

**Student Well-being Strategies in Secondary Schools: An Exploration of Opportunities
and Challenges in the Greater Ōtautahi Christchurch Region.**

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Abstract

There is a growing movement, both nationally and internationally, to support the integration of wellbeing and related concepts into the core work of educational institutions, both at the primary and secondary levels. In Aotearoa, New Zealand, the government has made wellbeing a key policy focus (New Zealand Treasury, 2019), and the Education Review Office (ERO, 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b) has published a series of reports designed to help inspire and assist schools in developing and implementing school-wide wellbeing initiatives. Although many educators recognize the potential value of wellbeing provisions for both students and staff (Hoare, Bott, & Robinson, 2017; Shoshani, Steinmets, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016), there is very little research that has examined the practical implications of implementing wellbeing-related initiatives. Given the tremendous variety of wellbeing-related approaches (e.g., Social-Emotional Learning, Positive Psychology, Positive Education, Positive Youth Development), how do schools go about this process? To address this lacuna, the present study explored the development and implementation of wellbeing strategies in secondary schools in the greater Ōtautahi Christchurch region. This geographic region has faced substantial natural disasters and human tragedies over the last 12 years.

Twelve participants representing key wellbeing staff from eleven secondary schools were interviewed about the theoretical underpinning and composition of their school's wellbeing strategy and their experiences with implementation, including cultural sensitivity, effectiveness, and challenges. Although there was evidence of individual differences in participants' perceptions of how school-based wellbeing strategies facilitated student wellbeing, the results identified several commonalities in theoretical underpinning, strategy composition, cultural responsiveness, necessary follow-up support, and perceptions of effectiveness. The findings show that the schools represented in this study have attempted to facilitate several immediate and long-term positive wellbeing outcomes using a whole-school approach, providing opportunities for life skill development, creating opportunities for youth empowerment and self-determination, promoting positive student-teacher relationships, and partnering with whānau and the wider community. These findings are discussed in light of recent national and international research, which calls for research-informed, ecological, and culturally responsive implementation strategies in school contexts to support the wellbeing of all young people. Further, this research highlights opportunities for future research in this area to explore the effectiveness of specific strategy components and barriers to development and implementation across participant populations (e.g., school leaders, teachers, students).

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Chapter One: Introduction

The positive psychology movement has had a profound influence on education, with many schools moving well beyond a focus on basic academic development and efforts to address malleable risk factors in children, to more holistic approaches targeting student wellbeing (Hoare, Bott, & Robinson, 2017; Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009; Shoshani, Steinmets, Kanat-Maymon, 2016). Although there is considerable optimism in this opportunity to provide greater support for students, wellbeing is a complex concept that has proven difficult to define. Blurred and overly broad definitions of wellbeing exist, due in large part to the multiplicity of approaches used in the study of wellbeing. At one level, there is consensus that wellbeing, in a broad sense, is a multidimensional construct that extends beyond a simplistic positive-negative dichotomy, to encompass socioeconomic conditions, social relationships, and emotional and behavioural functioning (Foregard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011; Frey & Stutzer, 2010). However, how all of these factors at various levels contribute to a students' subjective experience of wellbeing, and which of these are most important for a school to address is currently a focus of considerable attention in the literature. Accordingly, this chapter will define and describe a range of wellbeing and related perspectives in the context of relevant literature and research.

At a broad societal level, wellbeing is viewed from an objective perspective by governments and social policy researchers in terms of population-based quality of life indicators, including material resources (e.g. food, housing, income) and social attributes (e.g. social networks and connection, education, health, political voice). In contrast, wellbeing is also viewed as a subjective experiential state – the predominant approach in contemporary Western society (including Aotearoa New Zealand). For example, Diener, Oishi and Lucas (2009) defined subjective wellbeing as the general evaluation of own quality of life, based on

cognitive judgements and affective reactions (positive and negative). From this perspective, wellbeing is an internal subjective human attribute.

From an ecological perspective, wellbeing is situated across psychological, social, and societal systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). This approach accounts for three distinct but interrelated dimensions that reflect both developmental and social psychological approaches (White, 2009). These dimensions include the level of material resources (e.g. physical health, income, economic security, ecosystem services), relational resources (e.g. social and collective action that determines the scope of personal action and influence in the community), and subjective judgments and values held by an individual (e.g. self-concept, life quality appraisal, cultural norms, values and belief systems). The student wellbeing model (SWBM) represents a similarly holistic but more specific compartmentalised conceptualisation of student wellbeing, which takes complexity as a given (Soutter, O'Steen, & Gilmore, 2014). The SWBM comprises seven domains – being, feeling, thinking, having, relating, functioning, and striving – that represent different aspects of student wellbeing.

These ecological approaches attempt to transcend the more basic societal perspective, which focuses on basic material needs and incorporates those social, psychological, and cultural elements involved in thriving (McGregor et al., 2009; White, 2010). They involve more than the individualistic notion of what it means to live well because the profound influence of relational and collective processes is recognised (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010). However, school-based wellbeing strategies have limited capacity to influence material or objective societal indicators of wellbeing. They are limited to social-relational (including culture), subjective, and psychological dimensions. The present study will adopt a social-relational (including culture), subjective, and psychological definition of wellbeing to recognise this limitation. In this regard, this definition of wellbeing provides a lens through

which to understand how school-based wellbeing strategies protect and promote social-relational (including culture), subjective, and psychological domains of wellbeing for students. Moreover, this chapter will address the bicultural context of Aotearoa, New Zealand (hereafter referred to as Aotearoa).

As is the case with any scientific discipline, the positive psychology movement appears to have its own vocabulary. Terms such as flourishing, flow, happiness, and resilience are often used synonymously with the construct of wellbeing. Thus, an explanation of these related terms, and the role they play in establishing wellbeing is necessarily provided. Put simply, flourishing is feeling good and functioning well (Seligman, 2011). To flourish means to function optimally across a range of psychosocial domains, which include positive emotional experience, engagement with valued activities, cultivating positive relationships with others, developing a higher purpose or meaning in life, and pursuing and reflecting on accomplishments (Butler & Kern, 2016; Norrish, 2015). This definition dovetails with notions of SWB, as opposed to the social conception of wellbeing, which is a more complex construct (Armenta, Fritz, & Lyubomirsky, 2017; Armitage et al., 2012). As Deneulin and McGregor state, the social conception of wellbeing goes beyond the individualistic belief of what it means to live well, as an emphasis is placed on relational and collective processes. Accordingly, there is broad agreement that flourishing relates to elevated levels of SWB (Diener et al., 2010; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Huppert & So, 2009; Keyes, 2002; Seligman, 2011).

By contrast, the terms flow, happiness, and resilience each denote important aspects of wellbeing. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defines flow as a positive experiential state that occurs when an individual acts with total involvement. In order to achieve flow, an activity must be viewed as voluntary and provide achievable challenges, with clear goals towards success. Similarly, the term happiness is conceptualised as a state of mind, comprising

experiences of positive emotions and life satisfaction (Armenta, Fritz, & Lyubomirsky, 2017). Considerable research has identified these constructs as contributors to wellbeing. Flow directly influences SWB through encouraging positive emotional experiences (i.e. happiness) in the present moment. Of equal importance is the indirect effect of flow on SWB, through encouraging the motivation to engage in progressively more complex activities and tasks, thus promoting positive growth and development (Fritz & Avsec, 2007).

Resilience, however, is conceptualised in terms of dynamic developmental processes, rather than a state of being (Riley & Masten, 2005). It is inferred when adaptive success takes place despite high levels of adversity or risk, which pose a notable threat to positive development or functioning. Research provides evidence of a complex, yet direct relationship between resilience and wellbeing (Hu, Zhang, & Wang, 2015; Lee et al., 2013). Resilience (and other related constructs) can be considered as a moderator of the relationship between life stressors and wellbeing outcomes. Multiple researchers have used measures of resilience to predict a range of wellbeing outcomes, including depressive symptoms (Loh, Schutte, & Thorsteinsson, 2014) and SWB (Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009; Liu, Wang, Zhou, & Li, 2014). By contrast, when resilience is measured as an outcome rather than a process, high levels of wellbeing are believed to serve as antecedents of resilience (Kuntz, Näswall, & Malinen, 2016). Specifically, positive emotional experiences can help to promote resilience, through the promotion of flexible thinking, adaptive coping and positive relationship maintenance (Harms, Brady, Wood, & Silard, 2018). Thus, the concept of resilience holds promise for positive youth development and wellbeing.

Adolescent development

Adolescence is a transitional, formative, and malleable period of development, bookended by the biological start of puberty and concluded with the assumption of adult social roles (Patton et al. 2016; Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Adolescence is typified by rapid

and substantial intraindividual change across multiple domains and key contexts of functioning (Cicchetti & Cohen, 2006). At the individual level, the physiological and neurological transitions that adolescents undergo, lead to sexual maturation and higher levels of introspection, reasoning, and problem-solving. Concomitantly, the progression of identity formation and social transition towards greater peer influences takes place (Crocetti, 2017). Moreover, adolescents are pressed to assume greater responsibility as societal expectations evolve over the course of this stage. Transitions such as these result in the emergence of new tasks and challenges, which can alter individual strengths and vulnerabilities. As such, this stage is recognised as an essential window for prevention and early intervention in improving health and wellbeing outcomes. Instilling life skills and capabilities in young people during this critical developmental phase might help adolescents cope with challenges in both the present and as they progress through life. The provision of wellbeing within educational settings (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013; Seligman et al., 2009) has this larger objective as its central aim.

Arnett (1999) identified three heightened risk characteristics typical of adolescence; parent-child conflict, risk behaviours, and mood disruptions. Although individual differences remain, these characteristics may in part explain the significant proportion of Aotearoa adolescents who experience morbidity and mortality (Clark et al., 2014). Recent research has documented the increased incidence of mental illness among New Zealand secondary school students – particularly in the greater Ōtautahi Christchurch region. It is important to note that young Māori are over-represented in these mental health statistics and research findings. Subsequent chapters will thus address Aotearoa's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism, which acknowledges that two fundamentally distinct cultures exist in Aotearoa, an indigenous Māori culture and a national culture primarily based on British settlers' values, language, and customs.

The Youth'12 health and wellbeing survey of 8,500 Aotearoa secondary school students found that a large number of young people experience mental illness, emotional distress, bullying, exposure to violence, inconsistent use of contraception, and/or are overweight (Clark et al., 2013). Specifically, 25% of those surveyed reported clinically significant depressive symptoms, while a further 61% felt down or depressed for at least two weeks in the past year. Similarly, when compared to previous Youth2000 surveys in 2001, 2007 and 2012, the Youth 19 (Fleming, Tiatia-Seath, Peris-John, Sutcliffe, Archer, Bavin, Crengle, & Clark, 2020) data shows that the mental and emotional health of youth has worsened compared, with most of this change occurring since 2012 (Fleming et al., 2014). These findings are consistent with international research that highlights a general decline in youth wellbeing and mental health (Bor et al., 2014; Keyes et al., 2019; Lessof et al., 2016). Further, over the last decade, the rate of attempted and completed suicide has increased. Last year, 137 young people took their own lives (approximately 40% were of secondary school age) (Coronial Services of New Zealand, 2018). This is the highest rate of youth suicide across the countries that make up the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – making it a significant health and social problem (Ministry of Social Development, 2016).

Because Clark et al.'s (2012) questionnaire was administered after the 2010 and 2011 Christchurch earthquakes, Fleming et al. (2013) analysed a subset of their data to investigate the mental and emotional wellbeing of students in Christchurch. Demographically, the Christchurch students (n=558) were “younger, less ethnically diverse and from wealthier (less socioeconomically deprived) neighbourhoods than non-Christchurch students” (Fleming et al., 2013, p. 11). The sample also included 77 Māori and 18 Pasifika students. Altogether, Fleming et al. (2013) found a similar rate of positive emotional wellbeing. However, Christchurch students showed higher rates of worrying and lower rates of life satisfaction

than students elsewhere in Aotearoa. Moreover, students directly affected by either earthquake demonstrated significantly higher rates of negative psychological symptoms (e.g., feeling numb or detached from others, avoiding situations or thoughts, hypervigilance, and nightmares). Considering the national and international decline in student wellbeing noted above, these post-earthquake findings should be of concern, particularly because this was a small voluntary sample, as cautioned by Fleming et al. (2014, as cited in O'Toole, Martin, Fickel, & Britt, 2019). Other researchers have expressed similar concerns and have called for further research on the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents in Christchurch post-earthquakes (Thomson et al., 2016).

