of agency, coded inductively as a result of observation and data, rather than being a theme created by the children during their data analysis.

Access to health care is a commonly used external indicator and featured in the child-led tours of the school for Year 1 and Year 6. In discussing the data analysis, easy access to health care was also raised by one of the Year 6 children. “[Horizon School] provide vaccines for us and also provide nurses for us to get better.” (Amelia, Group 6.2)³

Although access to health care can be classified as an externally measurable indicator, for the children, it was intertwined with their feelings of being safe and nurtured. Rather than simply being about physical health, the nurses’ room was recognised as a calming place with a kind adult. It was a place that made them feel “separate from others, but in a good way” (Obama, Group 6.1).

Community

Throughout the research, the children demonstrated that they thought of themselves as part of a community. Early in the research process, Tom was concerned that other students besides the small group should be consulted. We were discussing the information we had gathered so far about wellbeing, at the end of a discussion responding to emojis as stimuli.

Tom: I think we can’t just focus on one person’s... I think we..., I don’t think, like, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, plus just a few classes will be enough.

Researcher: Okay, tell me more about that.

Tom: So we can, I think we can just, like, expand this to be a little bit more than just a few people or just the class. ‘Cause I don’t think like, 20 students can really decide the entire world... or, actually, like, your research. [*The researcher explained the case study approach.*] I’m just making sure it’s not just, like, all our thinking.

³ The research took place during a global health pandemic, at a time when vaccination status against Covid-19 was important. The children were exposed to a narrative engendered at a societal level about the safety and security conveyed by vaccines.

This concern with ensuring that other students were consulted and engaged came up throughout the research. One child in Year 1 had a number of questions about the research when I was initially seeking assent, and many of them focused on making sure I involved as many children as possible. On one occasion, I took Group 1.2 out of their class and Emma asked if the rest of the children were doing the same thing as we were. I assumed that Emma was concerned that she would be missing out on what was happening in class and explained that they would be doing the same thing in a different way. She responded, with relief, “they have important ideas too”. Her concern was that the research would not encompass the ideas of the students in the class, rather than that she was missing out on something taking place in the classroom.

The earnestness to ensure that as many views were sought as possible to build up a picture of the perspectives of all the children in Horizon School suggested that they perceived wellbeing as shared by the community rather than restricted to the individual.

Extending this concept, Group 6.2 recognised that each classroom was an independent microsystem operating within the wider community and that wellbeing needs may be addressed differently in different classes.

Luke: One thing, I think just our class doesn't have is brain breaks. Like, I always see lots of different classes go up to the roof, like 15 minutes, just kind of having a brain break, but we haven't had that before.

Ruby: But our class is..., like, after you finish it, just, just put your books away and stuff. You don't get to rest. Just, continue, continue, continue until break.

This exchange also indicated children's concern with parity. The same group had noticed that different places in school meant different things to different people. Exploring a number of photographs taken of the swimming pool, they noted the difference in the annotations. For many children, the swimming pool represented fun, exercise or both. For one child, the annotation indicated feelings of fear and not feeling safe. The following discussion centred on how different locations can represent different things, highlighting the subjectivity of opinion related to wellbeing and the importance of place.

Horizon School had a system of houses⁴, which was part of a deliberate strategy by the school to “help a big school feel small” ([School name], n.d.). There were references to the school house system throughout the data, with children indicating that they associated with and felt good about their house, but also about the other houses as well. There was a wall in the school with a mural of all the houses on it and a bench beneath the mural (Figure 4.6). Anna (Group 1.2) took this photograph and said, “I like the bench because it is a very happy place where you can wait for your friends if you’re alone and when you want to see all the beautiful colours of houses you go to the bench.”

Figure 4.6 Anna’s picture of the house mural



For Anna, both having a place to meet her friends and the mural gave her a sense of wellbeing. She did not single out one particular house for the photograph but liked the idea of house in general. She said, “I used to think I couldn’t be friends with people in other houses. But I know I can be friends with anyone now.” Anna’s group included the theme of “house” in their data analysis, exemplifying the interconnectedness they felt in their community.

The importance of belonging to a house was also evident in the Year 6 data. Obama (Group 6.2) took one picture that encompassed all the houses, noting the sense of “friendly competition and competing against other houses”, and a close up of the animal symbolising his own house, saying, “I want to show how much I enjoy being in my house and how loyal I am to it”. Jack said, “the house system is important... I feel like I am part

⁴ The house system, a common feature of schools in the UK and the US, is when the student body is divided up into groups of students called “houses”. In many schools the houses compete against one another in sporting events or in other ways.

of that group". The sense of belonging that the children had from being part of a group within the school was relevant for their wellbeing.

The data also referenced other smaller groups within the school that children felt they belonged to. They took photographs of their current and, in the case of Year 6, their former classrooms and of the lists of names outside the classrooms, explaining the sense of belonging they had in those classrooms. Speaking about class cohorts and their shared space as important for their wellbeing elevated the idea of friendship to something greater. Children were not friends with everyone in their class cohort yet felt that they belonged to that group. They continued to feel that sense of belonging when they moved to other classes between year levels.

Other aspects of community were also apparent in the children's data. Some Year 1 children in their documentation included either the name of the school or a representation of the school building as one of the things that was important for their wellbeing. Year 6 were more explicit in their thoughts about the involvement of all members of the community. For example, when talking about the security they felt in the nurse's room, the children in Group 6.2 expressed their concern for the nurse, wanting to ensure that she had downtime and wasn't overworked or stressed. The Year 6 children had a social media group where they chatted, giving the example that they checked in on each other if they were off school for any reason and shared information about schoolwork. They estimated that the group contained around 60 people from the Year 6 cohort of 168, and they believed that those who weren't in it did not have a phone or did not have the platform. The children did not indicate that they understood that others might not be in the group for any other reason. During one discussion Elizabeth (Group 6.1) expressed her belief that it was important that "everyone is treated fairly. So no one is left out, or no one is being bullied or anything like that". The other group members nodded, saying that they agreed that it was important. The children expressed a belief in inclusion but did not recognise the barriers that might exist. Group 6.2 emphasised the importance of rules to make the community work, with Amelia's phrase, "cooperating to learn".

4.3.6 Time

The children exhibited joy and delight in the immediacy of the present moment during the research. The Year 1 children enjoyed using the iPads and taking photographs of

everything they could. They liked playing games with me and showing me the places that made them happy. However, they also showed interest in the near and distant future throughout the research. Year 1 children expressed their excitement about going to the library later during the day or having an art lesson later that week. One session involved a very excited conversation about birthdays, some of which were not coming up for several months. Other children looked forward to less specific events. During the selection and discussion of emojis, Frank (Group 1.2) chose a mountain and shared that he wanted to go to a cold place and was looking forward to when he could travel. This also indicated an understanding from Frank that the restriction on travel related to pandemic prevention measures in HK was having an impact on him. Meanwhile, in Year 6 a child commented on the value of Virtual Reality devices at school for his wellbeing because it “lets me explore the world” (Child 12, Class 6.1), thereby recognising the potential for collapsing time in being both here and there in the same moment.

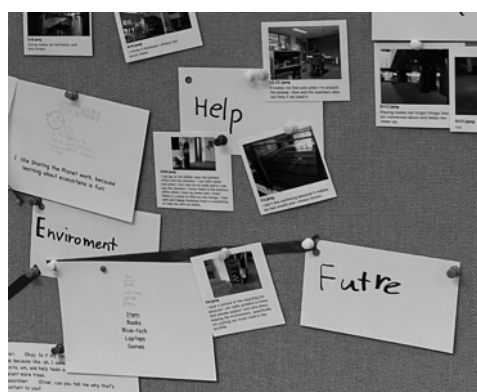
Future focused

The children did not only think about the future in terms of anticipation of hedonic pleasures. For example, during the first session explaining the research to Year 1 children, the children were asked for the reasons they came to school. While the majority of answers were around learning and fun, one child said, “to learn, so that we can get a good job and earn money when we’re older”. When explaining why he wanted to take a picture of the Chinese language classroom, Obama (Group 6.1) said, “I don’t exactly hate Chinese. It will be useful when we get out into society.” Eternal (Group 6.1) echoed this with an annotation he added to a photograph of his Chinese classroom – “...not my favourite subject and I don’t really enjoy it. But I know it will help me because in the future, I will need to write a lot of Chinese.” Luke (Group 6.2) said that he felt good when he was with the people “who can support me in my academic goals”. In Year 1 and Year 6, there was evidence that the children were taking on a perspective of their childhood as leading to adulthood. Child 2 (Class 6.2) shared their current goals as “be the best student and write a book & try to get a scholarship (mum told me).” The choice to include goals in the representation of wellbeing suggested that this was an important aspect for them. The inclusion of an inherently competitive goal to achieve one of a limited number of

scholarship places suggested the internalisation of a neoliberal imperative received from both parents and society.⁵

Although one group considered including “the future” as a theme during their initial data sorting (Figure 4.7), they ultimately decided to leave it out. However, they included “help”, listing as sub-categories “with mistakes” and “with growing up”. Although not specifically listed as “future” the theme links to preparation for the future, showing the children’s belief that wellbeing can be linked to their future lives as well as their current lives.

Figure 4.7 Section of Group 6.1's first data analysis



The concern with the future was also evident for Year 6 children in their attention to environmental sustainability. It was apparent in their conversations, the whole class documenting of wellbeing and in the photographs they took of recycling facilities in the school. Thinking about the impact of actions on the natural environment indicated an interest in the future and was not linked to individual wellbeing but instead represented interest in working for something greater than themselves.

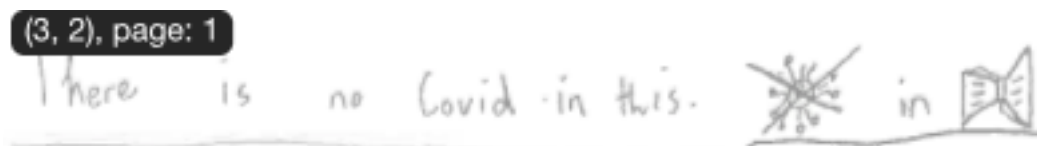
Socio-historical events

Finally, the impact of the socio-historical events concurrent with the research was apparent in Year 6 data. On one piece of documentation, a Year 6 child had written that masks make them feel safe. In a discussion, the Year 6 students noted that some of the

⁵ Under government mandate, Horizon School offered competitive scholarships in the arts, sports and academics. Scholarship included waived fees but the associated prestige resulted in students who did not pay fees (such as staff children) applying.

measures they thought hampered their wellbeing were pandemic restrictions such as Perspex screens between them when they ate or sat at their desks in the classroom, and the inability to gather together for assemblies and house activities. Year 1 students, on the other hand, had never been in school other than during the pandemic, so their experiences of the school environment had always been of physical distancing⁶ and screens. Their kindergarten years took place almost entirely online, so Horizon School represented an opportunity to be physically present in school. Frank's wish to travel again was an example of the more oblique sentiments of being aware of the impact of the current restrictions on them. The Year 6 children's general sentiments that "I am safe at school" (Child 5, Class 6.1) and "I want to be safe" (Child 5, Class 6.2) may indicate more oblique reasoning that they chose not to talk about the impact that the Covid-19 restrictions were having. One Year 6 child was more specific when she asked whether we could assume that there was no Covid-19 when documenting what was important for wellbeing. She was given a choice and produced her documentation with "no covid" written at the top (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8 Child 12, Group 6.2 indicating that she is not considering Covid restrictions in her account of wellbeing.



4.3.7 Summary

In this section I presented the ways that the children discussed wellbeing incorporating an understanding of both subjective and objective measures of wellbeing. They aligned with both SWB and PWB stances, referring to hedonic pleasure in the moment and longer-term engagement and fulfilment leading to wellbeing. They also understood the impact that CWB could have for them as future adults. Relationships and community surfaced continually as important for children. The relationships they valued included friends, teachers, and other adults in the community and with families. Belonging and connection to others were prized. Wellbeing was conceptualised for them as a net touching on all

⁶ "Physical distancing" is the chosen term at Horizon School, rather than "social distancing".

aspects of their lives, and in engaging with discussion about what it was and why it mattered it was apparent that they had much information to share.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the findings on the perspectives on wellbeing from three ecological levels. The data from the macrosystem of global norms and values were analysed with a WPR approach to policy analysis. The findings from this helped inform an enriched group interview and documentary review with leaders from the umbrella organisation at the exosystem level. Meanwhile, children in Horizon School (the microsystem) gathered and analysed data in various ways.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the alignment of these findings with the theoretical perspectives outlined previously. I will also consider the points of similarity and dissonance within and between the different accounts.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I synthesise the findings presented in Chapter Four to establish points of resonance and dissonance in the conceptualisations of CWB in the microsystem of Horizon School and the associated exosystem and macrosystem. In the previous chapter, I addressed RQ1, examining how CWB is presented in policies and guidance. I also explored how children in one private school in HK conceptualise CWB, responding to RQ2. I will firstly recapitulate these findings before considering the points of resonance and dissonance within the conceptualisations of wellbeing at different levels so that I can answer RQ3, addressing the implications for policy and practice for CWB.

In accordance with the definition of wellbeing presented in Chapter Two, I perceive wellbeing to be a construct represented both in the indicators held by individuals and through dynamic processes apparent in communities and societies. However, my purpose is not to understand how children achieve wellbeing; instead, it is to illustrate and compare how wellbeing is understood by children and by those who make decisions on children's behalf. The position taken at the level of policy-making and governance was supportive of a theoretical conceptualisation of wellbeing as an outcome for individuals to strive towards. There was dissonance between how the policy context and the children at the school level perceived wellbeing. There were also conflicts within the children's presentations of their understanding of wellbeing, and I explore these tensions and their implications further in this chapter.

In Chapter Two, I described how wellbeing theories can broadly be viewed on a continuum from focusing on the individual as represented in PERMA, to an understanding of wellbeing focused on the interdependence of people and their environments as represented in RWB. Between the two lies an understanding of wellbeing based in interactions, following SDT. PERMA addresses wellbeing of and for the individual where wellbeing is a measurable state to be achieved. SDT also constructs wellbeing as an individual property, but it considers the impact of interactions and the implications for other individuals. RWB construes wellbeing moving within individuals and groups through relationships with each other and the natural world. This chapter is formulated to

correspond with these understandings of wellbeing as individual, interactional and interdependent, using these as a lens through which to seek similarities and differences.

5.2 How CWB is understood in the different contexts

RQ1 How is CWB presented in policies and guidance at the local, national and international levels?

Representation of CWB at both the macrosystem of policy context and the regionally based exosystem reflected how wellbeing was understood and conceptualised throughout the literature. CWB at these wider policy and societal levels was generally represented as manifesting in the individual. Relationships were presented as contributing to individual wellbeing or as being sustained by individuals who have good wellbeing, in accordance with PERMA. As such, wellbeing was presented as a state of being that could be attained and maintained through learned skills and competencies. The value of CWB was largely future-focused, considering the implications for children as future adults or the benefits for society of a population who manage their own wellbeing.

RQ2 How do children in one private school in HK conceptualise wellbeing?

Children's conceptualisations of wellbeing reflected the complexities of adult understandings manifesting in policy and guidance. Children recognised the importance to their wellbeing of relationship networks that extended beyond the microsystem of the school. They considered the future as well as the present in relation to their wellbeing. Their understanding of wellbeing extended beyond the hedonic to include balance. In this, they demonstrated an understanding that hedonism and eudemonia act in equilibrium, as demonstrated by Waterman (1993) and exemplified in PERMA (Seligman, 2011). The children valued learning and challenge as part of their wellbeing as well as the opportunity to express themselves. They also demonstrated an awareness that the wellbeing and opinions of others were important, contributing to an understanding of wellbeing manifesting in a community. For the children in the study, wellbeing suffused all aspects of their life, interrelated and constantly relevant.