Despite this substantial rise in mental health challenges and risk-taking behaviour during adolescence, the majority of young people negotiate this period without major difficulty (Cicchetti & Cohen, 2006). Moreover, research in the areas of risk and resilience and positive youth development has revealed that many young people can face substantial challenges in their development, but still adjust relatively well; while others may show maladaptive development in some areas of their lives, but function quite well in other areas (Masten, 2014). The seminal work of Garmezy (1985) identified three broad categories of protective factors, including individual characteristics, family attributes, and aspects of the wider social environment. Protective factors have also been conceptualised as existing at multiple levels (Olsson, Bond, Burns, Vella-Brodrick, & Sawyer, 2003). Similarly, Bronfenbrenner's ecological system's theory suggests that protective factors are examinable at the level of the individual and multiple layers of contexts, including; the microsystem, which involves the immediate environment; the mesosystem, which encompasses the interactions between the different microsystems; the exosystem, which contains more distal settings (neighbourhood, parental workplace, extended family, government agencies); and the

macrosystem, which includes broad cultural, ideological, and historical factors (national policy, societal and cultural values, religion, and the media; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Recognising that resilience processes can occur across multiple levels provides an optimistic outlook for wellbeing strategies. Through resource provision and support, community organisations may be considered instrumental in delivering approaches that promote wellbeing and resilience. Evidence from international research and practice suggests practical approaches, providing at least one caring adult, along with a safe and secure environment, may help offset adverse experiential effects, establishing a firm foundation for positive development and wellbeing (Cahill, Beadle, Farrelly, Forster, & Smith, 2012). The school community is one such setting in which most young people spend a significant portion of their time and is therefore positioned as a key site to facilitate wellbeing promotion (Patton et al., 2016). Accordingly, an assortment of wellbeing programmes and initiatives have been developed for use in schools, that are based on different theoretical understandings and methodologies (Domitrovich et al., 2017; McGorry & van Os, 2013; Olsson, Bond, Burns, Vella-Brodrick, & Sawyer, 2003; Wallace et al., 2011).

The broad objective of this study is to provide a greater contextual understanding of secondary school-based wellbeing strategies within the greater Christchurch region. A school-based wellbeing strategy is defined as the comprehensive and coordinated set of actions implemented in the school community that promote and protect all students' wellbeing (whether holistically or specifically). Ultimately, the present study intended to uncover the practical implications of school wellbeing initiatives, furthering our understanding of and ability to interpret the complexities of school-based wellbeing strategies beyond effectiveness criteria. This thesis begins by defining wellbeing and presenting a rationale for developing and implementing school-based student wellbeing strategies. The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of several wellbeing models and approaches

implemented in the school context. Chapter Two: Adolescent Wellbeing in Aotearoa and Implementation in Secondary Schools, will review wellbeing legislation and policy in Aotearoa, introduce the wellbeing research undertaken in Aotearoa thus far, and conclude with a description of the present study. Chapter Three: Method describes the research design and qualitative methodology employed in this study. Chapter Four: Results, presents the analysed data in relation to the research questions and Chapter Five: Discussion comprises the discussion.

Wellbeing Models and the Delivery of Wellbeing Approaches in Schools

Wellbeing and learning have emerged as a strong focus within the national and international educational arena in recent years (Durlak & Weissber, 2010; Durlak et al. 2011; Humphrey, 2013; O’Toole, Martin, Fickel, & Britt, 2019; Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017; Weissberg et al. 2015). There is growing global momentum supporting the integration of wellbeing and related concepts into the core work of teachers and schools. Approaches for wellbeing provide a primary prevention strategy with the potential to promote positive and equitable youth development (Heuvel et al., 2010). An evidence-informed approach identifies how universal and targeted secondary school-based wellbeing strategies can be used to make the greatest difference to the lives of young people – today and in the future. If the antecedents of wellbeing described above are addressed through well-implemented, evidence-based programmes and initiatives, significant population shifts in wellbeing are likely. Thus, this chapter will review a number of existing wellbeing models that guide the development and implementation of such school-based approaches.

The PERMA model

Positive psychology is defined as “... the scientific study of what makes life most worth living” (Peterson & Park, 2014, p.2). It emerged from the desire to study human

happiness systematically and has shown tremendous growth in research, practice, and influence in recent years (King, 2003). The achievement of happiness, believed to comprise three elements, namely positive emotion, engagement, and meaning, is emphasised in Authentic Happiness Theory – the original theory of positive psychology. However, instead of focusing on happiness, positive psychology focuses on wellbeing. The PERMA model was therefore developed as an extension of Authentic Happiness Theory to assist in defining and explaining wellbeing. Although there is a limited number of studies on PERMA in the literature, it is considered *the* wellbeing model within positive psychology because wellbeing is at the focus. Five measurable elements essential to wellbeing are identified: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and achievement – hence the PERMA acronym (Seligman, 2011). With the addition of meaning and achievement, wellbeing is not only dependent on individual factors, but also on interpersonal and contextual issues. Importantly, each element contributes uniquely to wellbeing, is pursued in favour of perceived benefits, and can be defined and measured separately (Seligman, 2018). The following section details the constructs fostered by PERMA as defined in Seligman (2011).

Positive emotion represents the first element of the PERMA model and describes hedonic feelings of happiness (including pleasure, fun and enjoyment). According to the circumplex model of emotion (also known as the Circumplex Model of Affect; Posner, Russell, & Peterson, 2008), emotions arise from two independent neurophysiological systems, termed the valence (negative to positive) and arousal (low to high) systems (Russell, 1980). Every emotional experience results from a linear combination of these independent systems, which is then interpreted as representing a particular emotion (Posner, Russell, & Peterson, 2008). For example, circumplex theorists conceptualise fear as a neurophysiological state typically involving the combination of negative valence and

heightened arousal in the central nervous system (CNS). In this way, the subjective experience of fear arises from cognitive interpretations of these patterns of physiological activity that occur in the context of eliciting stimuli. Cognitive interpretations are employed as emotions are experienced and communicated to identify the neurophysiological changes in the valence and arousal systems and conceptually organise these physiological changes with respect to the eliciting stimuli, semantic knowledge, memories of prior experiences, and behavioural responses (Russell, 2003).

The broaden and build theory of positive emotions, developed by Fredrickson (2001, 2004), specifies the importance of positive emotion in order for successful transition through life. The theoretical proposition for this model is twofold. Firstly, positive emotions, such as happiness, joy, and contentment, are assumed to broaden attention and engender comprehensive, productive, and adaptive thinking. In contrast, negative emotions, such as anger, envy, sadness, and fear, purportedly restrict attention and encourage engagement in specific action tendencies, which are physiological and psychological responses that prepare individuals to respond adaptively to pressing environmental issues (e.g. fight or flight). Secondly, increased environmental engagement is achieved as a result of this broadened attention through positive emotion, leading to the acquisition of increased resources (within physical, social, intellectual and psychological domains) over time. Extant research confirms the relation between school students' positive emotions and their satisfaction and engagement with schooling, academic efforts, and motivation for learning (Meyer & Turner, 2006).

Research confirms the importance of positive emotion for students' current and future success. Huppert and So (2013) suggest that positive emotion is a core part of flourishing. When encouraged in a secondary classroom setting in China, 67% of form one and 40% of form two students, aged between 12 and 14 years, reported that 'positive emotions' facilitated positive thinking, particularly when experiencing frustrations, and maintained persistence

when accomplishing tasks (Au & Kennedy, 2018). Growing evidence has also demonstrated a positive association between positive emotions and various positive outcomes, including school engagement, hope, gratitude, physical activity and vitality, good relationships, job success, and life satisfaction (Carmona-Halty, Schaufeli, & Salanova, 2019; Diener, Thapa, Tay, 2020; Kern, Waters, Adler, & White, 2015).

Engagement is defined as a sense of complete involvement and absolute immersion in an activity, with “flow” considered as the fullest example (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991; Seligman, 2011). Engagements or activities in which individuals spend a considerable portion of time can facilitate flow (D’raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2016). The term ‘student engagement’ has been used to denote students’ feelings about schooling, as reflected in their sense of attachment or belonging to school (emotional engagement), the degree to which they are invested in their learning (cognitive engagement), along with their involvement and positive conduct in school (behavioural engagement). Research confirms the importance of engagement for student wellbeing and later life success and satisfaction (Gander, Proyer, & Ruch, 2016; Lai, Leung, Kwok, Hui, Lo, Leung, & Tam, 2018). Classroom environments that encourage experiences of flow have been linked to various positive emotional experiences during learning, such as, attention and inquisitiveness (Krapp, 1999; Suldo, Mariano, & Gilfix, 2021). Moreover, when feelings of competence, vitality and control were present (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2007), and the provision of opportunities that allowed students to showcase their abilities occurred (e.g. in small learning groups) (Peterson & Miller, 2004), students experience more flow, joy, and motivation.

Positive relationships are viewed as another important contributor to wellbeing. Such relationships encapsulate an individual’s perception of available support, authentic connections with others, and a sense of security in those connections (Seligman, 2011). Through considerable research, the role of positive student-teacher relationships, and sense of

belonging and connectedness with peers, has been shown to contribute significantly toward students' SWB, school engagement, resilience, and academic success (Shoshani, Nakash, Zubida, & Harper, 2016; Slone & Shoshani, 2008). On the other hand, students reported feelings of loneliness and peer alienation were routinely associated with reduced attendance rates and early school dropout (Butler & Kern, 2016). This provides important insight into school environment factors, such as social relationships, that can support the effective implementation of school-based wellbeing strategies (Schonert-Reichl, Kitil, & Hanson-Peterson, 2017; Street, 2017).

Within the context of PERMA, a sense of *meaning* (or purpose) is defined as belonging to and serving something believed to be greater than the self (Butler & Kern, 2016). Meaning provides a sense that each person's life holds importance. Educational research has identified several factors as key contributors to students' sense of meaning, including experience of flow, sense of belonging, engagement in activities that benefit others (e.g. community service and volunteering) and utilisation of individual character strengths (defined as the positive individual traits reflected in thoughts, feelings, and behaviours; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). Notably, 24 core character strengths were identified and associated with cross-cultural representation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Subsequent studies showed that each character strength was connected to a heightened sense of life meaning and purpose (Peterson, Ruch, Beerman, Park & Seligman, 2007), along with kindness, altruism, appreciation of diversity, open-mindedness, resilience, and school success (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012; Shoshani & Slone, 2016).

Accomplishment (or achievement) refers to the growth of individual potential, which results from a capacity to work obstinately towards meaningful goals when faced with challenges, accompanied by competent achievement in key life domains (Seligman, 2011). Notably, competence has also been hypothesised as a primary human need within Self-

Determination Theory (SDT), which is a broad framework for understanding the social factors that enhance or undermine human flourishing (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The connection between accomplishment and a range of wellbeing outcomes has been well-documented, including increased life satisfaction and decreased anxiety and depressive symptoms (Coffey, Wray-Lake, Mashek, & Brand, 2014; Kern et al., 2015; Seligman, 2011; Sheldon et al. 2010). Diener and Diener (2011) suggest that learning, achieving, and pursuing mastery at individual and group levels may provide a distinct pathway to happiness, with potential for crossover into other pathways.

The PERMA model provides a useful framework, at a theoretical and practical level, and a variety of positive psychology programmes have been developed for the educational context. Positive education is a relatively new field that collates the research findings from positive psychology and education, with the aim of ensuring students have the skills and knowledge to enhance resilience and wellbeing. Accordingly, positive education programmes combine a traditional structured curriculum with evidenced-based skills to enhance wellbeing (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009). The Geelong Grammar School Model for Positive Education represents one of the first efforts to teach wellbeing skills, providing a framework for positive education implementation in education. The model is based on an adapted version of the PERMA model, which aims to create a positive school culture that places wellbeing at the centre of education. The six domains – positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and health – are incorporated within four interconnecting, cyclical processes (learn it, live it, teach it, embed it), with efforts underpinned by a focus on character strengths.

Geelong Grammar School (GGS) is the first school to implement positive education as a whole school approach (O'Connor & Cameron, 2017). The whole-school approach adopted by GGS six domains viewed as central to wellbeing: health (establishing habits that

support positive psychological and physical health throughout life), emotional wellbeing (building healthy responses to difficult emotions and positive experiences), engagement (engagement and immersion in activities, purpose (engaging in activities of service to others), accomplishment (aspiring towards and achieving meaningful outcomes), relationships (developing social and emotional skills to promote healthy relationships. The school participated in one of the most extensive and comprehensive longitudinal studies of the impact of a substantial positive education curriculum and pedagogy on secondary school students.

Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, and Robinson (2013) completed an initial pilot study to examine a range of health and wellbeing outcomes, which were assessed at the beginning and end of the school year, in GGS students in Years 9 to 11. The same measures were also obtained from students similar in socioeconomic status from a range of non-government schools in Melbourne. Research findings demonstrated wellbeing improved among Year 9 students, remained stable in Year 10, but decreased in Year 11. These improvements were not observed in the matched comparison, supporting the potential for the positive education curriculum to promote student wellbeing. However, although there is much to learn from this school's experience, the unique characteristics of these schools (e.g., a high level of resources) should be considered before their approach is generalised to other school settings (O'Connor & Cameron, 2017).

Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a theoretical framework, which stems from a positive, strengths-based perspective. It maintains that all young people have the potential and capacity for positive growth and development (Lerner, Lerner, & Benson, 2011). Accordingly, it critiques research and intervention practice that focuses more on problems experienced by some youth, than their strengths, resources and capacities (Chung &

McBride, 2015). Two of the most well-known PYD frameworks are Benson and colleagues Developmental Assets (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 2012; Benson & Scales, 2009) and Lerner's Five-Cs Model of PYD (Lerner et al., 2012).

The Developmental Assets Framework, developed by the Search Institute, has identified 40 assets as important for positive development (Benson, Scales, & Syvertsen, 2011). Each of the 40 assets is seemingly positive qualities and experiences, and are divided equally into internal assets and external assets (Benson, Scales, & Syvertsen, 2011; Benson et al., 2011). Internal assets concern the competencies, skills and values an individual must internalise and are organised within four broad categories (i.e. positive identity, positive value, commitment to learning, and social competencies). External assets reflect environmental features that promote health and wellbeing, and are also organised within four broad categories (i.e. support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time). When youth have more of these assets, they are more likely to experience wellbeing and resilience, and are less likely to engage in a wide range of high-risk behaviours (Lerner et al., 2012; Deane & Dutton, 2020). However, one of the intriguing findings from research with this framework is that the inverse (negative) relationship between assets and risk-taking or maladaptive behaviour is not as strong as the framework proposes.

Lerner and colleagues (2012) Five C's model is yet another influential theoretical model of PYD. The 'C's' are broad developmental outcome categories that include *competence* (one's aptitude in cognitive, academic, social and vocational domains), *confidence* (generalised inner sense of positive self-worth, self-efficacy), *connection* (positive relationships with people and institutions depicted by reciprocal individual-context interactions), *character* (cultural and societal rule acceptance, personal integrity), and *caring* (possession of empathy and sympathy for others). The positive development that ensues from aligning individual youth strengths with positive environmental supports manifests as at least

one of these Five C's in the lives of young people. Over time, the presence of the Five C's puts young people on a positive developmental trajectory, comprising of mutually beneficial individual-context relations that contribute to the betterment of the individual, family, community and society (Bowers et al., 2010). Thereby, *Contribution* makes up the sixth 'C'. This also lessens the potential for initiating developmental trajectories associated with increased maladjustment, which manifest as internalising and externalising disorders (Bowers et al., 2010).

In Aotearoa, PYD's equating of an individual's strengths or assets with those strengths found in family or community contexts resonates with Māori perspectives, whereby initiatives intended to support the wellbeing of young people should involve whānau (family), hapū (clans or descent groups), iwi (tribe), and community (O'Toole et al., 2019). Sanders et al. (2015) showed that young Māori and Pasifika reported significantly higher wellbeing and resilience than their Pākehā counterparts, even though Māori males were at higher risk of disengaging from education or engaging in harmful behaviours than other groups. This may be due to the protective value of Māori and Pasifika "cultural resources" (p.50). PYD cultural resources include relationships with whānau, feeling connected to culture, and spiritual beliefs. Masten and Write (2010, cited in Sanders & Munford, 2015) also found an association between cultural group membership and the resilience of young Māori and Pasifika, and the "protective role that this has been noted to confer upon children and youth exposed to high levels of background adversity" (p. 18). Sanders, Munford, Thinmasarn-Anwar, Liebenberg, and Ungar (2015) suggest that PYD approaches utilising intensive home, school, and community-based interventions should address individual and contextual risks concurrently. This resonates with Te Kete Wanaketanga – Rangatahi (The Developmental Kit – For Youth; Simmonds, Harré, & Crengle, 2014), which gives equal

priority to “collective responsibility, navigating the world, cultural efficacy, health and individual strengths” (p. 220) for the wellbeing of young Māori.

Positive Youth Development theory has been applied extensively in Aotearoa in the context of youth policy and youth work. For example, the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) outlines how Aotearoa as a whole will support skill and attitude development in young people (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). The YDSA intended to provide a common policy platform to guide policy decisions, and initiatives concerning young people aged 12 to 24 years – those considered “youth” according to MYA and the current Ministry of Youth Development (MYD). This was adapted from the United Nations (UN) definition of youth (15 – 24 years). Policymakers, public sector agencies, and government-contracted service providers comprised the primary audience for the original YDSA. Agencies within the public sector are encouraged to use the YDSA throughout youth policy development and service delivery. However, the YDSA offers a vision, goals and principles to any individual, group or organisation, interested in supporting the wellbeing and positive development of young people in this country (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). Thus, it has been used by non-government organisations that work at various levels with young people to navigated issues faced. The national youth development organisation Ara Taiohi and the Graeme Dingle Foundation’s Project K provide two examples of how PYD theory has informed practice and intervention strategies in Aotearoa (outlined below).

Specifically, the YDSA identifies six fundamental principles of effective youth development practice (summarised in Table 1 below), which collectively describe the need for young people to feel connected, feel positive about their identity, feel they have choices for their future, and contribute to society. These principles provided the foundation for the previous Code of Ethics for Youthwork in Aotearoa (Ara Taiohi, 2011) and the competencies for Youth Worker accreditation by Aotearoa’s first professional association for Youth

Workers, Korowai Tupu o Ara Taiohi (Ara Taiohi, 2019a). They have shaped the core content of youth development education with certificates, diplomas and degrees, which require graduates to possess knowledge of the YDSA. Accordingly, they have provided a working definition of “youth development” for Aotearoa. Moreover, a recent review of the YDSA indicates that those engaged in the youth development sector still feel that the broad principles (outlined above) are relevant and useful (Deane & Dutton, 2020).

Table 1

The YDSA Principles of Positive Youth Development and Characteristics of Effective Practice

Principle	Characteristics of Effective Practice
1. Youth development is shaped by the “big picture.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader economic, social, and cultural contexts shape the development of young people. • Te Tiriti o Waitangi protects all Māori as tangata whenua (including rangatahi Māori) and has implications for prioritising support for Māori youth development. • Youth development is informed by those values and principles of international human rights conventions that protect and value young people
2. Youth development is about young people feeling and being connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy connections across multiple contexts support positive. These contexts include family and whānau, hapu and iwi, peer groups, school, training, or work environments, community, and external environments (e.g., social, economic, and cultural contexts). • Solid connections and relationships across contexts help strengthen youth development outcomes.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3. Youth development is based on a consistent strengths-based approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths-based youth development practice helps increase protective factors and address risk factors. • Strengths-based approaches circumvent identifying young people as ‘the problem’. Instead, they aim to connect young people with physical, social, emotional, and autonomy skills. |
| 4. Youth development through quality relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are essential to young people. • For young people, having one close friend can be a protective factor. • Effective youth development practice recognises the need for young people to develop supportive relationships with adults outside the family. • Those working with young people, such as teachers, youth leaders, and church leaders, should be trained in building quality relationships with young people. |
| 5. Youth development is triggered when young people fully participate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people can control what happens to and around them through effective participation. • Young people influence and inform decision-making and respond more effectively to change where they can engage and participate. • For Māori, concepts of participation include collectivist notions and tikanga (cultural practices). • Participation requires leadership, advocacy, organisation, service, and government. |
| 6. Youth development needs good information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective youth development practice responds to information about the ‘big picture’ or context in which youth development work is practised. • Research and evaluation feedback loops participate effectively to assist youth development approaches in effectively strengthening youth outcomes. |

Note. Adapted from Evidence Review: The Youth Development Ecosystem (Centre for Social Impact, 2018, pp. 29-30)

Despite the many changes in the political landscape that have influenced young people in Aotearoa and those working with them, the YDSA's principles have remained the indomitable pillars of practice for the youth development sector. However, the YDSA provoked a response from Māori youth development academics who criticised its Western orientation and disconnection from taiohi (young) Māori lived experiences (Keelan, 2014; Ware, 2009; Ware & Walsh-Tapiata, 2010). In response to these critiques, researchers and practitioners have developed principles, models, and frameworks grounded in Te Ao Māori (a Māori worldview; Baxter, Caddie & Cameron, 2016; Hurst, 2017; Simmonds, Harré & Crnegle, 2014). One such framework – Mana Taiohi (Ara Taiohi, 2019b)– is addressed below.

Ara Taiohi is a key organisation for youth development in Aotearoa that demonstrates a commitment to enhancing youth-related practice. 'Ara' means pathway, a passageway to/from, lane, and 'taiohi' means young person (Ara Taiohi, 2021). Ara Taiohi released the Mana Taiohi youth development principles in October 2020. The decision to frame these new-look principles around mana came as the literature team began pulling together the four strands of the Kupenga Kete framework (young people, practitioners, Te Ao Māori and Aotearoa literature). In Mana Taiohi, mana is defined as the authority we inherit and accrue over our lifetime (Tuhaka & Zintl, n.d.). It determines a young person's right to have agency in the decisions that affect them and their lives. Enhancing the mana of young people means recognising what is right with them and the reality of their world. Young people are encouraged to work to their strengths, have a voice and assume leadership. The links between mana enhancing practices, as outlined in Mana Taiohi, and strengths-based approaches, as described in the YDSA, are clear. Mana is broader and more holistic; however, both approaches honour the authority, prestige, influence and charisma of young people. Two key

aspects resulted in the decision to make mana the overarching framework for the new-look principles.

Firstly, the literature team categorised all the research and evidence under the framework of the six principles of the YDSA (Deane, Dutton & Kerekere, 2019). This quickly became difficult, resulting in the group reviewing Māori critiques of the YDSA and identifying kupu (Māori words/concepts) that better-reflected youth development in Aotearoa. These kupu are six of the nine that now frame the Mana Taiohi principles (summarise in Table 2 below). Although most of the research and evidence was strengths-based, very little fitted exclusively into the strengths-based category. Thus, there was a sense that a strengths-based approach flowed through every principle. This made it difficult to categorise these kupu into the previous YDSA principles.

Secondly, as the synthesis group engaged in regional hui (meetings), where practitioners who work with young people consistently identified that while quality relationships are central to youth work, a strengths-based/mana enhancing approach is fundamental. Youth work, at its core, is one of the few professions where practitioners do not engage with a young person because they have a problem that needs to be fixed, and then discontinue the relationship once it has been (or is considered) 'fixed'. However, true youth work does not begin until a young person chooses to engage with the youth worker. It became clear that Mana Taiohi needed to reflect on this aspect of youth work, where the mana of young people is honoured, acknowledged, supported and enhanced. This flows through all the principles, which are holistic, interconnected, and exist in relation to one another. Without one of them, the others are weak.