When thinking about wellbeing, children considered elements that could be measured by external reports, including material aspects of wellbeing such as safety and security. This supports the findings of Alexandre et al. (2021); Bhomi (2021) and Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016). As Fane et al. (2020) identified, children considered the process of

learning to be valuable to their wellbeing. However, the children in this study did not specifically reference the privilege of having access to quality education which is considered an indicator of wellbeing by the OECD (2009, 2020b). Although socio-historical events have denied them physical access to their school for the better part of two years, these children have maintained educational connection through online schooling, so there is a possibility that they do not perceive a lack of access to education, but rather a change in how that access is mobilised. The presence of school in children's lives has been made ubiquitous by the "scholarisation of childhood" (Qvortrup, 2009, p.28) meaning that children in industrialised countries spend a large proportion of their daily lives in school. Children are unlikely to recognise things that are so embedded in their lives, which may also account for why the children in the study did not specifically reference access to education and school.

5.3 Points of resonance and dissonance in wellbeing conceptualisations

The findings suggested some similarities in the conceptualisations of wellbeing between children in the school, policymakers and decision-makers. At all levels, the wellbeing of the individual was recognised as an important component of the conceptualisation. The relevance of relationships and learning to CWB were also recognised at all levels. However, the ways in which relationships and learning featured in CWB differ between policy level and the children's conceptualisations.

Responsibility for wellbeing was devolved from policymakers to the school and potentially from the school to the children themselves. Conceptualising wellbeing as the responsibility of schools represents a step toward the "responsibilisation" (Juhila and Raitakari, 2016) of children for their own wellbeing, whether it is present or future wellbeing. Although the children primarily perceived wellbeing to be manifested in communities, they were also sympathetic to a conception of CWB that constructed the individual as central in their own wellbeing. Children's construction of wellbeing included aspects that reflected individual attributes, skills and competencies such as self-regulation, self-esteem and persistence.

5.3.1 CWB of and for the individual

In the policy context, among the children and in the three theories of PERMA, SDT and RWB, individual wellbeing was understood to be relevant to a conceptualisation of CWB.

The dissonance lay in whether wellbeing was seen to be an individual concern or whether the wellbeing of the individual was perceived to be one component of CWB.

Seligman's (2011) mission that 51% of the world population should be experiencing good levels of wellbeing by 2051 succinctly premised wellbeing as a state to be accomplished by individuals, and furthermore one that is measurable, albeit by self-report. The policies analysed largely echoed this view, considering factors contributing to poor CWB to be lower levels of positive emotions, lower resilience and lower academic outcomes (e.g. Stirling and Emery, 2016a; Stirling and Emery, 2016b; Ireland, 2017; Australia, 2018; Ireland, 2019; Balica, 2021). This framed CWB as linked to the individual's emotional and psychological responses. The list of dispositions that support wellbeing were framed as character strengths in PERMA and accompanied by other desirable individual outcomes. The approach of listing characteristics that contribute to individual wellbeing was evidenced in the findings from the macrosystem, where documentation also included expectations to address certain performative skills and competencies (Brown and Donnelly, 2021), coded as dispositions. It was expected that these could be cultivated in children to amplify wellbeing (e.g. International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2009; Hong Kong, 2017d; Ireland, 2021). Children also recognised some of these skills and competencies in their conceptualisations of wellbeing, including self-regulation, gratitude and persistence, as demonstrated in Appendix 5. However, they tended to see them in relation both to other people and to other aspects of wellbeing rather than as individual.

Within the broader formulation of CWB presenting in individuals and as an individual's concern, other themes emerged from the findings. The ways by which CWB is framed as individual include its expansion to encompass illbeing, the approach to its assessment by self-report and its construction as a device for creating citizens of the future. These mechanisms, engineered through policy, are effective tools for promoting CWB as a vehicle for the promulgation of a population with a neoliberal mindset.

CWB encompassing both mental health and wellbeing

Throughout the research, issues of mental health were linked to wellbeing. This could occur because the shift to a salutogenic approach to understanding wellbeing and mental health (Weare, 2010) enabled related concepts to be imagined on a continuum from poor mental health and conditions listed in the DSM-5 at one end, to individuals who were flourishing with good mental wellbeing at the other.

Situating wellbeing on a continuum with illbeing, mental illness, poor mental health or conditions listed in the DSM-5 in this way contributed to the construction of wellbeing as an achieved end state rather than as a process. By seeking to identify children with higher needs for support as part of the wellbeing approach, policymakers positioned mental health issues as something that could be “fixed” so that children could move towards a state of wellbeing.

In the policy guidance both at the government level and in the local umbrella organisation, it was a specific expectation that part of the school's strategic approach to wellbeing should include applying personalised interventions for those with lower levels of mental health or at a greater risk of mental illness. The children did recognise a link between wellbeing and, for example, conditions listed in the DSM-5, but only in passing references, like Elizabeth's, to ADHD.

By recommending that the needs of individuals with lower levels of mental health were addressed as part of a wellbeing framework, the discourse was laid that wellbeing manifests and must be tackled in individuals. All three theories of wellbeing explored recognised wellbeing as experienced within the individual (Seligman, 2011; Ryan and Deci, 2017; White, 2018), yet it is the *approach* to addressing the needs that is relevant here. The suggestion of interventions and programmes that supported individual wellbeing (e.g. Penn Resiliency Programme (Positive Psychology Center, 2021), Resilience Academy (pieta, 2021), PATHs (PATHS Curriculum, 2012), Understanding Adolescent Project (Hong Kong, 2020a, 2021)) was far more common than those that supported interactional or interdependent wellbeing (see Table 4.6). However, as Brown and Shay (2021) argued, the RWB ontology supports an approach to addressing both mental health and wellbeing that is grounded in building societal structures and relationships. Individual wellbeing can be nurtured by supporting collective wellbeing.

Assessing individual wellbeing

The findings indicated that wellbeing is also framed as solely manifesting in an individual by virtue of its assessment at an individual level. The responsibility for wellbeing was devolved to schools, and schools were expected to identify individual wellbeing needs as well as to demonstrate the effectiveness of their wellbeing approach. To achieve this, schools looked to the assessment of individual wellbeing, following policy guidance (e.g. Lavis and Robson, 2015; Wu and Mok, 2017; Hong Kong, 2018a). The complexity inherent

in asking teenagers to assess their own feelings of contentment in a context in which they are expected to take responsibility for this themselves was not addressed in guidance and policy.

The policy contexts recommended (or stipulated, in the case of England, HK and the IB) that schools consistently reviewed the impact of the implementation of any wellbeing approaches (e.g. Hong Kong, 2016; International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016; England, 2019c; Ireland, 2019; Australia, 2020). Within the policy documentation, this expectation was articulated to imply that schools undertake a self-study process. It did not recommend or suggest that schools should implement assessments of individual wellbeing. However, a number of factors were likely to influence schools into deciding to assess students individually. Governments and NGOs modelled the approach of assessing individual wellbeing by administering tests. The OECD PISA surveys began including a wellbeing focus in 2015 (OECD, 2015, 2017, 2020b) and the approach was adopted by governments undertaking mass wellbeing assessments, particularly of adolescents. As well as following the lead of policymakers, this approach enabled schools to fulfil the expectation of identifying individuals in need of more support. The umbrella organisation in this study had followed the same path in recognising the use of tools to establish individual wellbeing and needs in its schools ([Umbrella Organisation], 2021).

In addition to elevating the construct of wellbeing as residing and measurable in an individual, the practice highlights a point of dissonance between the children's conceptualisation of wellbeing and that established in the exosystem and macrosystem. The children did not refer to measuring the level of wellbeing, either in themselves or in society. Although the data included examples of how wellbeing was either enhanced or worsened, the children's discussion did not present a linear representation of wellbeing that could be incrementally improved or decreased. The children accepted the coexistence of high and low wellbeing as transient and contextual. This is one of the beliefs that the mindfulness programmes delivered at the school explicitly teach (Ettyleal, 2010, 2018), so the children's acceptance of the shifting nature of wellbeing may have been a reflection of their training within the school. The key point is that the expectation was apparent in policy at the government level to quantify wellbeing. The same feeling was not indicated by the children in the school.

CWB equipping children for the future

The findings showed that CWB was seen to have a role to play in equipping children for the future. This was evident both at the level of policy-making and among the children. Policy documentation was primarily concerned with securing a global or national economic future, while the children were concerned with their *individual* wellbeing in the future, often related to employability. The acceptance of this responsibility by the children supported the neoliberal imperative for economic stability rather than promoting a policy approach which elevated the societal benefit of relational wellbeing.

Economic future

The focus on an economically stable future was cited mainly by governments and economic agencies such as the IMF (Georgieva, 2020). This perspective on CWB required the production of mentally healthy adults who would not present a drain on societal funds. This closely aligned with PERMA, where the focus was on the individual taking action (supported by the mechanism of the school) to improve their own wellbeing. In turn, this privileged the neoliberal belief in mentally healthy subjects responsible for their own wellbeing. The “responsibilisation” (Keddie, 2016) process could be seen to start young, as demonstrated by the Year 1 child who understood that in the future she would be responsible for her own welfare. Although this view was only expressed by one child, it was more evident in Year 6 children, particularly in the links they made between academic goals and their future lives. An example of this was the photographs and pictures shared by the Year 6 children who did not enjoy Chinese language lessons but included it because they knew that they would benefit in the future from knowing it. They saw the benefits of knowing and using Chinese for their future and in the work market. Keddie (2016) and Drake et al. (2021) revealed the same concern with employability among the children in their studies.

Learning and academic success

Academic success was given as a justification for focusing on CWB throughout the policy documentation (e.g. England, 2017b; Hong Kong, 2017c; Australia, 2018; Ireland, 2019; Balica, 2020) and in the documentation from the umbrella organisation, resonating with PERMA (see, for example, (Seligman et al., 2009; Seligman, 2011, 2017). Presenting academic success as a justification for focusing on wellbeing is an argument embedded in individualism and neoliberalism: the mentally healthy child can fulfil their potential and

become an adult who can contribute to the economy rather than being a drain on it (Davies and Bansel, 2007; Duffy, 2017). Besides academic success being a reason to implement wellbeing approaches in school, PERMA features accomplishment as one of the components of wellbeing. SDT is even more overt in the links between academic success with the promotion of autonomy-supportive teaching methods intended to increase intrinsic motivation for success (Furtak, 2012; Reeve, 2016; Cheon, Reeve and Vansteenkiste, 2020; Reeve, 2021). Intrinsic motivation places all responsibility for success onto the individual. In the policy documents at the local and national level and among the leaders of the umbrella organisation, references were made to the educational benefits of a wellbeing approach.

The findings indicated that children also recognised the importance of academic success as a component of wellbeing. The help that children in Year 6 indicated that they appreciated when working on their academic goals supported the findings of Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016), Drake et al. (2021) and Keddie (2016) that children recognised that working on academic goals would benefit them in the future.

Although there was evidence that the children recognised the potential impact on their future of achieving academically, the children in all four groups created a theme “learning” (indicating the process) as opposed to academic success or outcomes. Achievement or a sense of accomplishment were part of the Horizon School wellbeing framework, which the children were familiar with. Yet, these were also not indicated as aspects of wellbeing for the children. There was an implicit tension between the children’s perspective of learning enjoyed for the sake of it and learning that was for a specific purpose which more often created pressure – such as Chinese dictation. The children obliquely referred to this when they spoke of wanting to have free time to research things that they were interested in.

The dissonance was that in the policy documentation, wellbeing was important because it afforded academic success. For the children, the importance to CWB lay in both the process of learning in the present and the implications it had for future wellbeing. This duality of purpose echoed the findings of Drake et al. (2021) and significantly it demonstrated the complexity of wellbeing and its components for children.

Indicators of the neoliberal hegemony

The findings suggested that a neoliberal mindset was inculcated into conceptualisations of wellbeing at the policy-making level, in the leadership of the umbrella group and by the children in the school. At the macrosystem, this was underpinned by the rationale pointing to the economic value of CWB and the associated focus on the individual. In policies and guidance, the performative nature of assessing wellbeing suggested conformity with a neoliberal hegemony. The determination of one child to achieve a scholarship could be economically motivated or prestige motivated; both would fit with a neoliberal mindset. An economic motivation would free up disposable income for the family, as the fact that the child was already in school indicated a certain ability to pay school fees. It would also make the child partly responsible for funding their own education. A prestige motivation would align with the competitive aspects of neoliberalism while providing the child the potential to use the scholarship award in future school and college applications.

More subtly, however, the findings showed evidence of perspectives of CWB complying with a neoliberal economic belief. Not only were individuals made responsible for their own wellbeing, but where schools were signalled as the mechanisms by which children are “responsibilised” (Juhila and Raitakari, 2016), external providers were signposted to facilitate this (England, 2017b; Balica, 2020; Ireland, 2021). The government bodies recommended a series of different programmes which schools could purchase to support their wellbeing approaches. Meanwhile, external providers offered a range of methods for assessing wellbeing (e.g. GL Assessment, 2017; *Assessing Wellbeing in Education*, 2021). In its documentation, the umbrella organisation identified a number of external providers who have supported a wellbeing approach in schools within the group, including independent consultants and organisations providing professional development in wellbeing for school staff. Furthermore, by demonstrating a commitment to wellbeing in its schools, the umbrella organisation could be seen to appeal to HK’s market-driven educational landscape (Chang and McLaren, 2018; Hong Kong, 2020e, f). This was particularly relevant as the market share diminished with the exodus of both international expats and the affluent middle class in response to the combined effect of the pandemic and the political climate (Keegan, 2019; Yau, 2019; Lam, E., 2021). This was significant because it resulted in CWB being utilised as a strategy for securing a market

share in an education free market. It was therefore implicitly conceptualised as a selling point for schools.

Whilst implementing a CWB approach may increase the school's marketability, this rationalisation was not directly relevant for children on the receiving end of a wellbeing approach in school. However, in the same way that assessment of wellbeing necessarily focuses on visible, reportable aspects of wellbeing, using wellbeing as a marketing strategy leads to an emphasis on performative aspects of CWB being highlighted. The findings showed that, by Year 6, children had incorporated into their conceptualisations of wellbeing certain performative aspects of CWB exemplified by PERMA and embedded in policies and guidance. They noted the importance of having strategies for self-regulation, for example, including creating a theme in their analysis for balance or relaxation, a key factor in self-control and self-regulation.

Responsibilisation of the individual

A key feature of neoliberalism is the “responsibilisation” of the individual (Keddie, 2016), and the findings demonstrated evidence of this throughout the policy documentation. The umbrella organisation situated the responsibility for personal wellbeing with the schools and the children. The programmes recommended in guidance at the policy level most frequently supported the enhancement of individual wellbeing following the theorisation and interventions described in a PERMA perspective (Seligman et al., 2009; Seligman, 2011; Norrish, 2015). Technologies of the self (Reveley, 2013, 2015a, b) were in evidence throughout the policy guidance and documentation, including in the list of dispositions which were expected to enhance wellbeing – self-esteem, self-regulation, self-management, self-confidence (e.g. Hong Kong, 2016; Hong Kong, 2017d; England, 2019a; Australia, no date-b). The need to nurture positive emotions was presented in policy as one of the reasons for amplifying CWB in schools. This, too, focused on the individual. The Penn Resiliency Program was recommended as a program to support wellbeing approaches (Lavis and Robson, 2015). “Three Good Things” was an intervention used in the Penn Resiliency Program (Seligman, 2011, p.84) which involved writing three good things that happen each day and considering questions such as “why did this happen?”, “what does this mean to you?” and “how can you have more of this good thing in the future?”. The intention was to enhance positive emotions in the writer. Although relationships with others may feature as causing positive emotions for the

writer, the impact on others was not considered in this particular intervention. The focus of the intervention and its positive effect was limited to the individual.