Table 2*Mana Taiohi Principles and Characteristics of Effective Practice*

Principle	Description	Characteristics of effective practice
Māori	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mauri refers to the life spark inherent in all young people. It includes their beliefs, values, skills, and talents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuelling the life spark means that young people are recognised and valued for who they are. • Young people are supported to pursue their interests and passions and to actively construct their identity. • When mauri is secure and linked to whakapapa, young people stand in their truth.
Whakapapa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whakapapa encompasses all cultures descendants, genealogies, stories, and connections to whenua (land). • It recognises our shared histories and the impact of colonisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of young people’s whakapapa encourages them to explore how these histories have influenced their lives in their own way and time. • Young people are supported on their journey to discover their turangawaewae (place to stand).
Hononga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hononga means to connect and join. • Linked to whakapapa, it is about connecting with spirituality, people, the digital world, the environment and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When Hononga is understood, we recognise young people’s relationships with whānau, peers, school, the community, and other places that support them. • Young people are supported to identify and strengthen connections. • Strengthening hononga also involves recognising the connection between personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of the social and natural environment.
Te Ao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Ao Taiohi is impacted by big picture influences (e.g., dominant cultural values, economic and social contexts). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of Te Ao Taiohi ensures actions are judged in consideration of the systemic influences that impact young people.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It includes international and national legislation and policy impacting young people, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the impact of colonisation in Aotearoa, local. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are supported to participate in their dynamic world.
Whanaungatanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whanaungatanga reflects relationships, kinships and a sense of family connection. • It encompasses all relationships in the lives of young people, including those in the digital domain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When whanaungatanga is prioritised, genuine, authentic, intentional, high trust, reciprocal, and mana enhancing relationships are prioritised. • Young people are supported, with a strong foundation of belonging.
Manaakitanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manaakitanga refers to expressions of respect and kindness for others, highlighting reciprocity and responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate training and resourcing are required for those working with young people to uphold and extend manaakitanga. • Manaaki provides young people with a safe and empowering space to feel accepted, valued, and included.
Whai wāhitanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are recognised as valued contributors to society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows young people the space to assume agency, participate, and take responsibility.
Mātauranga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mātauranga relates to knowledge, wisdom, understanding and skill. • It includes individual experience, customary and cultural knowledge, the beliefs and ideals held by young people and their whānau, and research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment through rich and diverse mātauranga encourages personal growth in young people and those working with them. • Young people actively participate in meaning-making and are supported to make positive choices holistically with their whanau. • People who work with young people are supported to reflect on their relationships and practice actively.

Note. Information was retrieved from <https://arataiohi.org.nz/mana-taiohi/>

Although PYD is a prominent perspective in youth development practice, it is not yet a philosophy or driving force for a large scale project in Aotearoa. A recent literature review by Deane, Dutton, and Kerekere (2019) provides a broad overview of Aotearoa-based youth development research and explores the presence of PYD in youth programmes. Challenging problem-oriented attitudes towards young people is an integral aspect of PYD research. Various studies have amplified young people's strengths; some researchers have explicitly and critically refuted negative perceptions of young people (Edwards, McCreanor & Moewaka-Barnes, 2007; Munford & Sanders, 2017). Further, contemporary PYD scholars contend that schools and communities share responsibility for establishing thriving environments and opportunities to support positive youth development. In accordance, youth development programmes target one important ecological setting in order to promote thriving (Deane et al., 2019). Therefore, an evaluation of these programmes represents an essential strand of PYD research.

One example of a leading PYD organisation in Aotearoa is the Graeme Dingle Foundation. The foundation delivers a number of school-based programmes, which provide many young people with the opportunity to learn valuable life skills and develop self-confidence. One such programme is Project K, an evidence-based youth development programme for secondary school students (aged 13 to 15), which comprises three sequential components (an individual mentoring partnership with a trained mentor, wilderness adventure, and a community challenge) over a 14 month period (Deane, Harré, Moore, & Courtner, 2017). Its theory of change specifies that positive youth development is promoted through an iterative experiential cycle of learning that is strengthened by the provision of continuous support across various contexts.

The Graeme Dingle Foundation has demonstrated a commitment to evidence-based practice, through undertaking collaborative research, evidence utilisation, and quality

improvement. This establishes programme quality and provides a better understanding of the processes involved in PYD, thus enhancing research practice links. Recent research has focused on the effectiveness of Project K in practice. These studies have demonstrated improved and sustained changes in social and academic self-efficacy (Chapman, Deane, Harré, Courtney, & Moore, 2017; Deane, Harré, Moore, & Courtney, 2017; Hollis, Deane, Moore, & Harre, 2011). However, differential programme effects were observed across participant subgroups (Deane et al., 2017). Project K was most beneficial for those starting at a greater disadvantage. Asian participants experienced greater improvements in social self-efficacy, despite reports of significantly lower social self-efficacy at baseline (self-report and parent-report). In contrast, while intervention group participants identifying as Maori or Pacific experienced improved social self-efficacy when compared with Maori and Pacific control participants, the effects were not as strong as those experienced by non-Maori and non-Pacific participants. Albeit baseline levels of social self-efficacy were higher on average for both Maori and Pacific participants, regardless of research group assignment. This research supports the effectiveness of Project K as an optimistic and proactive approach to youth development, that supports communities to organise people, programmes, and additional supports.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is described as the process through which individuals acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to understand and manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, develop and maintain positive relationships, set and achieve positive goals, and make responsible decisions (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013; Yoder, 2014). SEL has gained attention as a research and intervention focus due to its promise as a teachable skill set that can enhance coping resources and promote wellbeing (Sánchez-Álvarez, Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2016).

Accordingly, several frameworks have emerged describing systemic SEL programming parameters. Based on a coordinated set of evidence-based practices, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) established an integrated framework for strengthening social, emotional, and cognitive development and academic achievement (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). This framework comprises five core competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making) which promote intrapersonal, interpersonal and cognitive competence (National Research Council, 2012).

Incorporating SEL into the school setting enhances students' ability to integrate cognition, affect, and behaviour, enabling effective management of daily tasks and challenges (Martin, Collie & Frydenberg, 2017). Providing opportunities for young people to develop social and emotional competencies has also been shown to decrease problem behaviours and increase school achievement, attendance, connectedness, and positive social behaviours (Green, Ferrante, Boaz, Kutash, & Wheeldon-Reece, 2020; Hurd & Deutsch, 2017). Further, SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships (CASEL, 2020). These partnerships help establish learning environments and experiences that feature collaborative and trusting relationships, meaningful and rigorous curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation (CASEL, 2020).

While specific wellbeing programmes or initiatives target the multiple domains discussed, SEL programmes target one important domain (Emotional Intelligence) within the broader construct of wellbeing. Broadly, the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to several abilities or skills that assist people to appropriately identify, manage, and respond to emotions not only in themselves but within others (Goleman, 1995; Mattingly & Kraiger, 2018). A critical aspect of EI is its separation from other intelligence domains, such as motivation (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Despite some definitional variability in the literature,

there is consensus that Mayer & Salovey's (1997) hierarchical four-branch theoretical model describes the component abilities of EI. The model outlines four key branches of emotion-related capabilities, ranging in complexity from low-level information processing to deliberative and strategic use of emotional information to achieve personal goals. The four branches involve (1) accurately perceiving emotions, (2) using emotions to support decision-making, (3) understanding emotions, and (4) managing emotions to down-regulate negative emotions and up-regulate positive emotions.

There is strong evidence that a high level of EI is related to better social and intimate relationships, plays a key role in academic performance and work outcomes, and predicts better psychological and physical health overall (Kotsou, Mikolajczak, Heeren, Grégoire, & Leys, 2019). Recent meta-analyses clearly demonstrate that emotionally intelligent people. Likewise, a body of research indicates a positive association between social and emotional competencies and positive adjustment outcomes. These competencies have been linked to several resources (individual and social) for resilience, including positive self-evaluation and social support (Perera and DiGiacomo, 2015). Moreover, conceptual models provide evidence of a significant association between SEL programming and wellbeing. Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2012) reviewed the role of EI in determining health and wellbeing, suggesting EI influences Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) through developing adaptive coping mechanisms, encouraging supportive social network development, promoting positive emotions, and enhancing emotion regulation.

RULER (Brackett & Rivers, 2013) is an evidence-based approach to SEL that incorporates a set of practices for widespread assimilation of SEL across the whole school or district (Nathanson, Rivers, Flynn, & Brackett, 2016). As an acronym, RULER denotes five skills: *recognising* emotion in oneself and others, *understanding* emotional consequences and triggers, *labelling* emotions with an accurate and diverse vocabulary, *expressing* emotions

constructively across contexts, and *regulating* emotions proficiently. While grounded in EI theory, RULER's design is informed by ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and accounts for the association between relationships, contexts, and developmental outcomes. Classroom interactions and instruction are targeted through professional development and classroom curricula (i.e. the Feeling Words Curriculum; Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2012) that infuse instruction of emotional literacy within teaching-learning interactions. At the utmost level, RULER assists educators in understanding how relationships, thinking and learning, decision-making, and wellbeing can be enhanced through emotion; and in developing personal and student EI through the integration of tools, activities, and specialised lessons. Accordingly, RULER's theory of change specifies that all stakeholders advance their EI and promote a positive emotional climate across the school and wider community, when components are used and skills practised in everyday interactions.

In an era of academic accountability, receptiveness towards SEL program curriculum integration is reliant upon empirical evidence indicative of improved academic performance, and social, emotional competence (Brackett et al., 2012). Accumulating evidence corroborates RULER's ability to support student outcomes, improving EI skill development and academic performance. A randomised pre-and post-test quasi-experimental study by Brackett et al. (2012), involving fifth- and sixth-grade students (N=273) across three elementary schools, incorporating 15 classrooms, examined the impact of RULER on academic performance and social and emotional competence. Data were collected over one academic year, with academic performance assessed by the end of year grades, and social and emotional competence assessed by teacher reports. When compared to those in control classrooms, students in RULER classrooms demonstrated significantly higher overall academic performance and social, emotional competence.

In a Randomised Controlled Trial, involving 62 schools, 3,824 students, and 105 teachers, classrooms in which RULER was used demonstrated more positive climates, higher connectedness and warmth between students and teachers, and greater regard for the perspectives of students, comparative to control classrooms (Rivers, Brackett, Reyes, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2013). The shift in emotional classroom climate was maintained, along with additional improvements in classroom organisation, instructional, and emotional support (Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2013). Outcomes, however, are influenced by the standard to which RULER is implemented. A study by Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, Elberston, and Salovey (2012), which examined the fidelity of RULER's implementation, showed more positive outcomes for students (such as higher EI and improved social problem-solving skills), when teachers had attended a greater number of training sessions, taught more lessons, and were rated as high-quality implementers by impartial observers.

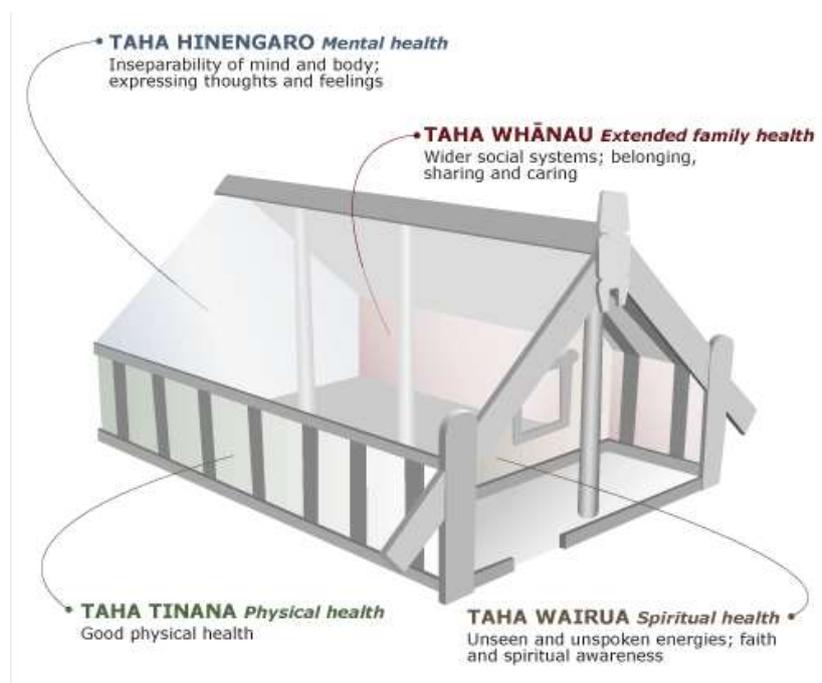
In response to the rapidly changing social and economic landscapes, many nations recognise the need for education to move beyond the traditional focus on academic achievement in order to assist young people in navigating the complex demands of contemporary life (Patton et al., 2016). Across this whole-school approach to student wellbeing provisions, the SEL model provides the overarching framework to conceptualise, formulate, and design effective programs. Indeed, the SEL movement has contributed significantly, highlighting the need for greater consideration of the emotional domain of schooling to educators and policymakers. In light of the above findings, research on SEL strongly suggests that interventions targeting the psychological and emotional determinants of learning provide an effective approach to enhancing the capability and wellbeing of young people. As such, SEL programming should be considered a viable option for enhancing students' positive development and wellbeing in any educational context.

Te Whare Tapa Whā

Te Whare Tapa Wha was first presented at a Maori Women's Welfare League hui in 1982, following the identification of barriers experienced by Maori in health (Morice, 2006, cited in Waitoa, 2014). Subsequently, Sir Mason Durie delineated disparities in Maori and Western perspectives towards wellbeing, in his publication *A Maori perspective of health* (1985). A traditional Maori perspective of health was presented, using the metaphor of a whare (a traditional Māori dwelling), in which four basic tenets of life represent each of the four pillars supporting the structure (Figure 1; Durie, 1994, cited in Winder, 2021). This model was soon established as a conceptual framework to facilitate the improvement of Maori wellbeing. The four components of wellbeing are te taha tinana (physical wellbeing), te taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing), te taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing), and te taha whānau (family wellbeing). In this way, Te Whare Tapa Wha offers a more holistic conceptualisation of wellbeing, as the balance and symmetry of each tenet is considered essential.

Figure 1

Te Whare Tapa Whā Model



This model provides a structured approach to integrating wellbeing into Aotearoa's education system, in the design of the curriculum and professional practice. In 1999, a new curriculum for health and physical education was published by Aotearoa's Ministry of Education (MoE). This document communicated a clear socio-cultural and critical approach to health and physical education in schools, signalling a shift in thinking. The Maori concept of Hauora, a key notion of this curriculum document, is explained as a Māori philosophy of wellbeing that encompasses the abovementioned dimensions of Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 2004). The concept of hauora encompasses the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions of health, which are also recognised by the WHO (O'Toole et al., 2019; MoE, 2019). Curriculum writers initially justified the inclusion of Hauora on account of its bicultural philosophy (Culpan, 1996; Tasker, 1996), though this sparked debate surrounding the position of Maori concepts in state-sponsored curriculum documents. The previous and current research has cautioned against simplistic interpretations and representations of Hauora, fearing most teachers would not acknowledge, let alone embrace, the depth of meaning in the concept as it pertains to Māori (Heaton, 2018; O'Toole et al., 2019; Salter, 2000). Nonetheless, despite all the identified limitations, it challenged students and educators to contemplate a more holistic health and physical education perspective, which clearly and deliberately incorporated a Maori world view (albeit inadequately).

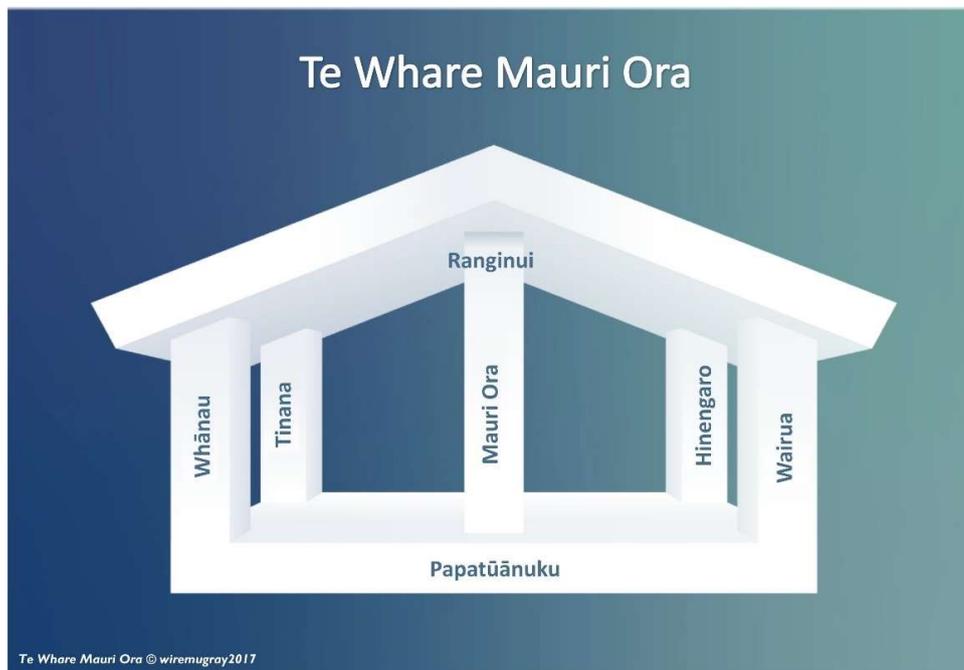
Te Whare Mauri Ora

Although Te Whare Tapa Wha integrates four essential components of wellbeing, it does not emphasise mauri ora (an individual's vitality and unique energy). Gray (2019, cited in Quinlan & Hone, 2020) extended Te Whare Tapa Wha and developed the Te Whare Mauri Ora model to reflect the importance of mauri ora (Figure 2; Gray, 2019, cited in Winder, 2021). The model also draws on Five Ways to Wellbeing, and the seven habits of happy people (Quinlan & Hone, 2020). The seven components of wellbeing are Papatūānuku,

wairua, hinengaro, mauri ora, tinana, whanua, and Ranginui (Figure 2). Gray (2019, as cited in Winder, 2021) asserts that considering Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father) is integral to a robust mauri ora. Positive cultural narratives drawn from stories regarding the origin of Māori resulted in the inclusion of Papatūānuku as a steady base, focusing on whakapapa and the subsequent gratitude and humility experienced by those providing support. Ranginui refers to aspirations and the setting of high achievement expectations, metaphorically ‘reaching for the sky’ (Winder, 2021).

Figure 2

Te Whare Mauri Ora Model



Te Whare Mauri Ora was designed to assist schools and other community organisations in developing authentic cultural responsiveness to Māori (Quinlan & Hone, 2020). Mental health and wellbeing are presented through an indigenous lens that bridges knowledge from Te Ao Marama (a Māori world) and Auraki (a western world) with specific mana enhancing techniques and tools from Positive Psychology (Winder, 2021). It explores the environmental influences and social determinants of health and wellbeing customised to

local school and community contexts. For example, it considers student and staff interactions, staff relationships, the parent community, senior leadership, and the Boards of Trustees. To this end, Te Whare Mauri Ora is a strengths-based, solution-focused approach underpinned by the aspiration of Pae Ora (a view of society encapsulation connections between the social determinants of health and wellbeing for Māori whānau; Winder, 2021).

Summary. This chapter reviewed several widely used wellbeing models and their application in different educational contexts. Clearly, the wealth of national and international work undertaken regarding students' learning and wellbeing in educational settings demonstrates its potential to support positive outcomes for young people and increases the likelihood it will remain a cornerstone of education and care practice for years to come. However, to effectively integrate wellbeing into their practice, teachers and schools must be equipped with skills, resources, and processes (Greenberg, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Durlak, 2017; Hazel, 2014; Schonert-Reichl & Zakrewski, 2014; Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017; Schonert-Reichl & Zakrewski, 2015). Accordingly, chapter two will provide an overview of wellbeing legislation, research, and implementation in Aotearoa. Following this, the key themes identified from the analysis will be summarised and discussed, together with the associated research and practice implications.

Chapter Two: Adolescent Wellbeing in Aotearoa and Implementation in Secondary Schools

Young people in Aotearoa experience many challenges, as is reflected in various statistics. For example, they have a high rate of social morbidity relative to those in other developed countries, as will be outlined below. Although most young people in Aotearoa are resilient to the complexities of the socio-political context in which they live, 20% (at a minimum) will have experiences or display behaviours and emotions with long-term effects. This chapter will provide an overview of wellbeing legislation and policy in Aotearoa, detail the wellbeing research undertaken in Aotearoa and its implementation in secondary schools, and conclude with a description of the present study.

Wellbeing legislation and policy in Aotearoa

The science of wellbeing has important implications for policy and programme decisions by both Government and non-government organisations (NGOs). Aotearoa's social and education policy pays particular attention to children and young people's wellbeing, with a focus directed towards care and protection, participation, material wellbeing, and education. The Aotearoa Coalition Government recently restated its commitment to working towards sustainable wellbeing for all in Aotearoa with the announcement of Budget 2019 – dubbed the 'Wellbeing Budget.' Budget 2019 worked to address some of the long-term challenges and concerns faced by many in Aotearoa's. Five areas of priority were identified which provide the greatest opportunity for meaningful consideration of wellbeing – taking mental health seriously, improving child and adolescent wellbeing, supporting the aspirations of Māori and Pasifika, building a productive nation, and transforming the economy into a sustainable and low-emissions path. The natural resource base was also recognised as a foundation for long-term wellbeing (New Zealand Treasury, 2019).

The budget also reflected a shift in the measurement of success from gross domestic product (GDP) growth to a broader set of indicators. While GDP statistics measure present economic activity, they do not factor in economic security, social relationship quality, personal safety, health or longevity – issues of concern for many in Aotearoa (Shaw, 2018). The Child Youth and Wellbeing Strategy (CYWS; DPMC, 2019) provided both government and non-government agencies a framework to guide the development and implementation of policies, programmes and services that affect children and young people. Additionally, local authorities and regional councils will be required to promote the purported "four wellbeing's" of all citizens and communities – social, environmental, cultural, and economic – under the current amendment of the Local Government Act.

There are a variety of national and international policies and legislation that have also supported this prioritisation. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC; Cohen, 1989) is a comprehensive treaty, ratified by Aotearoa in 1993, which outlines the social, cultural, educational, health, economic, political, and civil rights of children. Nga Kaitaunaki Kohungahunga, part of the Early Childhood sector within the Ministry of Education, released the Draft Charter of the Rights of the Māori Child detailing Tamariki Māori's rights (New Zealand Early Childhood Development Unit, 2002). This bilingual publication, though never finalised, provided a pluralistic approach to child rights predicated on the UNCROC.

Under the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act (2014), the Ministry of Education is required to have a Child Protection Policy (CPP). The Act articulates the Ministry's commitment to building a strong protective culture for children and young people, with information intended to guide staff response to wellbeing and safety-related concerns necessarily provided. Moreover, the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) and Te Marautanga o

Aotearoa – which informs the direction of teaching and learning in English-medium and Māori-medium schools, respectively – begin with a vision of young people developing the required competencies for learning (current and lifelong) and employment, with equal emphasis on wellbeing and academic achievement. Specifically, the vision, the school curriculum design and review sections, and the Health and Physical Education learning area include five explicit references to wellbeing (Soutter, O'Steen, & Gilmore, 2012).

Professional Practice Frameworks for educators also tend to incorporate a wellbeing perspective, both implicitly and explicitly. The New Zealand Teachers Council Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers (2004) articulates that teachers must endeavour to promote the social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing of all learners. Similarly, the Registered Teacher Criteria (2009) outlines the responsibility of all fully registered teachers in establishing and maintaining effective professional relationships with all students, which focus equally on learning and wellbeing and in demonstrating a commitment to wellbeing promotion for all students. These guidelines were recently reviewed and are underpinned by the following Māori values, whakamana (empowerment), manaakitanga (creating a welcoming, caring and creative environment), pono (showing integrity by acting in ways that are honest, fair and ethical), and whanaungatanga (engaging in positive and collaborative relationships). The National Administration Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2019) place obligation on the board of trustees in ensuring the provision of physically and emotionally safe educational environments, encouraging healthy food and nutrition choices, and acting in accordance with legislation developed to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Thus, regard for student wellbeing is a legal responsibility for teachers, school leaders, and school trustees – and is not merely an ethical or moral obligation.

Wellbeing research in Aotearoa

Wellbeing policy in Aotearoa provides a clear mandate for student wellbeing research. Accordingly, much research has been done to explore the wellbeing of young people in Aotearoa. A report from the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, *Improving the Transition: Reducing Social and Psychological Morbidity During Adolescence*, raised significant concern about mental illness during this period (Gluckman & Office of the Prime Minister's Science Advisory Committee, 2011). Similarly, the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (2016) completed a review for the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). The review concluded that a significant number of young people exhibit symptoms of mental illness, many of which do not receive appropriate support.

More recently, the inquiry panel presented He Ara Oranga – the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction (2018) – in response to widespread concern about support provisions within the mental health sector and the wider community. It intended to identify unmet needs and develop recommendations for an improved addiction and mental health system in Aotearoa. It provided an opportunity for the public, people with lived experience, and those involved in preventing and responding to addiction and mental health problems to present their comments on Aotearoa's current approach to addiction and mental health. Several urgent recommendations resulted from this inquiry while recognising that many would require detailed reviews, the establishment of new bodies, consultation, or legislative change. Specifically, He Ara Oranga contained 40 recommendations made across a broad spectrum from social wellbeing and the promotion and prevention of mental health to responses to people living with severe mental distress. The Government accepted 38 of the recommendations in full, in principle, or agreed to further consideration.