The findings indicated that resilience was a key feature of CWB. As an individual characteristic, personal resilience is of value in a neoliberal economy (Georgieva, 2020). Resilience also featured as a character disposition in PERMA and interventions such as “What Went Well” (Seligman, 2011) and activities focusing on character strengths were designed to enhance the individual’s resilience. In the policy context, resilience framed at an individual level was cited above all other skills as an important part of CWB. The umbrella organisation, too, focused on the development of resilience as a protective factor. Resilience included help-seeking behaviours and having coping strategies (Brown and Dixon, 2020). The findings showed that the children in Group 6.2 saw “help with mistakes” and “help with growing up” as factors in wellbeing. However, these were not presented in terms of resilience, rather they were included within the themes of learning and relationships.

The findings suggested that the children had started to take responsibility for their own wellbeing by the time they were in their final year of Primary school, as the performative, individual aspects of CWB were embedded in the children’s presentations of wellbeing.

5.3.2 CWB in interactions

There was evidence that both the policy context and the children in the school viewed wellbeing as apparent in an individual. Yet, the findings also demonstrated that wellbeing could be expressed in the interactions between individuals, or groups of individuals. Interactions between peers, between family members and between children with other adults in the community featured as important. However, interactions with the built environment, including certain features of the playground and places within the school were also salient. As White (2017, p.133) explains, wellbeing is emergent, partly as an outcome of the interactions that enable individuality to manifest. White (ibid.) notes that SDT assumes an individualist ontology where interactions with others (for example, in fulfilling the need of relatedness) enhance wellbeing for the self. However, elsewhere she has noted that the three basic psychological needs of SDT are based in relationality. White (2015, p.4) and Ryan and Deci are clear that “relatedness pertains... to a sense of being integral to social organizations beyond oneself” (2017, p.12). Since individuality did

emerge, it is relevant to consider what contributes to the individual's wellbeing within the community and not apart from it.

Although the children perceived wellbeing as an undercurrent throughout their community, they also evidenced a strong sense of self in relation to that community. In maintaining an individual ontology within a framework that considers social integration as paramount, SDT contributes a way of considering factors that contribute to the children's understanding of wellbeing in light of the themes that they established during data analysis.

The importance of relatedness

The policy documentation recommends the development of strong relationships (Hong Kong, 2016; Australia, 2018; England, 2018; Ireland, 2019). The IB suggests particular interactions that might enhance a wellbeing culture in school, including peer-to-peer work feedback, planning processes involving interactions between teachers extended to include children, parent and teacher consultation processes and teacher-to-teacher coaching (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2018). The umbrella organisation supported a range of interactions, including between schools in the instigation of a steering committee focused on wellbeing. The findings also showed that the children valued a range of interactions as part of CWB. They recognised it in their interactions with peers, sharing, socialising and playing together, as well as in their positive and encouraging exchanges with teachers. The Year 1 child who valued his interaction in teaching his classmate how to do gymnastics demonstrated an understanding of the reciprocity of this particular interaction. He recognised that he enjoyed the act of teaching, but also that his classmate was benefitting. The interactions between individuals were not always shared as an example of how relationships positively impact on themselves but as examples of how they benefitted each other. In this example, the child was also evidencing their own feeling of competence in a skill they could teach to their classmate. As Ryan and Deci (2017) indicate, it is in the balanced fulfilment of all three basic psychological needs that the highest positive impact on wellbeing can be observed.

In their analysis, children noted the importance of relationships to CWB, reflecting the findings in the policy context and from the literature review. The children differentiated between the relationships they had with family, friends and teachers, reflecting the

findings of Fane et al. (2020) in which relationships and social interaction were listed separately, indicating that they fulfilled different needs. During data analysis, children separated their relationships from friends and teachers, and during data collection the role of family was evident – for example, with Anna running to greet her older sibling before research could commence for her. The relatedness to other members of the community in different ways is an important component of SDT and featured in findings at all levels of the research.

Play as interaction

Like the work of Moore and Lynch (2018), Fane et al. (2020) and Stoecklin (2021) this study showed how important play is to CWB. Play did not feature as a component of CWB in the policy context but was predominant in children’s conceptualisations for both Years 1 and 6. The Year 1 children perceived so much of their daily activity as play that they struggled to differentiate between play and learning. This area is worthy of further investigation, as different types of play may have different degrees of importance in children’s conceptualisation of wellbeing. The children’s inability to differentiate between play and learning supports the findings of Fane et al. (2020); Fane et al. (2021) that children found play to be enjoyable regardless of initiator and purpose. Year 1 children also recognised their autonomy in play, with the ability to choose what and whom they played with in the central learning area and during playtimes.

The role of staff in CWB

Expectations about the role that staff hold in CWB constitutes a point of tension between the policy context, the umbrella organisation and the children’s conceptualisation. In the documentation, staff were represented as a resource in cultivating CWB, particularly in recognising mental health needs. Every staff member was responsible for the wellbeing of each child, and the expectation was that staff were provided with training to support them in this (e.g. England, 2017b; Australia, 2020). The responsibility for wellbeing was placed onto staff and schools. However, a by-product of this transfer of responsibility was that it manifested an SDT perspective, ensuring staff competency in recognising mental health needs, and giving them the autonomy to act when they do.

In the umbrella organisation, the findings indicated a struggle to find the balance between staff as a resource to support CWB and for the wellbeing of staff as individuals themselves. The wellbeing steering committee set up by the organisation initially focused

on staff wellbeing, with the intention of building a culture of wellbeing. The wellbeing of staff was one of the (more minor) strategies recommended in policy (e.g. Australia, 2018; England, 2018; Ireland, 2019), yet represented a focus among the leaders, although one of the stated purposes for this focus was enabling staff to “look after the children”.

The children, meanwhile, represented adults not only as a resource for their own wellbeing but also as an important part of their community – supporters, but also as deserving of consideration as themselves. The children’s perspective tends more towards an RWB (White, 2015, 2017) theoretical stance, with a focus on community structures manifesting wellbeing.

The tensions between the policy context's more individualist approach and the children's more interdependent perspective can be ratified through an SDT slant to the emergent individuality recognised in RWB.

5.3.3 CWB expressed interdependently

The findings indicated that the policy context at supranational, national and regional levels generally adopted an individualist ontological stance when framing, cultivating and measuring wellbeing, focusing on “what does all of that mean for each individual child?” (Samantha, Senior Leader, Umbrella Group). These conceptualisations of CWB align most closely with a PERMA perspective (Seligman, 2011). There were references to the importance of community building in the policy documentation. However, I contend that these exhortations for community building, in most cases, were focused on the impact for each child. The English strategies (e.g. Weare, 2015; England, 2017a, 2018) for enhancing community engagement, for example, suggested approaches such as developing parenting skills to promote CWB. There is an inherent tension between this approach, which valued interaction as a means of supporting the individual, and the conceptualisation of wellbeing presented by the children.

Webs of wellbeing

The findings suggest that children perceived wellbeing to be an underlying web that touched on all aspects of their lives. The mind maps that the children constructed during data analysis were evidence of the degree of connection that they saw in the initial categories they created for CWB. The overlap that persisted in the final themes and sub-categories created by Year 6, and between themes for Year 1, emphasised this. Wellbeing

was a feature of the community the children were part of, rather than the quality of an individual that could be enhanced or developed.

The way that the children included learning in their conceptualisation of wellbeing serves as an example of how one component can sit as part of a web. Learning was important for wellbeing to the children because it was seen to be important for their future as well as to provide an opportunity for them to engage in positive interactions with teachers and peers. For the younger children, it represented the opportunity to play. The older children indicated the importance of learning the skills needed for wellbeing as well as for life, and they appreciated the sense of challenge and achievement that comes with learning. The processes involved in learning did not fulfil only one wellbeing need for children; rather the findings suggested that learning and wellbeing were intricately and complexly related to one another.

The children analysed the data and talked about what wellbeing meant to them in a manner that suggested that they did not separate wellbeing from community. Concepts that surfaced as important for the children in CWB were linked with being part of a community: friendship, family involvement, cooperation, collaboration – even rule following – are all aspects of being part of a community. The pictures of wellbeing that Year 1 children drew featured the school as a back-drop or centre point. It was an intrinsic part of wellbeing for them because the school community underlay their sense of wellbeing. Year 6 children discussed the school as a community which included their friends, their families and adults, extending beyond their teachers. The first indicator of wellbeing defined by Fane et al. (2020) was “feeling happy, loved and safe”. I would equate this with a sense of belonging as a fundamental aspect of CWB (Brown and Shay, 2021, p.618), and the findings supported this construction for children in the school. There was a tension, however, in this manifestation of belonging, demonstrated in the children’s commitment to their house group. On the one hand, the houses were presented as providing a sense of belonging to one group within a broader community. On the other, by Year 6, there was evidence of a sense of competition ascribed to the house system more compatible with a neoliberal individualistic ethic to compete and win. The house system at Horizon School did not include house points or leader boards; the purpose of house is only considered to be the promotion of community. It was unclear when in the children’s chronology the competitive element entered their engagement

with the house system, yet it represented an evolving internalisation of the competitive nature of the neoliberal world in which the children were growing up.

The place of individual wellbeing

Wellbeing of the individual, so prevalent in the findings at the policy level, featured in the findings from the children, although they did not refer to individual wellbeing as manifesting in a checklist of attributes, despite the prevalence of the IBLP displayed in the school. The empirical evidence from the children generally suggested features of individual wellbeing manifesting as a result of relationships and communities, rather than the community being a collection of individuals with good levels of personal wellbeing. This aligns closely with an RWB theoretical perspective (White, 2015). However, there existed a tension in the children's representation of wellbeing between how CWB manifests in communities and acceptance of an individualistic conceptualisation, including competition and an acceptance of their own responsibility for their personal wellbeing.

White (2017, p.129) remarked that in each person, there exists a perpetual conflict between autonomy and belonging. I argue that this conflict is represented in the empirical data as symbiotic – autonomy exists within the community and is emergent when children feel safe to exercise it and supported in doing so. Children seeking a degree of autonomy over what they learn in a structured environment, or the autonomy of choice in their play during learning time were examples of this. In seeking autonomy in learning, children demonstrated a desire for engagement, which is a feature of wellbeing in PERMA (Seligman, 2011), aligning with an individualist conceptualisation. However, they sought it within the classroom with structure and support from teachers available. This supports the findings of Fane et al. (2020) that children valued the power to assert agency within their communities.

In another example, the children were highly engaged in the research and having their voices heard. Hearing and responding to child voice is supportive of their agency (Qvortrup, 2014), and the children sought to ensure that as many as possible were privileged with a voice in the research and also allowed to exercise their agency. Student voice was also recognised as emergent by the leaders, although they found it challenging to articulate how this was evidenced in schools. This may be because, as Fattore, Mason and Watson (2016) found, agency manifests for children through the relationships they

have with adults in their community which are intangible and difficult to quantify. When agency and autonomy manifest through and are represented in and by relationships and community, they are dependent on one another. For the children in school autonomy as an individual could manifest because of the societal structures and supports in place, not exclusive but supportive concepts. RWB can support this conceptualisation because of its focus on the interdependency of the elements of personal, societal and environmental processes of wellbeing (White, 2015, p.12).

Balance

The findings evidenced the children's understanding of the need for balance. The incorporation of hedonic wellbeing (Ryan and Deci, 2001) was not evident in the policy context, but it did manifest in the children's conceptualisation of wellbeing, supporting the findings of Fane et al. (2020) and Moore and Lynch (2018). However, the inclusion of hedonic activities such as play, fun and excitement were balanced for the children by the need for calm, mindful moments and "own self time". Research by Freire et al. (2013, cited by Alexandre et al., 2021, p.119) found that adolescents in Portugal incorporated both hedonic and eudemonic notions of wellbeing into their CWB conceptualisations, supporting the assertion of Waterman (1993) that the two manifestations of wellbeing were correlated. The children in this study also recognised the importance of balance in a way that was not apparent in the findings from the policy context, representing a point of dissonance in the conceptualisations.

Community resilience

I have already discussed how individual resilience was prized in policy. In an environment where wellbeing was entirely communal, individual resilience would be an outcome of strong relationships and community rather than an indicator of wellbeing itself, as argued by Brown and Shay (2021) and indicated in Australian and Irish documentation (Ireland, 2019; Australia, 2020). In addition to individual resilience manifesting from nurtured societal support structures (White, 2018), there are also instances where a community requires the capacity to recover from a collective challenge. Resilience viewed in this way can be seen as both societal and individual. The IB documentation recognised the interdependence of individuals with other people and with the world. Although the aim of "achieving wellbeing for ourselves and others" in the *balance* attribute of the IBLP referred to an achievable state of wellbeing, the concept of building strong communities

was clear. In the same way that individual resilience enables people to face and rebound from life's challenges, community resilience should enable a community to support each other through collective challenges such as those offered by the current pandemic, tragedy in the community or ongoing political unrest and uncertainty.

5.3.4 Impact of a specific microsystem

Devolution of responsibility to the local level

The findings in the macrosystem indicated that decentralisation of control for CWB had occurred. The policies and guidance that were mandated for schools are marked with an asterisk in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. HK is the only one of the policy contexts examined which demanded significant proportions of an expected approach to wellbeing. The caveat to this is that the requirement for implementation in HK applied only to government supported schools. It did not apply to private schools, of which Horizon School was one. All government education circulars released in HK were marked for the attention of the leaders of private schools "for information". They formed a part of the macrosystem for HK schools in that they represented a manifestation of the values that existed in HK.

I noted earlier the potential benefits to schools in what Weare and Nind (2011, p.166) called the "bottom-up" approach. These advantages included the ability for schools to be contextually responsive to the needs of their students, the longevity of implementation that comes with buy-in from those given choice, and the provision of supportive structures and climates in which change can take root. While the requirement to be flexible can have the benefit of freedom to employ a range of interventions in order to respond to changing or unanticipated issues and student population groups, the drawback is that accountability for the effectiveness of intervention is also devolved from authorising bodies to the school, concurrent with a neoliberal agenda. Analysing the documentation revealed that the principal focus for the macrosystem was on where the responsibility for CWB lies.

The findings indicated how the management of and support for CWB had been shifted into the private sector, in line with a neoliberal agenda. This enhanced the possibility that schools could market themselves on their unique characteristics, including the elevation of CWB if appropriate. This approach also relieved central government of responsibility for CWB.

Context of the school impacting on children's conceptualisations

In effect, schools were made complicit in the “responsibilisation” (Keddie, 2016) of children for their own wellbeing. The action that schools take to promote wellbeing can serve to achieve this aim. For example, Horizon School had had in place mindfulness programmes at every year level of Primary School for over six years. The recognition by the Year 6 children that mindfulness was a tool that would enhance calmness was likely to be a product of spending six years in a microsystem which deliberately endorsed meditation as a technology of the self (Reveley, 2013, 2015a) for promoting calm. Similarly, the students' use of the concept and word “balance” was likely to be linked to the IBLP, prominently displayed and referred to in the school. It seems plausible that the children in the Year 1 groups did not use this language because they lacked the protracted exposure to these concepts and language that the older children had experienced.

The importance of creativity for the children in the study was another case in point. In the findings, engagement in creativity was not just for hedonic pleasure but also for the sense of calm it provided and, as Obama (Group 6.1) shared, so that the children had the opportunity to express themselves. Moore and Lynch (2018) may link this deployment of creativity to “meaningful engagement”, which they represented as including play. However, creativity was not specifically mentioned by Moore and Lynch, whereas the children in this study were explicit that creativity was different to play. This leads to the question of why creativity and balance would feature as so important to children in Horizon School particularly. As an example of policy enactment (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012) whereby schools can challenge and redefine policy directives, Horizon School raised the status of creativity. There were Primary music rooms and teachers and Primary art rooms and teachers, as evidenced by the children's discussions about their art lessons and the calm they found in the music room. A whole area of the school was set aside for creativity and making, which featured heavily in the children's accounts of wellbeing. There were murals in evidence all around the school. Creativity and balance feature in PERMA and SDT theories of wellbeing, as a character strength in PERMA and as a process in both PERMA and SDT. However, creativity was not referenced in the guidance and documentation and was not mentioned at the level of the umbrella organisation. As indicated, neither balance nor creativity featured in recent studies into CWB including younger children.