He Ara Oranga reaffirmed that children and young people display high levels of emotional distress, manifesting as anxiety, self-harm, and risk-taking behaviours, in

particular. Parents reported concerns about the impact of bullying and internet misuse, mainly regarding social media. School counsellors and teachers were overwhelmed by the considerable number of students experiencing distress. Students and teachers emphasised the need to incorporate mental health in the health curriculum to help young people develop resilience and manage emotions. In light of these findings, the inquiry panel identified opportunities for preventative and resilience-building initiatives throughout the life course. Notably, wellbeing promotion considers the connected wellbeing of families, whānau and communities, not merely individual wellbeing. These initiatives took the form of relationship counselling, family therapy, school-based activities, and community programmes. Therefore, the inquiry acknowledges the role of schools in promoting and enhancing the wellbeing of young people in Aotearoa, among other things. In response, the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand commented, "Some of the most powerful determinants of good health lie outside the health system" (2020, p. 14).

It is also important to acknowledge the persistent and growing mental health inequity of Māori and other ethnic groups in Aotearoa (alluded to in Chapter One; Russell, 2018; Durie, 2017; Ministry of Health, 2018). Key findings presented below confirm disparities in both outcome and exposure to risk factors. Māori and Pacific students typically report lower wellbeing in student surveys than the overall student population. Lower wellbeing correlates with educational engagement and achievement disparities, and contributes to inequities in life outcomes (Fleming et al., 2020). The Youth19 data indicates a decline in mental and emotional wellbeing among rangatahi Māori from 2012 to 2019 (Fleming et al., 2020). This is consistent with other Māori mental health data, including suicide trends (Clark et al., 2018; Crengle et al., 2013; Ngā Pou Arawhenua et al., 2020). Rangatahi Māori who have experienced personal, community or intergenerational traumas, such as the continuing

impacts of discrimination and colonisation, represent a particularly vulnerable group (Lawson-Te Aho & Liu, 2010; Pihama et al., 2014).

Mental and emotional wellbeing among Pacific young people has similarly decreased (Fleming et al., 2020). Significant depressive symptoms increased from 14% to 25%, while a considerable portion of Pacific young people reported having attempted suicide in the past 12 month period (12%) compared to Pākehā and other European peers (3%). There are also differences in service access and use for Māori and Pacific children and young people. Despite recent developments in this area, limited policy, services, and resources have been designed explicitly for Māori and Pacific peoples.

More specifically, some research has explored student and staff perspectives on wellbeing at school. A series of six detailed reports were published after the release of the initial Education Matters to Me: Key Insights (2018) report. This research was conducted jointly by the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) and the New Zealand School Trustees Association. The study sought to examine how students feel about education in Aotearoa. The reports also intended to ensure that the National Education and Learning Priorities (2018) reflected the needs and lived experiences of all children and young people in Aotearoa. Children and young people were provided with an opportunity to communicate their experiences, primarily what was working well for them and how things could be better. The Children's Commissioner and the New Zealand School Trustees Association engaged with 1,678 children and young people face-to-face and online via surveys to understand their perspectives on education. Previous engagements with tamariki and rangatahi, and some of the well-documented challenges in the education system also informed this report series. With this foundation, it was possible to focus the engagements on six critical areas of enquiry, which directly correlated to the following six detailed reports (OCC, 2018, p. 3):

1. Achievement
2. Emotional wellbeing
3. Transitions
4. Engagement
5. Experiences of tamariki and rangatahi Māori
6. 'If I were the boss' – Improving our education

Children and young people expressed a desire to be seen for who they are and to be understood in context (e.g., their home and life experiences). They noted a range of significant relationships that permit or prevent achievement. Children and young people from diverse learning environments highlighted the importance of feeling comfortable and happy before they can learn, and the impact the learning environment has on their wellbeing. Many expressed that they could not begin learning until they had a trusting relationship with their teacher. Moreover, they want to be taught in conformity with their strengths and unique abilities. Learning content was also important; some wanted to be learning things that they perceived to be relevant to their lives and futures. Many told of how they have experienced racism at school and are treated differently because of their culture. Finally, children and young people experienced a lack of choice or participation in decision making concerning their own lives and schooling. They want to have a voice in their education and to be involved in their learning.

Various developments have taken place in the policy and practice context, which are designed to improve prevention and support services for young people in Aotearoa. The Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project (YMHP), for example, was established in response to clear evidence of inefficiencies in the provision of wellbeing support for youth throughout Aotearoa. In view of these findings, twenty-six multi-agency initiatives were

established – involving the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), the Treasury, the Ministries of Education (MoE), Social Development (MSD) and Pacific Peoples (MPP), the Education Review Office (ERO), and Te Puni Kokiri (TPK), to address the challenges to mental health and wellbeing amongst young people.

Kāhui Ako (Communities of Learning) are groups of education and training providers that come together with their local communities to increase achievement for all children and young people – particularly those who the education system has underserved. It is part of the governments' Investing in Educational Success (IES) initiative. The Kāhui Ako initiative provides a meaningful opportunity to build knowledge and expertise, inspire improvement and innovation, and strengthen teaching and learning through collaboration. The design purportedly optimises transitions between Early Childhood Education services, primary schools, and secondary schools. Group members share expertise in teaching and learning (ako) and support each other. Appropriate measures for identifying skills from early childhood to secondary school graduation also promote more secure transitions. Each Kāhui Ako group establishes achievement challenges or shared goals based on the particular needs of its children and young people. Once endorsed by the Minister of Education, the Kāhui Ako works with students, the board of trustees, whānau, communities, and iwi to achieve these objectives.

The proportionate universalism approach is applied to dominant settings for child development, namely primary and secondary schools, not merely promoting and protecting mental health throughout childhood and adolescence (Cefai, 2021). The term "universal", as applied to school-based wellbeing strategies, refers to those strategies designed to meet the needs of most students, such as a whole school and sometimes home approaches. The structure of universal interventions may be represented by a three-tiered "Intervention

Triangle" (Boyd, Bonne, & Berg, 2017, p. 10). Typically, a Tier 1 Intervention is a school-wide, protective, preventative "universal proactive approach" (p.11), which reduces risk factors for students overall, fosters a sense of belonging, and promotes positive outcomes. It is likely to be successful for approximately 85%-90% of students. Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions focus on the 5-10% or 1-5% of students (respectively) who may be more vulnerable, or at more severe risk. Accordingly, educational professionals at local schools are encouraged to build whole-school values and norms and focus on requisite skills through the curriculum. A second-tier response to emerging or sudden needs is also required. School-based wellbeing approaches may assist this if well-coordinated and exercised with appropriate skill by key stakeholders (e.g., the leadership team, school counsellors, deans, and nurses). A third-tier mental health professional response must also be immediately available and responsive in severe chronic and acute needs. Therefore, the three-tier approach provides a model that enables schools to be clear in their targeted groups for school-based wellbeing strategies (Boyd, Bonne, Berg, & New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 2017).

Moreover, schools are also encouraged to use an inquiry-based approach to contextual challenges. Inquiry is frequently understood as a cycle of learning; it is a process for examining current evidence, assumptions, and practices to inform professional practice changes and improve student outcomes (Driver, 2011).

The Education Review Office (ERO)

The Education Review Office (ERO) was commissioned, as part of the Prime Minister's focus on adolescent mental health, to conduct an evaluative review of wellbeing provisions within mainstream primary and secondary schools. The apparent need for a more coordinated and holistic approach to wellbeing provision and evaluation was highlighted. This review was completed in three stages (outlined in brief below), concluding with the development and

publication of an evaluative report series on the wellbeing of school students in Aotearoa (listed below).

- Wellbeing for Success: Draft Evaluation Indicators (ERO, 2013)
- Wellbeing for Children's Success at Primary School (ERO, 2015a)
- Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School (ERO, 2015b)
- Wellbeing for Success: Effective Practice (ERO, 2016a)
- Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools (ERO, 2016b)

Stage One concluded with the development of a culturally responsive evaluation indicator framework that encompassed a wide range of perspectives for achieving equity and excellence in student outcomes within an Aotearoa context. The Ministry of Education has long emphasised the prioritisation of evaluation across the education sector. Specifically, Aotearoa employs an integrative approach to internal and external assessment on the premise of school accountability (including regulatory requirement compliance). Accordingly, this framework should assist mainstream schools and the ERO evaluators in providing and evaluating wellbeing support, as it builds understanding of the complex interplay of factors that promote and impede student wellbeing (and other valued student outcomes). The fundamental principles of this framework are whanaungatanga (relationship, kinship, sense of connection), manaakitanga (showing respect, generosity, and care for others), ako (reciprocal learning), and mahi tahi (working together).

The ERO's initial draft evaluation indicators for student wellbeing were integrated into a generalised set of school evaluation indicators to ease the process of application. The content of the current framework is detailed in *School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success* (ERO, 2016c). In brief, two indicator types were established (i.e., process and outcome). Processes and practices that support school effectiveness and improvement can be identified by the process indicators, which were

classified in accordance with six evidence-based domains that underpin valued outcomes for all students (ERO, 2016c, p. 17-41):

- Stewardship
- Leadership for equity and excellence
- Educationally powerful connections and relationships
- Responsive curriculum, effective teaching, and opportunity to learn
- Professional capability and collective capacity
- Evaluation, inquiry and knowledge for improvement and innovation

The outcome indicators, informed in large part by the NZC and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, can be used to evaluate school policy and implementation impact, and support the concurrent pursuance of three goals described by Sir Mason Durie (2001), which facilitate the advancement of Māori. These goals include (1) enabling Māori to live as Māori, (2) participate as active world citizens, and (3) experience good quality health and a high standard of living. Expected school outcomes are directly measured through indicators of student progress and achievement, with the importance of holistic outcome indicators (reflecting wellbeing, identity confidence, language and culture, participation and contribution) also recognised.

Stage Two involved a nationwide review of wellbeing practice (i.e., promotion and response), conducted as part of the formal review process within the school context. The overarching question – *To what extent do schools promote and respond to student wellbeing?* – provided a clear directive for this work. Though elements of good practice were evident, the reports *Wellbeing for Children's Success at Primary School* (ERO 2015a) and *Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School* (ERO, 2015b) highlighted serious inefficiencies. Specifically, in the secondary school evaluation, the ERO evaluators reviewed 68 secondary schools, which were representative of geographic composition (but not type or

roll size), during the first term of 2014. Qualitative and quantitative information was collected, collated, and analysed with reference to the draft evaluation indicator framework mentioned above. Each school was classified as either well-placed (n = 11), variable (n = 39), challenged (n = 14), or overwhelmed (n = 4).

Specifically, well-placed schools demonstrated cohesive practices that aligned with expressed values, initiatives that supported student wellbeing needs, a depth of inquiry, and an improvement focus – drawn from various sources, including research and perspectives of students, staff, and community members (ERO, 2015b). Despite evidencing supportive care systems, variable schools did not implement review procedures to identify and extend good wellbeing support practices to all areas. The following areas of concern were identified in challenged schools: school culture, cooperation and relationships between school staff, (limited) emphasis placed on student wellbeing in strategic planning, and review procedures. Similarly, the wellbeing needs of students were not acknowledged in those overwhelmed schools at a leadership level. Therefore, the resultant classification highlights the haphazard wellbeing approach across schools, supporting the need for a more cohesive approach to student wellbeing.

Stage Three involved a national good practice evaluation in which select well-placed schools were revisited. Most notably, five aspects of the school setting considered vital for effective wellbeing practice were established from this inquiry, including culture, wellbeing in the curriculum, student voice, agency and leadership, and systems, people and initiatives (outlined below). The related publications - *Wellbeing for success: Effective practice and wellbeing for success: A resource for schools* – were written to help equip trustees, leaders, and teachers to effectively promote wellbeing for all and respond to wellbeing concerns.