These findings do not lead me to argue that creativity and balance should be included in a child centred conceptualisation of CWB. Instead, I draw from this that the context is central in understanding children's conceptualisations of wellbeing. In Horizon School, creativity and balance are valued, and this was reflected in how the children conceptualised wellbeing. The point I make is the importance of understanding context and the value of seeking child voice as to how they conceptualise and understand CWB.

5.4 Summary: Points of resonance and dissonance

The findings from the study revealed points of both resonance and dissonance in the conceptualisations of wellbeing. Both macrosystem and exosystem portrayed CWB as an individual set of dispositions and highlighted the importance of focusing on developing individual resilience. All three contexts examined, from policy in the macrosystem, to children in the microsystem, recognised the importance of learning and relationships. The dissonance came in how these concepts were understood within the concept of wellbeing. Using the PPCT framework enabled me to consider CWB from various angles and at different ecological levels relative to the children in the school. Because the PPCT model is not a theory of wellbeing itself, it lent an objectivity to analysing the data in relation to the three theories of wellbeing examined. This enabled me to consider the different angles of person, process, context and time. Through these elements, I could consider where and how wellbeing was seen to manifest, what was emergent within it and where the responsibility for CWB was seen to lie.

In the macrosystem, the focus was on how to elevate CWB by attending to what were perceived to be its components, reflecting most closely a performative and individualist PERMA stance. The children in the microsystem did not separate the components of CWB, rather seeing the aspects of their community as a web within which wellbeing moved, more in line with an RWB perspective. The umbrella organisation in the exosystem tried to bridge these two perspectives, indicating an implicit awareness of both conceptualisations. Although child voice featured as an element of wellbeing in the macrosystem, the development of agency, of which voice is a part, required deliberate relational and community building to elevate. Points of similarity between RWB and SDT could be seen in examples such as this, running counter to the promotion of an individual concept of wellbeing exemplified by PERMA. In many ways, the individualist and performative nature of PERMA makes it incompatible with RWB, in which wellbeing is

manifest in relationality. The webs of wellbeing envisaged by the children did not include specific elements and concepts contributing to wellbeing.

SDT similarly has an individualist slant, although it is framed to consider collectives of individuals and their impact on one another. White (2015) recognised the relationality of the three basic psychological needs of SDT, and it is therefore possible to see how SDT can contribute to a RWB understanding in a way that PERMA does not. This is apparent in the tensions within the empirical data from the children and the umbrella organisation. Both theories can be recognised because RWB is broad enough to encompass SDT, and SDT is relational enough to offer an additional lens. Developing communities in which children feel autonomy and competence as an intrinsic and important part of a whole includes managing relationships in a way that enables all children to have their voices heard. This is challenged by the notion implicit in the neoliberal hegemony that CWB has an individual focus, with broader implications for the future and stability of the economy. Building *resilient* communities will do far more to support wellbeing in communities than focusing on assessing, measuring and addressing individual levels of wellbeing. The challenge lies in how to achieve this.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 Contribution of the study

This study contributes to the field of knowledge of CWB in several ways. The use of Bronfenbrenner's model in its evolved PPCT form is rare in qualitative research (Eriksson, Ghazinour and Hammarström, 2018). The exploration of how CWB is conceptualised at different ecological levels demonstrated a shift from an individualist conceptualisation in policy at the macrosystem to an interactive approach in regional policy and manifesting as an interdependent conceptualisation from the children at the microsystem of the school. The creation of a framework to support research into CWB through this lens represents a contribution to the field.

For Horizon School and its wider umbrella organisation, the study provides information about the conceptualisations of wellbeing for children. The importance of friendship and play were already recognised in CWB research (Moore and Lynch, 2018; Fane et al., 2020), yet the study highlighted the importance of creativity and balance for children at Horizon School. These findings can be used to guide the approaches to CWB taken in the school, while the approaches to research could be replicated in other schools within the umbrella organisation. This process has already begun. The study could also contribute to the growing bank of research into conceptualisations of CWB in smaller case studies through the CUWB project (Children's Understandings of Well-being, 2019).

Methodologically, this is the only study I am aware of which has included children aged below 6 in both the collection and analysis of data related to CWB. The study brought together a range of methods under the Mosaic Approach which privileged child voice and sought, at every stage, to honour the children's input.

6.2 Overview of the findings and transferability

Horizon School is a private, English medium school operating within a wider umbrella organisation. The school's curriculum follows the framework of the IB. In the terms of the HK EDB it is an international school – one that “follow[s] a full non-local curriculum... operated on a self-financing and market-driven basis” (Hong Kong, 2020e). The fees it charges place it within a range affordable for the middle class and do not place it significantly higher than schools which are obliged to follow more stringent government

guidelines. With more than 90% Permanent Resident holders in its student body, the school represents the local population. However, it is more characteristic of the diverse nature of the passports held by those students. The school student body has experienced the same challenges associated with the political situation and the reaction to the pandemic as other students in HK. Although it is unique in nature, in a market-driven society, all schools seek to highlight their differences. It is in the school's similarities to so many other schools that offer strength to the possibility of transferring the method employed to other contexts.

6.2.1 Recommendations

Supporting CWB in schools could be facilitated by understanding the community it served in the microsystem. White (2018) and Brown and Shay (2021) suggested that a productive step towards this would be to consider the relationships within the school, between students, teachers, other adults and parents from the perspective of those engaged in them. Using the PPCT model to examine wellbeing in schools demonstrated that it is necessary to consider the web of interactions that impact on each individual, and this is exemplified in relationships within the school.

Enhancing competence, autonomy and relatedness among staff and children to meet each other's wellbeing needs could elevate staff beyond the status of tools that must be maintained so that they may nurture wellbeing in children, as seen in the policy context. Instead, staff and children can be considered inherently part of their communities and in supporting their emergent individual needs wellbeing in the community would also be enhanced. In this way, the policy context can be enacted locally to nurture wellbeing through community – seeking to meet the basic psychological needs (Ryan and Deci, 2017) of all to enhance societal wellbeing.

A school is a community focused on children, so it is imperative that it is constructed in a way that the children feel that their voices are heard. The relationships within the school will impact on the extent to which children feel their voice is relevant (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016), so a focus on relationship building between adults and children, as well as between adults and adults and children and children would be invaluable in this context. The children in this study highlighted the importance of relationships as part of their sense of community wellbeing, so one approach could be for Horizon School to investigate the extent to which children feel they belong, including the mechanisms that

are in place to enhance that sense of belonging (Brown and Shay, 2021) Considering the school as a series of small networks for each child is one way of visualising this, as became evident in the various groups the children talked about being part of. Working with the children to find ways that everyone in the community is a member of multiple networks would enable them to feel belonging to different smaller groups in the school as well as part of the wider community of the school. The children already recognise this in the houses and classes at Horizon School, so amplifying this would be a next step in this context.

Engaging student voice as part of this process promotes children's sense of agency and brings authenticity to an understanding of CWB. One recommendation based specifically on the children in this study's need for creativity and balance would be to engage with the students about whether these needs are met and ways to elevate balance and creativity if they are not.

6.3 Limitations of the study and implications for further research

The findings I present here are drawn from an investigation in one particular school. Readers will know the extent to which the findings are transferrable based on the descriptions contained within the study and their knowledge of their own context. It is also relevant to note that the school is self-financing, and therefore not confined by the need to meet academic expectations in order to achieve government funding. Children from low-income families are not afforded the luxury of attending schools with this freedom, and the extent to which the conceptualisations of wellbeing are met for these children would be worth exploring, so I would strongly recommend exploring conceptualisations of wellbeing with children in their own context. Appendix 6 contains the codebook developed through literature review and inductively added to during the research. The codebook could be a useful tool for other researchers seeking to understand child conceptualisation of wellbeing in their own settings.

This study represented a short-term case study. The subject matter would bear longitudinal investigation if this were possible. The findings presented here were based on an investigation into children's conceptualisations of wellbeing for two separate groups of children in Year 1 and Year 6. I have drawn conclusions about how the school context may have impacted on the children's developing conceptualisations. The school

context was the same for these children, and the environment could be argued to be deliberately engineered by a school focused on making wellbeing a central tenet. The suppositions I have made could be more thoroughly scrutinised by investigating the same group of children's developing conceptualisations. This might be further enhanced with a lens on the specific wellbeing-related language used in the school and by the children. If appropriate, this may lead to recommendations which could support building robust, resilient communities focused on humanitarian approaches in defiance of the neoliberal hegemony.

There were also limitations imposed by the ongoing pandemic situation in HK. The empirical research took place for three months between October and December 2021. Schools had reopened in May 2021 with strict social distancing measures including mask wearing, no food provision and plastic screens between desks. The period in which the research took place was the final three complete months of face-to-face schooling before school closures for Covid were re-enacted from January 2022 to April 2022. The previous closures were still uppermost in the children's minds, and the social distancing measures were impacting on their perception of wellbeing and the ways that the research could be conducted. For example, facial expressions were largely hidden by masks making non-verbal cues challenging to ascertain. In some cases, children were limited further in their engagement with other children by parents fearful of Covid, while other children did not return to school when the campus reopened, although they remained on roll. One of the ongoing impacts of the pandemic restrictions in HK is that children cannot interact with one another in play as they did before the restrictions.

Play was found to be significant for children both in Year 1 and Year 6, supporting the findings of previous researchers in the field (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2016; Moore and Lynch, 2018; Fane et al., 2020). Understanding CWB from the children's perspective would be enhanced by further study into the relevance of different types of play on wellbeing, including taking into account initiator, purpose and those who are engaged in it. This would be of interest both within the current climate and later. The PPCT lens of time would be particularly interesting to employ in this regard, considering both child development and socio-historical events.

6.4 Conclusion

In an ideal world, policymakers would utilise qualitative research such as this in order to reflect what matters to young children when constructing policy impacting on them. Rather than following Qvortrup (2014) and choosing between social policy for wellbeing or politics focused on the sociology of childhood, I would hope that educators and policymakers would be able to find a balance between the two. It is possible to engage with the voice of the child and seek to build larger communities that reach beyond the microsystem of the school, enabling wellbeing to move throughout our society.

The study found that the influence of the neoliberal hegemony was reflected in policy and decisions in the macrosystem. An understanding of how children conceptualise CWB must take account of the economic implications of a market-driven economy based on “responsibilised” (Keddie, 2016) citizens. The devolution of responsibility for wellbeing has been accepted by schools which assume both responsibility and accountability as the mechanism by which students are inculcated into a neoliberal thought pattern. The counterbalance to this is to follow the approach of Hargreaves (2003) and Ball (2016b, 2016a) and, with awareness of the hegemony, resist its inculcation in promoting community and humanitarianism.

Part of this resistance lies in schools deciding not to focus on wellbeing as an individual set of dispositions that can be reified, quantified and ranked but instead moving towards building resilient communities founded on mutual support. In this approach, the individuals in the community may well benefit from the community and the community may well benefit from the individuals within it.

One significant challenge lies in the accountability that accompanies the responsibility for wellbeing devolved to the schools. Individual wellbeing is relatively easy to measure and assess, particularly through the wide range of market-boosting tools available. Similarly, programmes and interventions (also widely available on the market) can be introduced to address particular deficits in wellbeing. It is more challenging to implement cultural change, which leads to an understanding and amplification of wellbeing moving within and across the community. However, this more complex approach is more likely to

address children's needs for wellbeing and enhance CWB in the community, with the advantage that it will likely impact positively on adults in the community as well.

CWB has been situated throughout this study as a branch of the wider concept of wellbeing that encompasses all ages. In a community building approach, both CWB and the broader wellbeing of the community will be addressed. Ultimately, for this approach to be successful, policymakers will also need to accept the school's autonomy in pursuing a community-based approach to understanding and amplifying wellbeing. The dissonance between how children conceptualise CWB and the perspective of the policymakers and decision makers needs to be addressed if CWB, and the wellbeing of the whole community, are to be enhanced in a meaningful way.

I am not naïve enough to assume that this is a simple or an easy endeavour. However, the findings from this study convince me that I can start by working within my own community to take steps towards developing a culture of wellbeing in the way that the children conceptualise it, as encompassing all and as moving through the members of the microsystem.

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Appendix 1: Review of Educational Landscape in Hong Kong

Tables showing schools listed on the IB website as offering one or more of the IB programmes as of January 2021.

School name	PYP	MYP	DP	CP	Language of instruction	State school	School type (HK)
Australian International School HK			✓		ENGLISH		IS
Beacon Hill School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Bradbury School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Canadian International School of HK	✓	✓	✓		ENGLISH		IS
Carmel School	✓	✓	✓		ENGLISH		IS
Causeway Bay Victoria Kindergarten and Int'l Kindergarten	✓				CHINESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		Private
Chinese International School		✓	✓		ENGLISH		IS
Christian Alliance International School			✓		CHINESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		IS
Clearwater Bay School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Creative Primary School	✓				CHINESE, OTHER		Private
Creative Secondary School		✓	✓		ENGLISH	✓	Private
Delia Memorial School (Glee Path)			✓		CANTONESE, ENGLISH, OTHER	✓	DSS
Diocesan Boys' School			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
Discovery College	✓	✓	✓	✓	ENGLISH		PIS
ELCHK Lutheran Academy	✓	✓	✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
ESF Abacus International Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		Private
ESF International Kindergarten (Tsing Yi)	✓				ENGLISH		Private
ESF International Kindergarten - Hillside	✓				ENGLISH		Private
ESF International Kindergarten Tung Chung	✓				ENGLISH		Private
French International School			✓		ENGLISH		IS
G. T. (Ellen Yeung) College			✓		CHINESE, ENGLISH		DSS
Galilee International School	✓				ENGLISH		Private
German Swiss International School			✓		ENGLISH		IS
Glenealy School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Han Academy			✓		CHINESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		Private

School name	PYP	MYP	DP	CP	Language of instruction	State school	School type (HK)
HKCA Po Leung Kuk School	✓				ENGLISH		PIS
HK Academy	✓	✓	✓		ENGLISH		IS
International College HK			✓		ENGLISH		IS
International College HK Hong Lok Yuen	✓				ENGLISH		IS
Island School		✓	✓	✓	ENGLISH		ESF
Japanese International School	✓				ENGLISH		IS
Kennedy School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Kiangsu-Chekiang College, International Section			✓		ENGLISH		IS
King George V School		✓	✓		ENGLISH		ESF
Kingston International Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		IS
Kingston International School	✓				ENGLISH, CHINESE, OTHER		IS
Kornhill Victoria Kindergarten	✓				CHINESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		Private
Kowloon Junior School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Li Po Chun United World College of HK			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
Malvern College HK	✓	✓			ENGLISH		IS
Nord Anglia International School HK			✓		ENGLISH		IS
Parkview International Pre-School	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Parkview International Pre-School (Kowloon)	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Peak School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School			✓		ENGLISH		PIS
Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
Quarry Bay School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Renaissance College	✓	✓	✓	✓	ENGLISH		PIS
Sha Tin College		✓	✓	✓	ENGLISH		ESF
Sha Tin Junior School	✓				ENGLISH		ESF
Singapore International School (HK)			✓		ENGLISH		IS
South Island School		✓	✓	✓	ENGLISH		ESF
St Paul's Co-educational College			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
St. Stephen's College			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS

School name	PYP	MYP	DP	CP	Language of instruction	State school	School type (HK)
The HK Chinese Christian Churches Union Logos Academy			✓		ENGLISH	✓	DSS
The Independent Schools Foundation Academy		✓	✓		CHINESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		PIS
Think International School	✓				ENGLISH		IS
Victoria (Harbour Green) Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Victoria (Homantin) International Nursery	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Victoria (South Horizons) International Kindergarten	✓				CANTONESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		Private
Victoria Belcher Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Victoria Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Victoria Nursery	✓				CANTONESE, ENGLISH, OTHER		Private
Victoria Shanghai Academy	✓	✓	✓		ENGLISH	✓	PIS
West Island School			✓	✓	ENGLISH		ESF
Wu Kai Sha International Kindergarten	✓				ENGLISH		Private
Yew Chung International School - HK			✓		ENGLISH		IS
<p>Data in the first seven columns extracted from the IB website (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2020). Data in the last column extracted from the Education Bureau, HK (Hong Kong, 2019, 2020d, e, f)</p> <p><i>Key information about the final column:</i> These are government categorisations. DSS – Direct Subsidy Scheme schools ESF – International School, English Schools Foundation (currently having a government financial subvention phased out) IS – Private International School PIS – Private Independent School Private – not counted as international schools. Majority Kindergartens and Nurseries</p>							

International Schools in HK offering a curriculum other than the IB: 20
American International School 美國國際學校
American School HK
Concordia International School 協同國際學校
Delia School of Canada 地利亞(加拿大)學校
Discovery Bay International School 愉景灣國際學校
Harrow International School (HK) 哈羅香港國際學校
HK International School 香港國際學校
HK Japanese School 香港日本人學校
Japanese International School (Japanese) 香港日本人學校(日文部)
Kellett School 啟歷學校
Korean International School (English) 韓國國際學校(英文部)
Korean International School (Korean) 韓國國際學校(韓國部)
Lantau International School 大嶼山國際學校
Lycée Francais International (English) 法國國際學校(英文部)
lycée Francais International (French) 法國國際學校(法文部)
Norwegian International School 挪威國際學校
Saint Toosie Rogers International School 聖道弘爵國際學校
Shrewsbury International School HK 思貝禮國際學校
The Harbour School 港灣學校
The International Montessori School – an IMEF School 蒙特梭利國際學校

Appendix 2: Documentary analysis

Table showing the documents and articles analysed using the WPR approach – Australia, England, Ireland

Country/ agency	Code no.	Name of document	Statutory/ guidance
Australia	A1	The National Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (in draft) (Australia, 2020)	Guidance
	A2	Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (Australia, 2018)	Guidance
	A3	The Early Years Framework for Australia (Australia, no date-a)	Guidance
	A4	Framework for School Age Care in Australia (Australia, no date-b)	Guidance
England	E1	Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (England, 2019b)	Statutory
	E2	Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools departmental advice for school staff (England, 2018)	Guidance, but see *
	E3	Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper (England, 2017b)	Guidance
	E4	School Inspection Handbook (England, 2019c)	Statutory
	E5	Promoting Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing (Lavis and Robson, 2015)	Guidance
	E6a E6b	A Whole School Framework for Emotional Well Being and Mental Health (Stirling and Emery, 2016a) A Whole School Framework for Emotional Well Being and Mental Health Supporting Resources for School Leaders (Stirling and Emery, 2016b)	Guidance
Ireland	I1	Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (Ireland, 2019)	Guidance
	I2	Guidelines for Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle (Ireland, 2017)	Guidance
	I3	Best Practice Guidance for post primary schools (Ireland, 2018a)	Guidance

Table showing the documents and articles analysed using the WPR approach – Hong Kong and the IB

Country/ agency	Code no.	Documents and articles reviewed in considering wellbeing approach in schools	Statutory/ guidance
HK	H1	Learning through Life reform proposals (Hong Kong, 2000)	Statutory
	H2	Performance Indicators for HK Schools (Hong Kong, 2016)	Statutory
	H3	General Studies Curriculum Guide for Primary Schools (Hong Kong, 2017a)	Statutory
	H4	Personal, Social and Humanities Education (Hong Kong, 2017d)	Statutory
	H5	Healthy Schools Policy (Hong Kong, 2018b)	Guidance
	H6	Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No 180/2020 Latest developments in values education (Hong Kong, 2020c) (Hong Kong, 2010)	Statutory
	H7	EDB Guidelines on Student Discipline (Hong Kong, 2017b)	Guidance
	H8	Mental Health of Adolescents (Hong Kong, 2017c)	Statutory
IB	IB1	Why wellbeing matters during a time of crisis (Balica, 2020)	Guidance
	IB2	MYP/ From Principles into Practice (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2021)	Guidance
	IB3	IB Standards and Practices (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016)	Statutory
	IB4	PYP PSPE scope and sequence (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2009)	Guidance
	IB5	The Learning Community (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2018)	Guidance
	IB6	What is well-being (Balica, 2021)	Guidance

Tables showing which documents recommend a particular strategy to support a wellbeing approach (Australia, England, Ireland)

Document	Australia				England						Ireland		
	A1	A2	A3	A4	E1 *	E2	E3	E4 *	E5	E6	I1	I2	I3
Contextually relevant – schools given freedom to adapt dependent on identified school need	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Whole school approach/ culture of wellbeing	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Targeted intervention or support for more needy students	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Strong relationships in the school	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Staff: professional development	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Staff: wellbeing of school personnel	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Leadership: Designated person in the school responsible for implementation of a wellbeing approach.	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Learning and teaching: Curriculum expectations	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Learning and teaching: Implementation of evidence-based programmes	X	X				X	X			X	X	X	X
Engagement of student voice	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Implementation of a review and monitoring cycle	X	X						X	X	X	X		
Community involvement, including parents/ caregivers and the wider community	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Recognition of the involvement of external bodies – i.e., local and national government, NGOs, faith groups	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		

Tables showing which documents recommend a particular strategy to support a wellbeing approach (HK and IB)

Document	HK								IBO					
	H1 [^] *	H2*	H3*	H4*	H5	H6*	H7	H8*	IB1	IB2	IB3*	IB4	IB5	IB6
Strategy														
Contextually relevant – schools given freedom to adapt dependent on identified school need	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Whole school approach/ culture of wellbeing		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Targeted intervention or support for more needy students		X			X		X	X			X		X	
Strong relationships in the school		X		X			X	X				X	X	
Staff: professional development		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	
Staff: wellbeing of school personnel			X		X									
Leadership: Designated person in the school responsible for implementation of a wellbeing approach.			X	X			X		X		X	X	X	X
Learning and teaching: Curriculum expectations	X		X	X		X			X			X		X
Learning and teaching: Implementation of evidence-based programmes		X	X					X	X			X		X
Engagement of student voice	X						X		X				X	X
Implementation of a review and monitoring cycle		X	X	X	X				X		X			
Community involvement, including parents/ caregivers and the wider community	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X		X
Recognition of the involvement of external bodies – i.e., local and national government, NGOs, faith groups	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X	

^NOTE: H1 is a document that refers to Education Reform throughout HK. The statements are not specifically linked to wellbeing. The strategies indicated are ones which are promoted for some form of wellbeing outcome, such as the development of the whole child, or social skill development.

*Indicates statutory

Programmes Recommended to support CWB in schools - Australia, IB, HK, Ireland

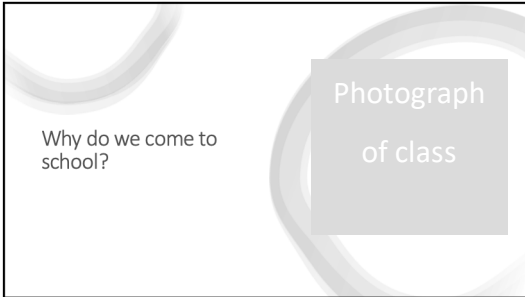
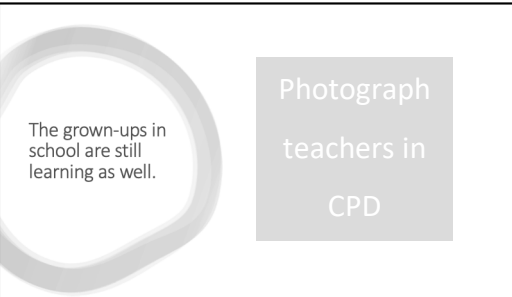
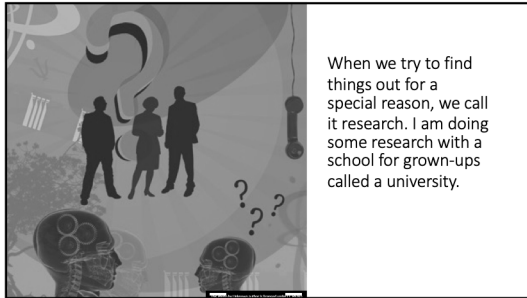
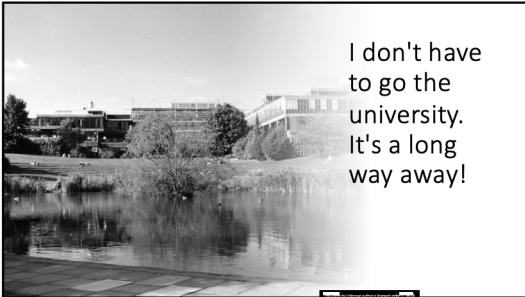

Agency	Recommending document	Recommended Programmes	Key skills developed/ purpose of programme	Focus
Australia	The National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (in draft) (Australia, 2020)	Think Equal (Think Equal, n.d.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and Emotional learning - Pro-social behaviours - Autonomy - Collaborative Community 	Individual Interactional Interdependent
IB	Why wellbeing matters during a time of crisis (Balica, 2020)	Quality Circle Time (Jenny Mosley consultancies, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn-taking - Team-building - Problem-solving - Community 	Interactions Interdependent
HK	Mental Health of Adolescents (Hong Kong, 2017c)	Understanding Adolescent Project (Hong Kong, 2020a, 2021) Enhanced Smart Teen Project (Hong Kong, 2020b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience - Coping with challenge - Facing adversity - Team-building - Self-discipline - Self-confidence - Resilience 	Individual Interactional
Ireland	Guidelines for Wellbeing in the Junior Cycle 2021 (Ireland, 2021)	Pupil Ambassador Scheme on positive living	Cannot comment – no English version	n/a
		Joyful@School (2016-19?) Friends Youth Programme (Friends Resilience, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social skills - Resilience - Anxiety prevention - Bounce back from setbacks and adversity - Relaxation - Emotion regulation - Develop empathy - Confidence - Self-regulation 	n/a Individual Interactional
		Junior Social Innovation Action programme (Young Social Innovators, 2021) Resilience Academy (pieta, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community building - Collaboration - Emotional resilience 	Individual Interactional Interdependent Individual

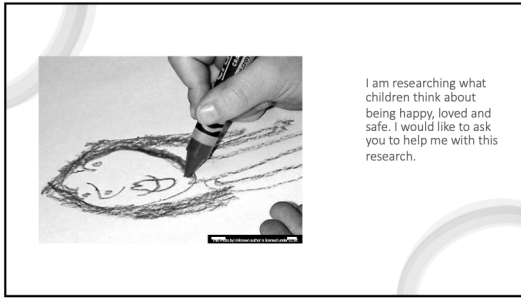
Programmes Recommended to support CWB in schools – England

Agency	Recommending document	Recommended Programmes	Key skills developed/ purpose of programme	Focus	
England	Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper (Great Britain, 2017)	Positive Behaviour Support (The Challenging Behaviour Foundation, 2021) Youth Mental First Aid training for teachers (Mental Health First Aid England, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing challenging behaviour - Risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems - How to help youth in a crisis - How to help youth with a mental health challenge - Early intervention 	Individual	
	Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing (Lavis and Robson, 2015)	Penn Resiliency Programme (Positive Psychology Center, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience - Well-being - Optimism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Navigate adversity - Thrive in challenging environments - PERMA 	Individual
		Classroom Dinosaur Curriculum (The Incredible Years, 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive social skills - Conflict and anger management skills - Emotional literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate school behaviours - Self-esteem - Social and emotional competence 	Individual Interactional
		Friends for Life (Friends Resilience, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social skills - Resilience - Anxiety prevention - Bounce back from setbacks and adversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relaxation - Emotion regulation - Develop empathy - Confidence 	Individual Interactional
		PATHS curriculum (PATHS Curriculum, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional and social competencies - Reducing aggression and behaviour problems 	Individual	
		Roots of Empathy (Roots of Empathy, n.d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing aggression - Raising social/emotional competence - Increasing empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coping skills - Emotional awareness 	Individual Interactional
		Zippy's Friends (Partnership for Children, n.d.)		Individual	

Appendix 3: Fieldwork information

Story and transcript for informed assent session with Year 1 students

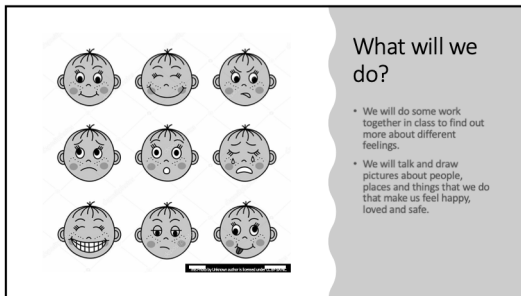
 <p>Why do we come to school?</p> <p>Photograph of class</p>	 <p>The grown-ups in school are still learning as well.</p> <p>Photograph teachers in CPD</p>
<p>2</p> <p><i>“What do we come to school for? (anticipated response – to learn but take others and discuss as appropriate).</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>The grown-ups in school are still learning as well.</i></p>
 <p>4</p>	<p><i>When we try to find things out for a special reason like this, we call it research. I am doing some research with a school for grown-ups called a university. (Some of the children may have parents/ guardians/ carers who work at a university or brothers or sisters at university. Ask if there is anyone who knows someone who is going to university.)</i></p>
 <p>5</p>	 <p>6</p>
<p><i>The University – my other school – is in the UK in a city called Bath. This is a picture of it.</i></p>	<p><i>I don't have to go to the university, instead I do all my work here and tell my teachers about it.</i></p>



7

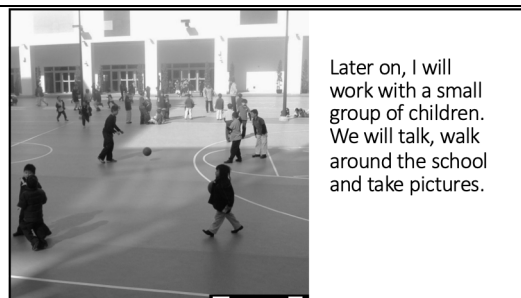
I am researching what children think about being happy, loved and safe and feeling part of our school. I would like to ask you to help me with this research, with this finding out.

"I would really like to know more about what you think about being happy, loved and safe and feeling part of our school. I would really like to have your help with that. I am going to tell you a bit more about it so that you can decide if you want to help me or not."



8

We will do some work together in class to find out more about different feelings. We will talk and draw pictures about people, places and things that we do that make us feel happy, loved and safe and being part of our school.



9

Later, I will work with a small group of children. We will talk, walk around the school and take some pictures.

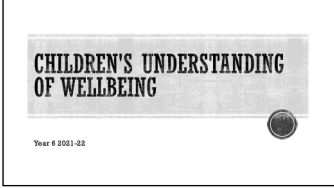




10

You do not have to help me with my research if you do not want to. How could you show me if you do not want to help? You could shake your head like this (demonstrate). You could tell your

	<p><i>teacher or your EA or your Mum or Dad that you don't want to join in the research. It's OK to say no – you can always change your mind next time.”</i></p>
<p>We'll all still be together in class, but any work you do won't count towards my research.</p> <p>Photograph of the class working together</p> <p>11</p>	<p><i>We'll all still be together in class but any work you do won't count towards my research. If you are really sad about the work, your teacher or your EA will talk to you to find out more and try to help.</i></p>
<p>If you do want to help, that would be great – I really want to hear your thoughts and ideas.</p> <p>12</p>	<p><i>If you do want to help, that would be great – I really want to hear your thoughts and ideas. How can you show me if you do want to help? (Take children's ideas, and if need be, follow up with “How could we show other people that you are happy to help me? (Take children's ideas and use the ones that are appropriate.)</i></p>

Slides and transcript for informed assent with Year 6 students

 <p>1</p>	<p><i>"As well as working at [NAME OF SCHOOL], I am learning outside of school as well. I am doing this learning at the University of Bath in the UK. To help me learn more about wellbeing I am going to do some research here at [NAME OF SCHOOL], in Year 1 and Year 6. I would like to ask you to help me with that research."</i></p>
 <p>2</p>	<p><i>"Let's just make sure we understand what "research" is."</i></p> <p><i>Research – what type of word is it? Both noun and verb.</i></p> <p><i>What parts can you see? What does it mean? What linked words are there?</i></p> <p><i>Noun – 1570s "act of searching closely" from Old French <i>recherche</i> (modern French <i>recherche</i>).</i></p> <p><i>Verb – 1590s "seek out, search closely" from Old French <i>rechercher</i>.</i></p> <p><i>https://www.etymonline.com/word/research</i></p> <p><i>Prefix – re: does not mean again in this instance (although it can) - in this case it intensifies the meaning of the word search.</i></p> <p><i>What related words can you think of – researched, researching, researcher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>- "I am doing the research with a university in the UK – although I don't have to go there! The research that I am doing is about what children understand about wellbeing. Your parents/ guardians/ carers have already been asked if you can help with the research if you want to and *all of them have agreed that you can/ some of them have agreed that you can, but they know that you are all hearing this information.</i><i>- Before you decide if you want to help, I am going to give you more information about what it will be like to take part in the research. All of this information is in a document that was emailed to you this morning as well."</i>
 <p>3</p>	<p><i>What do you notice about these two words?</i></p> <p><i>What do they mean? What do you think is the difference between them?</i></p> <p><i>Root word? - sent – from Latin <i>sentire</i> (to feel, think) and <i>con</i> (with).</i></p> <p><i>To feel – sense</i></p> <p><i>Assent is about understanding, consent is about agreeing to. From <i>ad</i> + <i>sentire</i>.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>- "For you to be involved in research, your parents/ guardians/ carers give their active consent and you give your assent to say that you have understood and are also willing to be involved. We're going to talk more about what this means for you."</i>

To find out more about:

- What children think and believe about wellbeing.
- What our school already does and what else it could do to help with children's wellbeing.

1. WHY IS MRS. HOWDLE-LANG DOING THIS PROJECT?

4

"All this information is on a sheet called "Year 6 student information sheet" which will be emailed to you after this lesson, so you can refer back to it.

Mrs Howdle-Lang is doing research as part of further learning – like [Principal] and [Ex Head of School] did.

This research project is to find out more about what children believe about their wellbeing. This includes things like what makes up wellbeing for children and what children think is important to help with their wellbeing.

The project will also look at what school already does and what else it could do to help with children's wellbeing."

- Children in two classes in Year 1 and Year 6 have been asked to take part.
- Some work will be in the whole class and some in small groups.

2. WHY HAVE YOU BEEN ASKED TO TAKE PART?

5

"I am doing this research with Year 1 and Year 6. Why do you think that might be?"

It's so that I can find out what children think at the start and at the end of Primary school. I have asked two classes in each year group to be part of the research. I picked the classes after talking to the teachers. Your class is one of the ones that has been chosen to take

part. Some of the research will happen with everyone in the class, and some of it will happen with a smaller group. The smaller groups will be 2 groups of 5 – 6 children from each class. These children will be chosen from those who have given their assent to represent the class."

Before October break:

- Whole class lessons
- 1 – 2 sessions

Between October and Christmas:

- Smaller group of 5 – 6 children
- 4 – 5 sessions

Before the end of the school year:

- One session where I share the findings with the small group.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DO TAKE PART?

6

"If you choose to take part, there will be 1 – 2 whole class lessons before October break – finding out what the class thinks about wellbeing and doing some writing or drawings.

Then there will be 4 – 5 sessions with a smaller group between October and Christmas, to explore ideas of wellbeing with some talking, some exploring the school and some taking photographs. Just before Christmas

there will be one session to look at all the information we have gathered and decide what it means together."

- You do not have to take part with the research –
- – but you still come to class!
- You can take part in one part and not another part.
- You can change your mind about taking part and say you don't want to anymore.

4. DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

7

"It is totally up to you to decide if you want to take part or not. You can take part in the whole class lessons, and not in the focus group. You can say that you want to take part now, and later on change your mind and say you do not want to take part.

Not taking part in the research does not mean that you do not come to class! If you choose not to take part in the research then any work you do in the whole class sessions will not be collected in. You will not be asked questions about the work that you have done. You will not be asked to join the focus group.

Nothing will happen if you choose not to join in. It is completely your decision.

If you want to stop taking part after the project has started, you can change your mind that is fine too. No-one will mind. You can tell me or your teacher that you don't want to take part anymore. If you decide that you do not want me to use your work after you have handed it in, you can tell me that up to two weeks afterwards. After that, I will have taken your name off the work and I will not know which work is yours anymore.

There are no reasons not to take part though, unless your parents/ guardians/ carers have said that you cannot join in. You will not miss out on breaktime or lunchtime, or on any class work. The work that is happening in class while we do small group work on the research project will be similar to what we are doing out of class. It just won't count towards the project. "

5. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

- Thinking about the world in a different way.
- Getting a chance to say what you think about wellbeing to people inside and outside our school.
- Helping to show people how children can be involved with research in an important way.

"There are lots of benefits to being involved in the research. Here are some of examples of benefits.

You will also help our school to think about whether it needs to do things differently to help children's wellbeing."

8

6. WHAT ARE THE DOWN SIDES OF TAKING PART?

- No obvious disadvantages.
- No obvious risks.
- No discomfort or embarrassment.

"We will be working in class or in spaces that you know in school.

If you do feel discomfort or embarrassment, you can let me know and we can stop the research if we can't solve the problem. I might ask you if you are uncomfortable based on your body language, and you can tell me if you are OK to continue.

9

Remember, the same as with anything you say in school, if you say something that is worrying, I might need to follow up with a parent or your teacher, but I would always talk to you about that first."

7. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE DATA?

- No data that anyone else sees will have your name on it.
- Other people who might see the data:
 - My teacher at the university
 - Children in the small group
- Other people who might see the final project (or a summary):
 - People at the university
 - Your parents
 - Leaders at [redacted] and our school

"The information that you share, any photographs we take and any work you do is called data. I will see the data, but anything that is written down will not have your name on it.

Sometimes I will need to write down some of the words that you say. In that case, I will change your name so that no-one else will

10

know who said the words.

In the final report that I write, I will make sure that no-one knows who said what by changing names and giving general ideas about what we decided. I must follow the law about the data that you give me. The law in Hong Kong is called an ordinance and it is the Personal Data Protection (Privacy) Ordinance. I am following that and the Data Protection Law in the UK, because I am working with a university in the UK."

● WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

11

"You will all be given a consent form and an information sheet and some time to think about whether you want to take part. I will leave a box in class so that you can put your consent forms in here before DATE.

After that, we will start the whole class sessions next week, and decide on the small group to let you know who will be in that."



YEAR 6 STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Children's Understanding of Wellbeing

Name of Researcher: Stephanie Howdle-Lang

Contact details of Researcher: [showdle-lang@\[name of school\].edu.hk](mailto:showdle-lang@[name of school].edu.hk)

Supervisor: Ceri Brown

Supervisor contact details: [REDACTED]

This sheet contains information about the research project we talked about in class. I am asking you to take part in the project with me.

Please read this information sheet carefully and ask if you are not clear about any of it. Take your time to decide if you want to take part. It's up to you if you want to do this. If you don't then that's no problem.

1. Why are we doing this research project?

Mrs. Howdle-Lang is doing this research as part of her learning with the University of Bath. The project is to find out more about what children believe about their wellbeing. This includes things like what makes up wellbeing for children and what children think is important to help with their wellbeing. The project will also look at what school already does and what else it could do to help with children's wellbeing.

2. Why have I been asked to take part?

Children in Year 1 and Year 6 have been asked to take part in the research. Two classes in each year level have been chosen to join in, and your class is one of those. I talked to your teachers to help me to decide which classes would join in.

Some children in each class will work with me in a smaller group. These children will be chosen from all those who have said that they are interested.

3. What would taking part involve?

There will be 1 - 2 whole class sessions just after the October break when we will find out what the whole class thinks about wellbeing. In those classes you will be asked to share your ideas in writing or drawings.

Between the October break and the Chinese New Year break a small group of 5 – 6 children will work with me during class time. This will happen 5 – 6 times. The rest of the class will be doing similar work in class with your teacher, but it won't be counted towards the research.

At the end of the project, the small group will look at all the information we have gathered and make a decision together about what wellbeing means to children.

The small group sessions will be filmed to help me remember what everyone has said.

Before the end of the school year there will be one more session when I will share all the research findings.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. It is totally up to you to decide if you want to take part or not. No one will mind if you say no. If you say yes, you are still free to change your mind later without giving a reason.

You will always be told if we are doing something linked to the research. If you do not agree to be involved in the research you will still be in the classroom. Any work you do will not be counted towards the research.

If you say no, you will not be included in the group of children that we choose from to be in the small group. You can agree to join in with the project and later say that you do not want to be part of the small group.

If you do decide to join in with the project I will ask you to sign a form to say so. I will give you a copy of your signed form, and of this information sheet.

5. Are there reasons why I should not take part?

The only reason not to take part is if your parents/ guardians/ carers has said that you cannot.

6. What are the benefits of taking part?

- Taking part in the project is a chance to say what you think about wellbeing and be heard by people inside and outside of our school.
- The research that you help to do will help school understand what children believe about wellbeing and how they want to be supported.
- Doing this research will help to show people outside of our school that children can join in research in an important way.

7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no obvious disadvantages or risks to you taking part in the project. You will not miss out on class work or break time to take part in the project.

8. Will taking part involve any discomfort or embarrassment?

I do not expect you to feel any discomfort or embarrassment if you take part in the research. If you are uncomfortable or unhappy at any point, you can let me know and we can stop the research. If you say anything during the project that is worrying, I might need to follow up with you afterwards or talk to your teacher or parents/ guardians/ carers. This is the same as with anything that you say in school.

9. What will happen to the data?

The information that you share, the film recordings, any photographs we take and any work that you do is called data. Anything that you write or draw will only have your name on the top of it. After I have made sure I understand what is on the paper, your name will be cut off so that no-one will know who did the work. This will happen two weeks after the data has been collected.

I will see the data, the children in the small group will see some of the data and my teacher at the university will be able to see it as well. Anything that anyone besides me sees will have your name taken off it. The only person who will see the films will be me, so that I can carefully write down the things that you say. When I write things you say down I will use a different name instead of yours so no-one would know who you were.

All the information and work you give will be kept safely locked away either in a locked cabinet or in a password protected file. The films of the focus group sessions will be kept until the project is finished and then they will be deleted.

There are some rules that I must follow with some of your data. One of these is that I keep your assent forms for ten years. These forms will be kept securely and then destroyed in a safe way. I have to follow the law about the information you give me. The law in Hong Kong is called an ordinance and it is the Personal Data Protection (Privacy) Ordinance. I am following that and also the Data Protection Law in the UK, because I am working with a university in the UK.

Some of what you say might be put into the final paper I write, which is called a thesis. Other people at the university will read this. One day, some of what you say might be printed in a journal for other people to read. If any of this happens, your name will always be changed so that no one will know whose words they are.

After the project is over, you can have a summary of the information if you are interested. This summary will also not contain any names and it will only show the overall findings of the research.

In the thesis written at the end of the research, it might be possible for someone who knows Hong Kong to work out that it is about our school but they would not be able to work out which children had helped.

11. Who has reviewed the project?

The University of Bath has a committee that checks to make sure that projects are OK to do. This group is called the Social Science Research Ethics Committee. They have checked and said that this project is OK. [Head of Primary] and [Head of School] also know about this research that we are doing together, and your parents/ guardians/ carers have been given some information as well.

12. How can I stop taking part in the project after it has started?

If you agree to take part and later change your mind that is absolutely fine, no one will mind. Tell Mrs Howdle-Lang or your teacher that you no longer wish to take part. Any work that you have done during that session will not be taken in.

If you are part of the small group and decide you do not want to take part anymore, then you will be able to leave and you will not be asked to join in any more of the small group sessions if you do not want to.

If you decide that you do not want me to use your work after you have handed it in, you can tell me that up to two weeks afterwards. After that, I will have taken your name off the work and I will not know which work is yours any more.

If your parents/ guardians/ carers later change their mind and doesn't want you to join in, I will respect their wishes and you will not be part of the research anymore.

13. If I require further information who should I contact and how?

You can contact Mrs. Howdle-Lang at school – I will be happy to answer any questions you have. Please do also talk to your parents/ guardians/ carers about your decision whether to take part in the project.

Name of Researcher: Stephanie Howdle-Lang

Contact details of Researcher: [showdle-lang@\[name of school\].edu.hk](mailto:showdle-lang@[name of school].edu.hk)

Supervisor: Ceri Brown

Supervisor contact details:



YEAR 6 STUDENT'S ASSENT FORM
Children's Understanding of Wellbeing in School

Name of Researcher: Stephanie Howdle-Lang
Contact details of Researcher: [school email address]
Supervisor: Ceri Brown
Supervisor contact details: [redacted]

Please put your initials in the box if you agree with the statement.

- I understand why this project is being done and what taking part will involve for me. I understand that this project is for University of Bath research.
- I have been able to ask questions about the project and have received answers to my questions.
- I understand that I can stop taking part at any time.
- I understand that if my Parent/ Guardian/ Carer requests that I stop taking part, my involvement in the project will be stopped.
- I understand who will be able to see the information and data I provide, how the data will be stored, and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.
- I understand the information I provide will be held in line with the law in Hong Kong and in the UK.
- I understand that I can ask the researcher to stop using my work up to two weeks after I hand in any work in the project. If I do this, the data will not be used in the project or future publications.

- I agree to take part in this project.

Your name: _____

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's name: Stephanie Howdle-Lang

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

If you have any concerns or complaints related to your participation in this project, please direct them to the Chair of SSREC at ssrec@bath.ac.uk.

Text of email sent to parents/ guardians/ carers about the research

Dear Parents/ Guardians/ Carers,

As you know, it is my privilege to serve as Vice Principal in the Primary School at [name of school]. At the same time as undertaking this role, I am undertaking doctoral studies with the University of Bath in the UK. I am about to start data collection as part of the final research study for my doctorate, and I would like to invite your child to take part in this research.

I am researching children's understandings of wellbeing and what this means for schools as they support children. Although this has been the focus of my study for some time, it has become even more relevant to our children in the last two years, which have been ones of significant upheaval for our children, their schooling and their wellbeing.

The research is focused on two classes in Year 1 and Year 6 to serve as a comparison between the start and end of the Primary phase of schooling. It is intended that the research will take place in school, during class time and will closely mirror what is happening in the classroom. The children will not miss out on any parts of their curriculum by being involved in this research.

The research activities have been designed to be participatory, so that I will be researching with the children. The skills that we will be developing in these sessions are the same skills of inquiry that are embedded in our curriculum at [name of school].

However, participation is completely optional and your child will only participate if you give your full, informed consent and, in addition, that your child demonstrates willingness to take part.

The attached information sheet should help to inform you about the study so that you can give consent knowing exactly what the study is about, what the purpose is and what participation will involve for you child. I will be offering a Zoom meeting before the start of the study so that you can discuss any concerns and ask questions if you have any. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

If you do not have any questions and are happy with the information provided, I would appreciate it if you could sign the attached consent form and return it either to the Primary Office where a box will be available to receive it, to me in the playground in the morning, to the class teacher or EA or scanned and sent to my email address. Any child who does not return the form will not be able to join the research group.

Part of the role of the researcher in this type of research is to form positive relationships with the children so that they are happy and comfortable to share. I hope that the children involved in the research will find it interesting and rewarding as they think about our school and what means to be part of it.