School culture has been defined in many ways, but perhaps the simplest definition is *the way we do things around here* (Martin, 2002, p.3). Accordingly, most well-placed schools

described action to establish a culture of care and connectedness as framing wellbeing related practice. Wellbeing values, developed through active consultation with a wide range of stakeholders (i.e. staff, students, whānau, and the wider community), were owned, understood, and implemented by the whole school community. For instance, school leaders provided repeated opportunities for staff discussion throughout the value development process. This helped ensure a general level of understanding for all staff and helped incorporate wellbeing values into various forms of practice, including daily staff-student interaction, strategic planning, and policy development. Moreover, in well-placed wellbeing schools, school leaders exercised discretion in the appointment of staff. For example, to ensure the best fit, each potential candidate's personal qualities and strengths were regularly considered in relation to school culture. Culture was further enhanced through practising a restorative discipline philosophy, an approach that emphasises the importance of caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and cohesive relationships across the school community (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005).

The ERO proposes that student wellbeing is central to effective curriculum implementation (ERO, 2016b). Accordingly, they recommend that schools ensure every student is provided opportunities to explore wellbeing issues and develop the key competencies identified in the NZC – namely thinking; using language, symbols and texts; managing self; relating to others; and participating and contributing (Ministry of Education, 2015). Specifically, the report states, "a focus on wellbeing ties together the curriculum's vision, principles, values, key competencies, and learning areas" (ERO, 2015a, p. 30). Wellbeing clearly positions learners and their development as confident young people at the centre of what schools do. The Code of Professional Responsibility (Ngā Tikanga Matatika), among other Registered Teachers' Criteria, requires teachers to remain cognizant of espoused school values and act accordingly (Teaching Council of Aotearoa, 2017). In most cases,

schools in the ERO's secondary school evaluation provided opportunities for students to explore valued aspects of wellbeing (ERO, 2015b). Health and physical education programmes, for example, offered much of this deliberate teaching and learning of wellbeing:

A junior school health programme was carefully planned to align with the principles of Hauora and the objectives of the health and physical education curriculum. Attention was given to social and emotional aspects of wellbeing such as identity, friendship, relationships, safety and bullying. Students talked about their wellbeing using the dimensions of Hauora (A medium-sized urban secondary school, p. 20).

Most secondary schools evaluated allocated a maximum of two hours per week for health in Years 9 and 10 (ERO, 2015b). However, time for health and physical education programmes varied considerably in Years 11, 12 and 13. While strong senior programmes were identified in some schools, with health a compulsory component through to Year 13 in one school, provision was limited or omitted in others. Therefore, exposure to topical wellbeing concepts and issues was not provided to some students.

Traditional learning areas have also supported the exploration of wellbeing concepts, though less routinely, through relevant content selection. Such inquiries often included examining themes within required reading material (e.g. relating to characters' circumstances), temporal and cultural differences within art history, social science, or media study; health statistics in mathematics; and socio-environmental issues in science and technology. Consequently, the ERO advised that schools map teaching of these concepts or themes across learning areas and year levels to determine whether particular groups of students had equal opportunities to explore wellbeing because of their subject choices.

As described by Fielding (2001) and Mitra (2018), the term student voice encompasses the wide range of opportunities for active student participation in school decisions that shape student lives. In many cases, the secondary schools in this evaluation implemented a negotiated curriculum, whereby the focus for learning was jointly determined by students and teachers (ERO, 2015b). This is particularly relevant because, at present, learner agency is embedded in the NZC key competencies (Ministry of Education, 2016). Various leadership roles and responsibilities were also offered (e.g., student council, house captaincy, peer mentoring). Such opportunities allowed students the space to influence issues of importance and engage in active problem-solving – preparatory for future and adult responsibilities (Mitra, 2018).

Student wellbeing was regarded as a shared responsibility, requiring a coherent effort across *systems, people, and initiatives*. Accordingly, opportunities to ensure positive adjustment and wellbeing continuity were extended and enhanced through collaborative partnership across the school and broader community. Espoused wellbeing values were incorporated in strategic planning and policy documents, allowing for proactive and responsive practice at all levels. Collaboration across the education community allowed for more immediate targeted support during periods of transition through student information sharing (i.e. the transfer of student information between schools). Well-established relationships and ways of working with families and external support services (e.g. resource teachers for learning and behaviour, guidance counsellors, youth workers, public health nurses) frequently facilitated prevention programming, the referral response process and follow-up.

The Present Study

The current policy and practice arena widely acknowledges the importance of wellbeing in the lives of young people in Aotearoa. As described above, the Ministry of

Youth Development (MYD) applies a PYD approach to youth development, which guides efforts to promote and protect young people's wellbeing. Moreover, wellbeing and learning have emerged as a strong focus within the field of education in recent years, both nationally and internationally (Durlak & Weissberg, 2010; Durlak et al., 2011; Humphrey, 2013; Weissberg et al., 2015). There is a growing movement that supports the incorporation of wellbeing and other related concepts into the core work of teachers and schools, such as and the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) initiative in the UK and the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in the USA; together with considerable research ongoing on programmatic assessment. How wellbeing is achieved effectively and efficiently among this group is, however, far from clear, particularly within the secondary school setting.

Although the ERO evaluations have provided helpful information regarding the overall context of wellbeing strategies in schools in Aotearoa and the range of progress that has been made in these endeavours, these reviews have significant constraints. The ERO research was undertaken as part of the organisations' standard school evaluation process, during which schools are scrutinised about all of their educational administrative and pedagogical practices. Thus, information collected during these reviews reflects a school's evidence of best practice, rather than the day-to-day opportunities and challenges that may moderate best practice. In this regard, there is a need to document the practical challenges schools experience in implementing a wellbeing approach and how schools navigate these challenges as they strive to support and promote student wellbeing. It is not sufficient to merely identify characteristics consistent across schools deemed well-placed, variable, challenged or overwhelmed. Moreover, the ERO's resultant evaluation indicators may not provide an accurate measure of effectiveness. Effectiveness measurement requires a commitment to understanding the setting or community, considering particular strengths and

difficulties (Swartz & Martin, 1997). Although grounded in sociocultural theory, the ERO evaluation placed limited emphasis on delineating the school's wellbeing approaches. Theory provides a framework that supports the development of wellbeing approaches and interventions (Collins & Stockton, 2018). The ERO evaluation did not consider whether these approaches were culturally safe, appropriate, competent and inclusive. Moreover, as O'Toole et al. (2019) found, it does not provide specific procedures for schools, meaning that they have to find their own way. At a regional level, there is also a clear need for school-based wellbeing approaches in Canterbury and research on how they are implemented and their effectiveness, especially after recent events such as the Canterbury Earthquakes and the Christchurch terror attack.

The present study attempted to address some of the limitations, or constraints, that were present in the ERO research. First, I attempted to assess a more realistic "day-to-day" perspective of how secondary schools' wellbeing policies and practices in the greater Christchurch region are implemented by ensuring participant and school confidentiality. Schools were not expected to meet predetermined expectations as there were none. The exploratory nature of the current study provided an opportunity for schools to reflect on the broader workings of their wellbeing approach, where they described the challenges associated with implementation and identified factors that have impeded their efforts. Lastly, the value of theoretical frameworks was explicitly addressed in an attempt to understand specific school wellbeing approaches.

Although it is important to distinguish the extent to which school-based wellbeing strategies are effective once fully implemented, it is first necessary to understand how and the extent to which these strategies are implemented. Moreover, although some frameworks point to the dimensions of how school-based wellbeing approaches may be measured (i.e., *School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success*;

aforementioned), the applicability of such frameworks across diverse educational contexts is open to question. The accuracy of measurement frameworks that are limited to the school context is also questionable, particularly with the emphasis on ensuring lifelong wellbeing. It is necessary to address these limitations to ensure wellbeing is achieved equitably and sustainably alongside traditional educational objectives. Therefore, this research examined the internal dynamics (i.e., processes, needs, and strengths) of school-based wellbeing strategies and the theoretical lens or model (if any) that they are applying. Moreover, the findings mentioned above regarding the persistent and growing mental health inequities in Aotearoa support the ongoing prioritisation of Māori and Pacific children and young people in shaping how school-based wellbeing approaches are developed and implemented. Accordingly, the present study questioned participants about their school's efforts to ensure cultural accommodation of these approaches.

Aims of the Present Study

The present study intended to uncover practical applications, furthering our understanding of and ability to interpret the complexities of school-based wellbeing strategies in the greater Christchurch region, beyond effectiveness criteria. For the purposes of this study, a school-based wellbeing strategy refers to the coordinated set of actions implemented in a secondary school setting, which attempt to promote and protect all students' specific or holistic wellbeing needs. Data were gathered from the perspective of educational professionals to develop initial accounts of the motivations, actions, and situations that pertain to wellbeing strategies within the secondary school setting. This approach can potentially provide a better understanding of the implementation strategies across schools and give insight into common strengths and challenges. It might also provide information for

external stakeholders (e.g., external agencies, external funders, and community organisations working with secondary schools) on how school wellbeing strategies can be supported.

Accordingly, this study's overarching aim was to document how secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region implement wellbeing strategies and the opportunities and challenges these strategies create for the school. More specifically, the research questions for this study include the following:

1. What is the theoretical basis for secondary schools' wellbeing initiatives?
2. What are the forms of actions that comprise a school-based wellbeing initiative?
3. How do schools provide follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties?
4. How do schools ensure a culturally sensitive approach to the implementation of wellbeing related actions or initiatives?
5. How do schools demonstrate evidence of effectiveness?
6. What are the obstacles or challenges in the implementation of the wellbeing approach?

This particular study was part of a larger research project to systematically document the wellbeing approaches across all secondary schools in the city of Christchurch and the greater Canterbury region in Aotearoa. The original design included a combination of methodologies, including questionnaires for all schools and follow-up interviews for schools that were actively implementing one or more wellbeing approaches. However, due to the Christchurch terror attacks and the Coronavirus pandemic, this larger project was stalled, but this more focused project documenting the experiences of those secondary schools that were actively engaged with wellbeing initiatives was able to be completed.

Chapter Three: Method

Study Design: Qualitative Description

Approaches to qualitative inquiry have become highly diverse, informed by critical theory, ethnography, ethnomethodology, feminist inquiry, hermeneutics, heuristics, phenomenology, positivism, and symbolic interaction (Patton, 1990). Qualitative description (Kim, Sefcik, & Bradway, 2017; Sandelowski & Leeman, 2012) is an approach to qualitative inquiry that emphasises minimal interpretation of the data by the researcher (Sandelowski, 2002). Qualitative descriptive studies seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, process, or the experiences and perspectives of the people involved (Caelli, Ray, & Mill, 2003; Merriam, 1998). It aims to communicate what was said, or what is there, with as few assumptions as possible (Sandelowski, 2002). A qualitative descriptive approach is particularly relevant where information is required from those experiencing the phenomenon of interest and where time and other resources are in short supply (Neergaard, Oleson, Anderson, & Sondergaard, 2009). Consequently, a qualitative descriptive approach was selected because it permits the exploration of participants' experiences and perspectives in more depth and detail than what is generally practical in quantitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

School-based wellbeing approaches place school professionals and school communities in novel circumstances, with important decisions to be made concerning pedagogical practice, school culture, and resource investment. In addition, as shown in the literature review, there is limited previous research in this domain that has investigated the fundamental and practical questions about the implementation of school-based wellbeing strategies and the opportunities, challenges, and potential for support that such a shift in educational practice has for a school. In light of this, the sample for this study included educational professionals across secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region who were intimately involved in

developing and implementing their school's wellbeing application. Thus, a qualitative descriptive approach is well suited for documenting the experiences and perspectives of these professionals, and adding their voice to the literature on school-based wellbeing strategies was an important gap to fill.

Giving voice to "the other" is a hallmark of humanistic anthropology. This tradition has carried over into qualitative research more generally in other fields, including psychology, and stems from its phenomenological roots (Guest, 2002). That is not to say that a quantitatively oriented study cannot have a comparable populist viewpoint. Instead, the nature of qualitative data and the data collection process are more conducive to this aim. The idea of conversational inquiry and open-ended questions, typical in qualitative research, is founded on this principle. This study allowed participants to talk about the composition and complexities of school-based wellbeing strategies in their own words, mostly free of the constraints imposed by fixed-response questions often seen in quantitative studies.