I am looking forward to working on this research with the children in Year 1 and Year 6 and I am very happy to discuss this research further with you.

Kind regards,

Stephanie Howdle-Lang



PARENT/ GUARDIAN/ CARER INFORMATION SHEET

Research Project: Children's Understanding of Child Wellbeing in School

Name of Researcher: Stephanie Howdle-Lang, EdD Student, Department of Education, University of Bath; Vice Principal Primary, RCHK.

Contact details of Researcher: shl61@bath.ac.uk [REDACTED] CONTACT DETAILS INCLUDED]

Supervisor: Ceri Brown

Supervisor contact details: clb27@bath.ac.uk Department of Education, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath, BA2 7AY [REDACTED]

Second Supervisor: Sam Carr [REDACTED]

Second Supervisor contact details: sc352@bath.ac.uk

I would like to invite your child to help [REDACTED] h project. This information sheet forms part of the process of informed consent. It should give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your child's participation will involve. Please read this information sheet carefully and ask me (Stephanie Howdle-Lang) if you are not clear about any details of the project.

1. What is the purpose of the project?

The project will investigate what children believe about their wellbeing and what is important for them in feeling happy, loved, safe and part of our school. The project will also compare what the school thinks it does and what the children think and look for places where there are similarities and differences.

2. Why has my child been selected to take part?

The study is taking place at our school because of the importance the school places on wellbeing and the type of school it is. The study is taking place with two classes of in Year 1 and Year 6. These classes were chosen at random. Your child is in one of the classes that have been chosen to take part in the study.

3. Does my child have to take part?

It is completely your decision if you would like your child to take part in the research. If you agree that your child can take part, I ask you to sign a Parent/ Guardian/ Carer consent form electronically or physically.

Should you consent to your child taking part, I will make sure that they are willing to join in at the beginning of the project and at the start of each session.

If you do not agree to your child taking part, they will still be in the classroom for any whole class sessions, but any work they do or contributions they make will not be used for data. They will not be invited to join the smaller focus group sessions.

It is important that you know that I will be in all classes in the year group at different times. Your child will always be told at the start of a session if the reason I am there is to do with the research project.

4. What will my child be asked to do?

The project will take place in six - seven sessions from mid-September to January.

Before the October break, there will be two whole class sessions when we will explore feelings and understand what the project is about. Children will draw pictures or write about what people, objects, places and activities are important for feeling happy, loved, safe and part of school.

Between the October break and the Chinese New Year break, 5 – 6 children will be chosen to work in a smaller group on 4 – 5 occasions. During these sessions, the children will work with me. We will talk more about things that are important for their wellbeing. They will take me on a tour to take photographs of the places in school that are important for them. In the final sessions, the children and I will look at all the information we have gathered and use it to decide what wellbeing means to them and how school helps or doesn't help to support this.

Focus group discussions will be filmed so that they can be accurately transcribed. Your child will not be identifiable from the transcription as pseudonyms will be used. The film footage will not be shared with anyone else, and once the research is complete, the footage will be destroyed. In the meantime it will be kept securely on the University of Bath server.

A final session will take place between the Easter break and the Summer break to share the research findings with the children in a format that makes sense to them.

The project will follow a similar way of finding out to the inquiry approach that is taken to learning at [NAME OF SCHOOL]. The time that the children spend in the focus group sessions will help to develop their questioning, connecting and meaning making skills in the same way that work in class will do.

5. What are the benefits of taking part?

Being involved in the project should have several benefits for your child.

- Being involved in sharing information about their thoughts and feelings increases a child's sense of autonomy and agency.
- The information that your child and the other participants provide in this project will help the school to understand what children believe about their wellbeing and how they want to be supported.

- Participation in this project will also show how children of all ages can participate in a significant way in research, further helping them to develop their sense of agency.

6. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no obvious risks or disadvantages to your child taking part in the project. The small group sessions will take place at a time when similar activities will be taking place in the whole class setting so that no child will be disadvantaged in any area of the curriculum by taking part.

7. Will my child's participation involve any discomfort or embarrassment?

Participating in the project should not involve any discomfort or embarrassment for any of the children involved. I will be paying close attention to the verbal and non-verbal messages that the children send about how they are feeling throughout the sessions. If there is any discomfort or embarrassment from any child, I will do everything I can to resolve this. If need be, sessions will be ended if children are unhappy or uncomfortable. If, during the research, your child mentions anything that is concerning I may need to discuss this with you. If your child tells you at any time that they feel unhappy at any stage during the project then please contact me so that we can work on the situation together. I'll be telling the children that they can talk to someone at home if they don't want to join anymore.

8. Who will have access to the information that my child provides?

Both Stephanie Howdle-Lang (the researcher in the field) and Ceri Brown (the project supervisor) will have access to the information that your child provides. Consent forms will be kept securely in an encrypted, password protected file (e-forms) on an external drive. Paper forms will be kept in a locked storage cabinet. These forms will be kept for ten years and then destroyed.

9. What will happen to the data collected and results of the project?

All data collected during the project, including personal, identifiable data will be treated as confidential and kept in a locked cabinet or encrypted on a password protected folder on the University of Bath's secure server. The storage of data will be done in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and with the Hong Kong Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. I will maintain an awareness of any changes to the Hong Kong Personal Data (Privacy) ordinance. If data storage needs to be altered to comply with legal requirements, you will be informed of this. All data in which any child can be identified will be deleted from all devices within three months of the conclusion of the project. Recorded data in which participants cannot be identified will be stored on the University of Bath secure server for no longer than ten years.

Your child's name or other identifying information will not be shared in any presentation or publication of the research findings. After the project has finished we will also provide you and your child with a summary of the research findings if you are interested. The summary will not include any names and will show the overall findings of the project.

In the thesis written at the end of the research, it might be possible for someone who knows the Hong Kong context to make an informed guess as to which school is the focus. Individual children will not be identifiable in the report.

Parent/ Guardian/ Carer Consent Form



PARENT/ GUARDIAN/ CARER CONSENT FORM
Children’s Understanding of Child Wellbeing

Name of Researcher: Stephanie Howdle-Lang, EdD Student, Department of Education, University of Bath; Vice Principal Primary, RCHK.

Contact details of Researcher: shl61@bath.ac.uk [REDACTED]
[SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS INCLU] [REDACTED]

Supervisor: Ceri Brown

Supervisor contact details: clb27@bath.ac.uk Department of Education, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath, BA2 7AY [REDACTED]

Please initial box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm I am the Parent/ Guardian/ Carer of _____
(Full name of child)

in class _____.
2. I have been provided with information explaining what my child's participation in this project involves.
3. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this project.
4. I have received satisfactory answers to any/ all questions I have asked.
5. I have received enough information about the project to make a decision about my child's participation.
6. I understand that I am free to withdraw my child from the project at any time during data collection without having to give a reason for withdrawing.
7. I understand that I am free to withdraw my child's data within two weeks of their participation.
8. I understand my child will be asked if they agree to participate and if they choose not to, their decision will be respected.
9. I understand the session will stop if my child asks or appears uncomfortable.
10. I understand the nature and purpose of the procedures involved in this project. These have been communicated to me on the information sheet accompanying this form.

- 11. I understand and acknowledge that the investigation is designed to promote scientific knowledge and that the University of Bath will use the data my child provides only for the purpose(s) set out in the information sheet.
- 12. I understand the data my child provides will be treated as confidential, and that on completion of the project my child's name or other identifying information will not be disclosed in any presentation or publication of the research.
- 13. I understand my consent to use the data provided by my child is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Hong Kong Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and the UK Data Protection Act 2018.
- 14. I understand that if my child is included in small group research, they will be filmed in these sessions and that the some of the footage may be transcribed by the researcher in an anonymised format. I am aware that the footage will be securely stored in an encrypted, password protected file on the University of Bath secure server.
- 15. I understand that the data collected will be stored in an encrypted, password protected file on the University of Bath secure server. I am aware that my child will not be identifiable from any of the anonymised data stored on the University of Bath server.

Please initial by ONE of the following options to indicate whether your child can be involved in this research.


YES: I hereby fully and freely consent to my child's participation in this project.

NO: I hereby withhold my consent to my child's participation in this project. I understand that this means that they will take part in whole class lessons related to the research but that data they generate will not be used, and that they will not join small group research.

Parent/ Guardian/ Carer signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/ Guardian/ Carer name: _____ Date: _____

Child's name: _____ Class: _____

Researcher signature:  Date: _____

Researcher name: STEPHANIE HOWDLE-LANG

Please return this form to your child's class teacher or the box in the Primary Office.
 If you have any concerns or complaints related to your child's participation in this study please direct them to the Department Research Ethics Officer in the Education Department, University of Bath:
 Dr Santiago Sanchez, hss30@bath.ac.uk



Appendix 4: Research Tools

Cards for group interview - Cards were printed at ¼ A4 size

Outcomes of wellbeing cards

Vitality/ energy	Reflectiveness	Relationships	Resilience
Meaning/ purpose	Optimism/ hope	Positive emotions	Gratitude
Engagement	Physical health and activity	Self- determination	Sense of community
Positive self- image	Self- regulation	Life satisfaction	Safety and security

Reverse of outcomes cards

Reflectiveness <i>(emotional management/ intelligence, open-minded)</i>	Vitality/ energy <i>(self-esteem, self-confidence, self-management, self- motivation, active/ physical/ healthy, courage)</i>	Resilience <i>(coping skills, help seeking, problem solving, courage, perseverance/ persistence)</i>	Relationships <i>(emotional management/ intelligence, honesty/ trustworthiness, integrity, commitment, positive values, respect, caring, kindness/ compassion/ empathy, generosity, responsibility, collaboration, belonging, connection)</i>
Optimism/ hope <i>(courage, perseverance/ persistence)</i>	Meaning/ purpose <i>(commitment, positive values, responsibility, willingness to contribute to the common good)</i>	Gratitude <i>(positive values, kindness/ compassion/ empathy)</i>	Positive emotions <i>(happiness, courage, kindness/ compassion/ empathy)</i>
Physical health and activity <i>(active/ physical/ healthy, self- control/ self-regulation/ self- discipline)</i>	Engagement <i>(agency, autonomy, self- management, self-motivation)</i>	Sense of community <i>(emotional management/ intelligence, positive values, respect, open-minded, caring, kindness/ compassion/ empathy, generosity, responsibility, collaboration, belonging, sense of justice, interdependence, willingness to contribute to the common good)</i>	Self-determination <i>(agency, autonomy, competence)</i>
Self-regulation <i>(self-control/ self-regulation/ self-discipline, self- management, self-motivation, emotional management/ intelligence, humility, positive values)</i>	Positive self-image <i>(self-awareness, self-identity, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-worth, self-respect, dignity, humility, integrity)</i>	Safety and security <i>(personal safety/ protective behaviours, caring)</i>	Life satisfaction <i>(integrity, commitment, respect)</i>

Strategies for promoting wellbeing cards

<p>Whole school approach Contextually relevant – schools given freedom to adapt dependent on identified school need</p>	<p>Whole school approach Whole school approach/ culture of wellbeing (including policy creation)</p>	<p>Staff focused Professional development of staff in wellbeing approaches or specific interventions</p>	<p>Staff focused Wellbeing of school personnel</p>
<p>Whole school approach Targeted intervention or support for students with high needs (i.e. counselling, specific programmes)</p>	<p>Whole school approach Strong relationships within the school</p>	<p>Staff focused Leadership: designated person in the school responsible for implementation of/ support of wellbeing</p>	<p>Student focused Curriculum expectations</p>
<p>Student focused Implementation of evidence-based programmes</p>	<p>Student focused Engagement of student voice on wellbeing</p>	<p>Community focused Involvement of external bodies – i.e. local and national government, NGOs, faith groups</p>	
<p>Review Implementation of a review and monitoring cycle for wellbeing</p>	<p>Community focused Community involvement – including parents/ caregivers and the wider community</p>		

Emojis used to promote discussion with children

*These were in colour in the original.



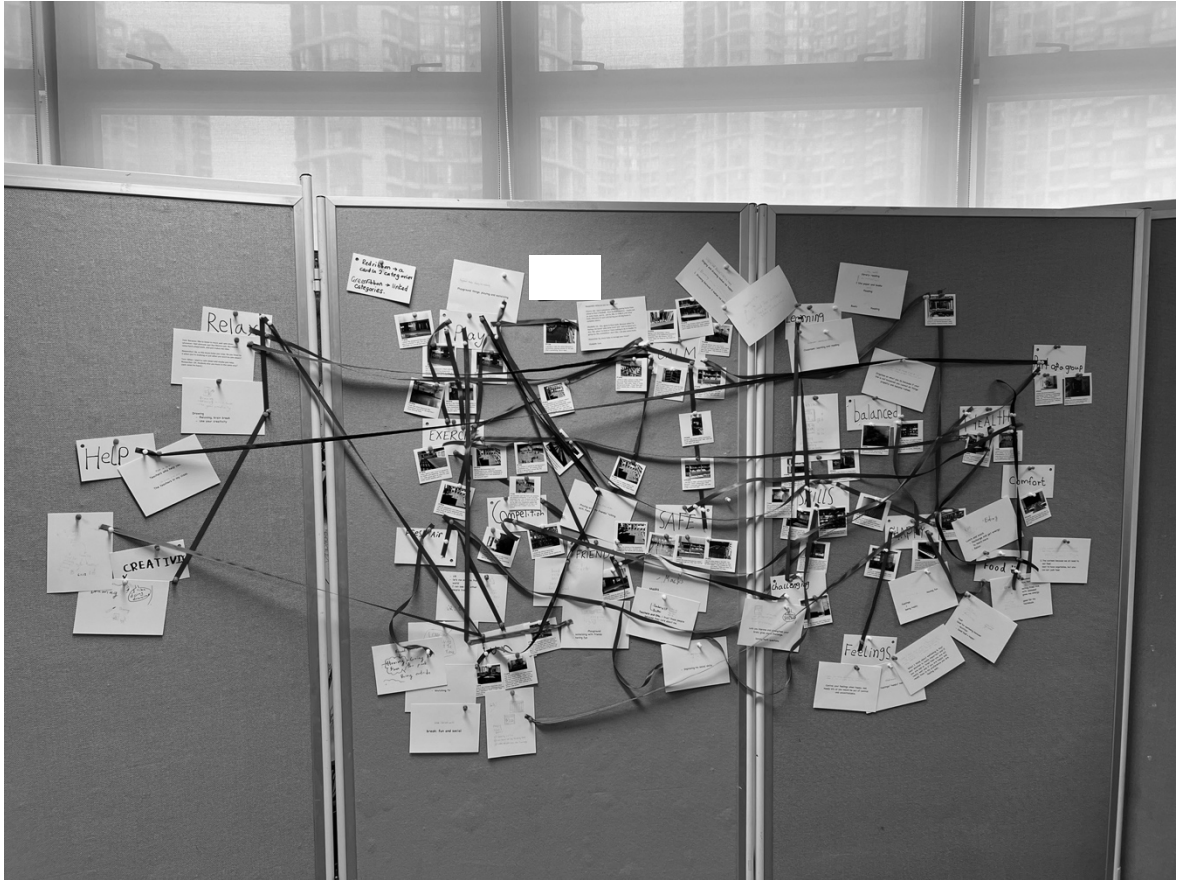
Character Strengths as defined by children in the school

Virtue	Character strength	Description
Transcendence	Gratitude	Expressing feelings of thanks.
	Humour	Seeing the funny side of things – not being too serious.
	Spirituality	Having a purpose and a faith in something.
	Appreciation of beauty	Being thankful for the good things in life.
	Hope	Seeing the bright side instead of the dark side.
Humanity	Kindness	Being caring and nice in general.
	Social intelligence	Knowing how your actions make other people feel.
	Love	Caring deeply about someone or something.
Courage	Bravery	Facing your fears.
	Perseverance	Whenever you start something, you need to finish it, and when it doesn't go your way you try, try, try again.
	Honesty	Being true to yourself and others.
	Zest	Feeling alive and activated in all you do.
Wisdom	Love of learning	Enjoying finding out new things.
	Perspective	Seeing the bigger picture from different viewpoints.
	Curiosity	Wanting to find out more about everything you are interested in. You are an inquirer.
	Creativity	Thinking about new ways to do thing. New ideas from a different perspective. Being inspired by others.
	Judgement	Making a decision based on your own thoughts.
Temperance	Forgiveness	Not being angry with friends who have done something wrong and giving them another chance. Understanding that people can make mistakes.
	Modesty	Being humble about what you have done.
	Caution	Being aware of your actions and risks.
	Self-control	Managing your emotions and actions.
Justice	Leadership	Having courage to lead.
	Fairness	Treating everyone as equals.
	Teamwork	Cooperating and communicating with others, being open-minded to work together.

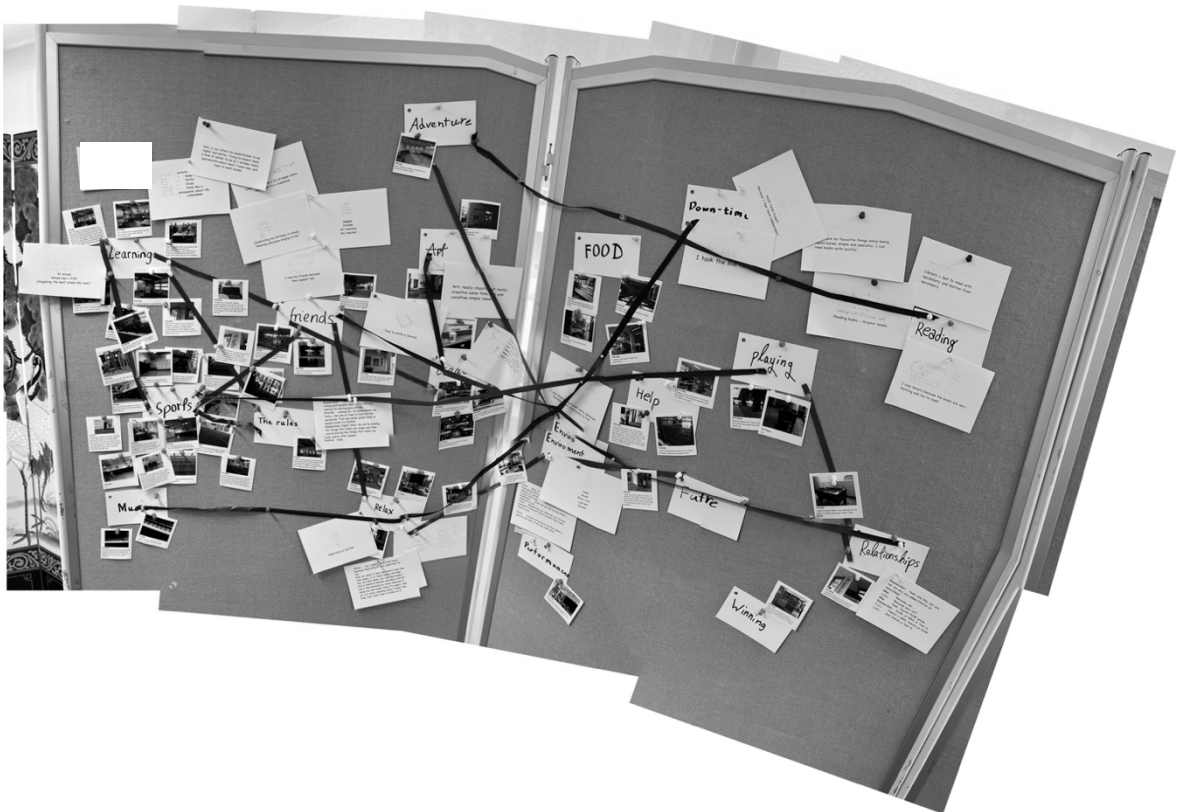
Appendix 5: Samples of data

Year 6 mind maps constructed during data analysis


Group 6.1




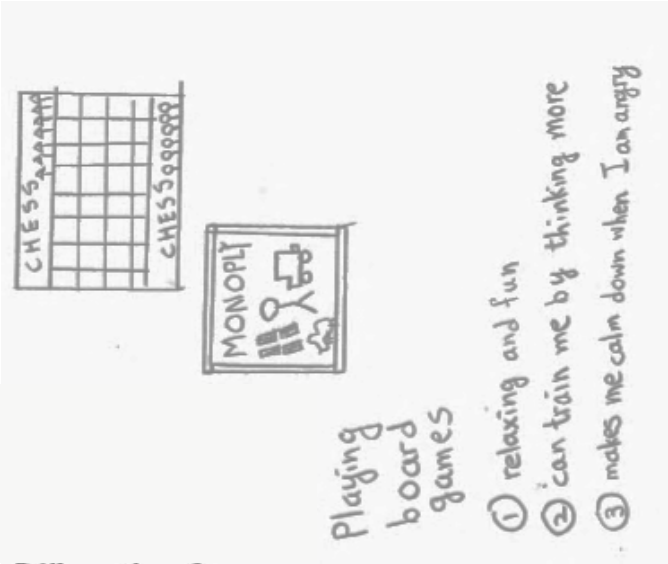
Group 6.2

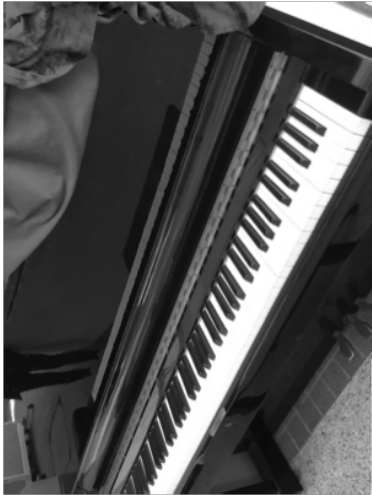


Examples of children's recognition of dispositions

Disposition sub-code	Origin	Examples in Year 1 children's documentation/ discussion
Generosity	Policy context	 <p>Amy, explaining why she likes the drawing area: And when you do creative things that you wanna do you can give them to the people who you love.</p> <p>David: When I drawing and painting and making my art is beautiful it makes me very, very, very calm.</p>
Self-regulation	PERMA – character strengths SDT Policy context	

Examples in Year 6 children's documentation/ discussion		
Disposition sub-code Generosity	Origin Policy context	<p>Free time - Made a lot of paper stars, gave them to a classmate. ☆☆☆</p>
Gratitude	PERMA - character strengths	<p>Skill Skill, it can affect my expectations to be higher and better, trying to expect more is kind of selfish to be so I already really appreciate about what I have now, and hope to work harder</p> <p>Bodies.</p>
Persistence	PERMA - character strengths Policy context	<p>Elizabeth (on choosing the hands pressed together emoji): Uh, this is my one because, uh, I always, like, I'm always grateful for what I have in life and I always think of the people that don't have this so I'm really lucky to have everything that I have now.</p> <p>a positive mindset is also important because not everyone has it</p> <p>Math 1.5 + 1.5 = 3 -lets you improve your brain -strengthens -gives you a challenge</p>

Examples in Year 6 children's documentation/ discussion		
Disposition sub-code	Origin	
Perspective	PERMA – character strengths	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read • Write • Study • Think like a philosopher about life. <p>- I can see how other people live</p> <p>Control your feelings when happy, sad, mad, etc. or you would be out of control and be uncontrollable.</p> <p>Homework</p> <p>Work - Stay productive!</p> <p>Good for wellbeing because</p>
Open-minded, Reflective	IBLP RWB SDT	 <p>It calms me down so that I can do better in class.</p>
Self-regulation	PERMA – character strengths SDT Policy context	<p>it makes me calm</p>  <p>Playing board games</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① relaxing and fun ② can train me by thinking more ③ makes me calm down when I am angry

Examples in Year 6 children's documentation/ discussion		
Disposition sub-code Self-esteem	Origin Policy context	 <p>The piano is one of my favourite hobbies since I was two and a half. It is so fun and I can play beautiful music. It makes me happy and makes me feel good and proud of myself.</p>

Appendix 6: Codebook

PPCT	Code	Sub-code	Description	Origin
Person	Positive emotions	happy, excitement,	<i>Positive emotions</i> are hedonic, subjective measured aspects of children's wellbeing. They include references to happiness, joy and excitement as well as other indications of satisfaction with life in general.	a priori: In PERMA – subjectively measured. The work of Fane et al. (2020) utilised happy, loved and safe as wellbeing indicators. Moore and Lynch (2018) explored wellbeing through happiness as a mechanism by which very young children could be supported to understand wellbeing. Ascribed to SWB and a hedonic paradigm, experienced in the moment.
	Fun	fun, laugh, enjoy	<i>Fun</i> refers to enjoyment that children devote from their activities. Not to be applied to the process of having fun.	inductive: included after data analysis showed that the children differentiated between <i>play</i> and <i>fun</i> . Data can be coded as <i>play</i> and <i>fun</i> , but data can be coded as <i>fun</i> without having the code <i>play</i> assigned.
	Dispositions	self-esteem, gratitude, character strengths, energy, open-mindedness, persistence, curiosity, reflective, self-regulation, integrity*, courage*, emotional intelligence*, self-confidence*, generosity*, commitment*, dignity*, honesty*, humility*, self-awareness*, self-identity*, self-control*, self-respect*	The <i>dispositions</i> that form part of the characteristics of the person contribute to their engagement with others or with activities that form their development. They might also result from these engagements. The subcodes were drawn initially from PERMA and SDT theories but later extended to include information drawn from policies and guidance.	a priori (with some sub-codes added inductively): person characteristics in the PPCT model that encourage the engagements with proximal processes. Constructed originally based on PERMA and SDT characteristics that were considered supportive of wellbeing including character strengths. Additional sub-codes (*) added based on policy and documentation review.

PPCT	Code	Sub-code	Description	Origin
Person/Process	Learning	self-management, motivation, problem solving, responsibility, fun, lessons, class	<i>Learning</i> refers to data that is linked to gaining new knowledge or skills. It can include reference to challenge and skill if the children perceive this as learning. The code is only applied when the children are specifically talking about learning or referencing new knowledge that they have acquired through the process.	a priori: the code emerges from the work of Fane et al (2020) and Moore and Lynch. In Moore and Lynch's work the code refers to learning from play. The code is also evident in the inclusion of competence (in SDT) and accomplishment (in PERMA), although in PERMA <i>accomplishment</i> is an end point, whereas the intention of the code is that it is an ongoing verb rather than a concluded one.
	Physical health and activity	active, physical, healthy, sports, self-control, self-regulation, self-discipline	<i>Physical health and activity</i> refers to both aspects of life that ensure children's health and the opportunities and wish they have for physical activity.	a priori: the code emerged in Fattore et al (2016) as health and also emerged in Fane et al's (2020) study as an adult defined indicator. Could be measured by external report. It was also prevalent in the policy analysis.
	Creativity	art, music, creativity, imagination, opportunities to be creative.	<i>Creativity</i> refers to any activity the children indicate or reference that includes the use of imagination and creativity. It might include different forms of art, imaginative play, music and opportunities to practice creativity.	inductive: added to the codebook because 1.2, 6.1 and 6.2 groups indicated it's importance to them during data analysis.
Process	Play	play, playing, games,	Opportunities for <i>play</i> refers to indications that play and playing are important and valued. It can refer to child-instigated or adult instigated play.	a priori: the code emerged from the work of i.e. Moore and Lynch (2018), Fane et al (2020) and Stoecklin (2021). For Moore and Lynch (ibid.) play was participation in occupation and included fun. In this research play and fun were differentiated inductively. Data can be coded as play and fun, but fun can be coded without the data being attributed to the code play.

PPCT	Code	Sub-code	Description	Origin
Process/ context	Relationships	friends, teachers/ other adults, family, connection, collaboration, respect, caring, kindness, compassion, empathy	<i>Relationships</i> refers to all relationships referred to by the children. It might include their own relationships or those of others. It might include connection with friends, family, teachers or other adults.	a priori: Apparent in all examined theories of wellbeing – PERMA, BPNT, RWB and emerges in the work of researchers in the field including Fattore et al. (2016), Moore and Lynch (2018) Fane et al. (2020). Includes relationships and connections with friends, other peers, family, teachers and other adults in the microsystem, as well as interactions in the mesosystem. Can be impacted by context. Includes love, friendship, cooperation and collaboration.
	Agency	problem solving, responsibility, autonomy	The <i>agency</i> that children have in their own lives is seen in data where children evidence a desire for or recognition of some control or say in what happens to them. The code may be applied interpretively.	a priori: in SDT, stated as autonomy. Noted by Anderson and Graham (2016) as being a contributor to increased wellbeing. Also added by Fane et al. (2020) following research with children - the opportunity for children to exercise agency in their own lives.
	Balance	balance	<i>Balance</i> applies to any specific reference to being balanced that the children make. The sub-codes of calm and relaxation are part of a balanced life.	inductive: included after children's data analysis determined that balance was important for them.
		calm (might include relaxation, meditation, down-time, alone time)	<i>Calm</i> or <i>relaxation</i> are aspects of balance. The code refers to activities or places which promote a sense of calmness or relaxation for the children.	inductive: included during data analysis with the children to indicate that they valued relaxation.

PPCT	Code	Sub-code	Description	Origin
Context	Material wellbeing	food, water	Aspects of <i>material wellbeing</i> are generally externally measurable, such as family income, health and healthcare, access to food and water. In this research <i>material wellbeing</i> is not objectively measured, but refers to aspects of wellbeing that could, theoretically, be objectively measured in the context.	a priori: externally measurable indicator referenced by i.e. OECD (2009) and Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2007). Economic wellbeing as part of material wellbeing is evidenced in Fattore et al. (2016) as featuring in children's understanding of wellbeing. Fane et al. (2020) include material wellbeing as an adult assigned indicator. Can be evidenced in the microsystem but impacted by the exosystem and macrosystem.
		comfort, cosy, warm	<i>Comfort</i> applies to any aspect of children's accounts which refers to their physical ease, for example, warmth, lack of hurt, cosiness.	inductive: added to the codebook when Year 6 students recognised the importance of feeling i.e. warm during their mapping tour.
	Safety and security	safe, secure,	<i>Safety and security</i> applies to children expressing a sense of feeling safe and secure in their location, their relationships or their environment.	a priori: the code is part of Fane et al's (2020) triptych of feeling happy, loved and safe. Externally measurable indicator used by i.e. OECD (2020), this measure is also recognised by children through the work of Fattore et al. (2016 p. 46), Fane et al. (2020), Alexandre et al. (2021) and Bhomi (2021). Includes elements of feeling safe and being safe and can manifest and be impacted in the microsystem, exosystem and the macrosystem. It also appears in the policy analysis as a prerequisite for children being able to learn.
	Community	sense of justice, belonging, connection, interdependence, open-minded	<i>Community</i> applies to any reference to a larger group than close friends or family, or any sense of belonging to a larger group.	a priori: Particularly relevant in RWB, sense of community is indicative of the presence of wellbeing. Fane et al. (2020) refer to one element of this as social participation, while Moore and Lynch (2018) as having friends to play with, doing and being together. Community features as part of the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem, and can cross these systems as well. It features in the policy analysis as something to be cultivated by school.

PPCT	Code	Sub-code	Description	Origin
Time	Future focused	resilience, optimism/ hope, coping skills, future	<i>Future focused</i> refers to any aspect of the data that indicates a consideration of the benefit of wellbeing in the future life span of the child.	Origin: CWB as preparation for adult wellbeing features in economic discourses i.e. OECD (2009). Resilience, hope and optimism all feature in PERMA, and are all examples of learning from failure and believing that there will be better times ahead. Economic understandings of wellbeing look to the future benefits for the economy and/or society stability of adults with good wellbeing. Referred to throughout policy documentation.