Simultaneously, I learnt from participants' responses and actively sought to guide the inquiry in response to what had been shared. The ability to ask participants meaningful questions and obtain answers in participants' own words and subjective constructs is one of the greatest strengths of qualitative research. In this regard, an additional benefit is the use of inductive probing, whether in participant observation, in-depth interviews, or focus groups (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). Inductive probing allows the researcher to clarify meaning or expressions and further permits participants to tell their stories. Furthermore, the qualitative approach in this study allowed prioritisation of "How?" and "Why?" questions (Grieb, Eder, Smith, Calhoun, & Tandon, 2015). In qualitative research, data collection and analysis are typically grounded in an epistemology of constructivism (and subjectivism to a lesser extent). Conversely, traditional quantitative research methods tend to be based on an objectivist or positivist epistemology and are more effective in describing trends across larger

samples where measures can be clearly defined. Pope and Mays (1995, p. 42) argue that qualitative research enhances knowledge by "reaching the parts other methods cannot reach".

Ethical and Cultural Considerations

This study was reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury's Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC; Appendix C). During the design of the study and in the course of the ethical review, several ethical concerns were identified. First, the psychological safety of participants was identified as a potential risk of participation in this project due to the potential that participants may have had stressful experiences in their roles supporting student wellbeing (especially in light of the traumatic situations many young people have experienced in the Canterbury region in recent years and ensuing mental health challenges). I recognised that the potential for harm might result from the elicitation of various intense emotional responses or additional 'emotional costs' as a result of participating in this study (McKenzie, Li, Jenkin, & Collings, 2017). In order to minimise and manage this potential risk, the data collection procedures did not enquire about personal or sensitive topics but rather addressed the schools' policies, procedures, and strategies that are intended to safeguard student wellbeing. In addition, participants were able to skip questions during data collection or even pause or withdraw from the interview if they felt uncomfortable.

Additionally, social risk was identified as an ethical concern, as the school professionals were asked to evaluate the strengths and limitations of their schools' wellbeing-related programming or policies. Social risk represents the social harms that are associated with participation in research (Labott & Johnson, 2004). In this study, participants were asked to report about their experiences in implementing a wellbeing strategy in their school that they may or may not endorse. Thus, participants could have felt there was a professional risk in being transparent about their perspectives of their school's wellbeing strategy and/or a

conflict of interest depending on their level of investment in these strategies. To address this, a number of steps were implemented to protect participants' confidentiality.

Scheper-Hughes (2007) described the challenge of confidentiality assurance in place-based research and the need to prevent deductive disclosure. Risks of deductive disclosure existed in this study, as identifying characteristics were interwoven in quotes. Where the data was actively used, it was only handled by myself and my supervisors. Transcriptions were de-identified, and the interview audio recordings were deleted once transcribed. The de-identification process did not occur at a single point in time. It was an iterative process that took place during data transcription, coding, theme development, and most notably, as the results were written.

For example, pseudonyms were used for participants, gender-specific pronouns were not included, and the role of the key contact person (e.g., Dean, Counsellor, Head Teacher) was not disclosed, nor was specific information about the school. References to the interviewee or school's religious or cultural background may have resulted in deductive disclosure (Kaiser, 2009). Therefore, religious and cultural references were replaced with similar but unrelated terms where appropriate (e.g., Catholic faith became religious faith). References to particular wellbeing strategies adopted by certain schools might be similarly revealing and were thus carefully managed when quoting the participants. Saunders, Kitzinger, and Kitzinger (2015) provide a useful example of how to discuss places without revealing participants' links to locations. Accordingly, environmental features and factors were de-identified with due consideration of their potential impact (geographic location was not disclosed). Schools were described at the group level (not as individual schools), according to broad categories such as single-sex or coeducational; state and state-integrated/private; urban or rural.

The first step in participant recruitment and subsequent informed consent was to gain consent from the school principal or the school's board of trustees (Appendix A). This was

because participants were asked to share information about school policies and practices beyond those in the public domain. Accordingly, school principals were provided with a study information sheet and asked to provide written informed consent. The information sheet outlined the research aims and objectives, and provided information regarding the confidentiality of information. Notably, the consent process provided the prospective participant and the principal sufficient opportunity to consider whether to participate in the research. Furthermore, the consent process for participants' (i.e., the professionals from each school) strongly emphasised the steps to protect confidentiality to help participants trust that they were free to participate and share openly about their experiences without coercion and to minimise social desirability pressures.

The commitment to enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles in governmental, institutional, and social policies and practices reflects Aotearoa's unique bicultural nature. In light of this, the current study acknowledged that conceptualisations of wellbeing and related concepts qualitatively differ between traditional Māori perspectives and traditional Pākehā perspectives. As such, the in-depth interview provided an opportunity to discuss culturally responsive practices to examine how schools' wellbeing strategies reflect the language, values, or practices of different cultures. This also intended to communicate respect for the cultural knowledge and traditions of all peoples, particularly tangata whenua. Further, had I interviewed a school representative who identified as Māori, or from a Māori medium school (kura tuarua), who wanted to incorporate tikanga, an adapted interview protocol would have been used. This adapted protocol respects and includes the tikanga Māori principles of whanaungatanga (relationship, sense of connection) and manaakitanga (the process of showing respect, generosity, and care for others). Expressly, I would have included pepeha (personal and professional introductions) and koha (token of appreciation; sharing of food, gifts, or resources). However, this was not needed as no participants identified as Māori.

Secondary Schools in the Greater Christchurch Region

This study is situated in the greater Christchurch region – which was defined as Christchurch City, the Waimakariri District, and the Selwyn District (Clark et al., 2013). At present, there are 47 operational secondary schools within this region. However, as is evident in Table 3, a number of secondary school structures exist. These differences reflect variations in school type (composite, secondary, and special), authority (state, state-integrated, private), student gender (single-sex or coeducational), and area type (main urban, secondary urban, minor urban, rural). As described above, to prevent deductive exposure and preserve the confidentiality of the participants and the schools that participated, schools are described below (see column 3) at the group level (not as individual schools) according to combined categories.

Table 3

Greater Christchurch Secondary Schools and Participating Secondary Schools by Type, Authority, Student Gender, and Area Type

	Greater Christchurch	Participating Schools
Type	Secondary Schools	(Categories Collapsed)
Composite (Year 1-15)	16	
Secondary (Year 7-15)	9	11
Secondary (Year 9-15)	18	
Special	4	
Authority		
State	30	7
State-integrated	12	4
Private	5	

Student Gender

Girls	5	3
Boys	5	
Coeducational	37	8

Area Type

Main Urban Area	38	8
Secondary Urban Area	2	
Minor Urban Area	6	3
Rural Area	1	

Note: Shaded cells indicate categories that were collapsed to protect the confidentiality of the participants and schools

Participant Recruitment Strategy

Qualitative research typically involves a detailed focus on relatively small, purposefully selected samples (Patton, 1990). The objective of purposeful sampling is to ensure data collection is drawn from information-rich cases that can provide the most useful information about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990). As this was a qualitative exploratory scoping study, it was not possible to estimate a specific sample size. Instead, the goal was to obtain a somewhat representative sample of the diverse secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region through purposeful sampling. As such, the diversity of schools was prioritised rather than the diversity of the participants. Moreover, the focus was on understanding and illuminating important cases rather than generalising from a sample to a population. The sample size (n=11) was large enough to be credible given the purpose of the evaluation but small enough to permit adequate depth and detail for each case or unit in the sample; while not extending too far beyond the logistic scope of a Master's thesis.

Before participant recruitment, I conducted an informal survey of all secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region (via telephone or email). The survey asked the following questions: Does your school have a student wellbeing application? Who is the best contact person for this application? The survey established that, of the 47 operational secondary schools in this region, 21 (45%) had implemented some form of wellbeing application, while 18 (38%) identified a key wellbeing contact. In this study, a key wellbeing contact is defined as an individual involved in the development, implementation, or review of the school's wellbeing application. As such, this person was presumed to have good knowledge of their schools' wellbeing application, such as why and how it was selected or developed, how it was implemented, what other school staff were involved, and how information regarding student wellbeing difficulties was managed. For those schools that did not have a known wellbeing contact, the school administrator was asked for the contact information of the school leader who manages student health and wellbeing matters (principal, deputy principal, dean, or counsellor).

Based on this survey, a core group of schools was recruited (i.e., those with some form of wellbeing strategy and the key contact). Recruitment was subsequently extended to all remaining secondary schools, where information regarding current wellbeing application efforts was limited or unknown. Therefore, all secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region were eligible to participate and were approached, but recruitment was staggered in an attempt to maximise diversity.

Participants

Of those schools with a wellbeing approach (n=21), eleven agreed to participate, six declined to participate, and four did not respond. Twelve school professionals participated in this research from 11 schools of varying decile ratings (i.e., two participants were from the same school). Deciles are a measure of the socio-economic rating of a school's student body,

relative to schools throughout the country. Decile ratings range from 1 to 10. A decile rating of 1 represents the 10% of schools with the largest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities, and 10 represents the 10% of schools with the largest proportion of students from high socio-economic communities. To safeguard confidentiality, a detailed profile for each participant has been omitted. Further, it is important to note that seven school professionals identified as New Zealand European (four did not disclose their ethnicity), a majority had been involved in their school's wellbeing strategy for at least two years and dedicated over 50% of their workload to the schools' wellbeing approach. Table 4 below provides participant pseudonyms and a brief description of the school context.

Table 4

Characteristics of the Participating Schools by Authority, Gender, and Participant

Pseudonym

Participant pseudonym	Authority	Gender	Decile rating
Alex	State	Coeducational	5
Frankie	State	Coeducational	4
Morgan	State	Coeducational	8
Reese	State	Coeducational	7
Riley	State	Coeducational	10
Shannon	State	Coeducational	8
Yael	State	Coeducational	9
Ash	State-integrated/ Private	Single-sex	10
Jesse & Blair	State-integrated/ Private	Single-sex	10
Shay	State-integrated/ Private	Single-sex	7
Sage	State-integrated/ Private	Coeducational	10

Note. Decile ratings were retrieved from <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/funding-and-financials/resourcing/operational-funding/school-decile-ratings/#sh-decile>

Measures

A semi-structured interview method was selected to ensure that the required information could be obtained, while also allowing for rich, participant-directed answers. A vital feature of the semi-structured interview is its ability to generate an undiluted focus on the phenomena of interest. Miller and Glassner (2016) suggest that interviews provide information that relates to the nature of the phenomena of interest, including situations and contexts in which the phenomena emerge, as well as a thorough understanding of the theoretical and cultural frames individuals use to make sense of experiences and their social world. Specifically, it provided an opportunity for in-depth investigation of the perspectives of school professionals', a detailed understanding of the secondary school context within which wellbeing strategies are situated, and comprehensive coverage of the associated challenges. Further, semi-structured interviews are in accordance with a Thematic Analysis (TA) approach due to their flexibility (Niland, Lyons, & Goodwin, 2014; Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017).

Interview Questions. The interview included nine broad questions informed by the aims of this study and the ERO research reviewed above. The interview also offered participants the opportunity to comment on their own experiences and perceptions – providing new possibilities for understanding the complexity of school-based wellbeing strategies (Galletta, 2013). Specific follow-up questions were also incorporated to encourage further reflection, and identify relationships between wellbeing strategy goals, school policy, and the opportunities and challenges of implementation. The nine broad interview questions encompassed various topics – including, the composition of the wellbeing approach, why and how the approach was selected, the theoretical lens through which it is applied, accommodations for cultural diversity, professional learning and development opportunities, follow-up support, perceived effectiveness and associated challenges. The topics and

questions that were covered in each interview are presented in Table 5 and arranged in a typical order of discussion. The full interview schedule can be found in Appendix B.

Table 5

Semi-Structured Interview Topic Areas and Corresponding Questions

Topic Area	Example Questions
<p>The manifest strategies that comprise these approaches and their perceived relevance</p>	<p>How does your school "do" wellbeing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe the resources and activities that comprise wellbeing related programming or initiatives in your school? <p>Please tell me how the school came to a decision about implementing this programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What appealed to your school about this programme? • Were there any specific factors that this programme addressed that your school felt were particularly relevant for your school context? Please describe. <p><i>[Probe for dimensions of wellbeing, such as meaningful relationships across the school community, student involvement, and those educational policies and practices that encourage wellbeing promotion].</i></p> <p>What type of professional development opportunities are available for school staff to help ensure that the programme is effectively implemented?</p>

Systemic acknowledgement	<p>Is student wellbeing accounted for in school policy documentation and procedural protocols?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the alignment of wellbeing values and potential staff members considered in the employee recruitment process?
Theoretical basis	<p>Are these applications informed by one or more theories of wellbeing, such as the PERMA model, Positive Youth Development, Social Emotional Learning, Te Whare Tapa Wha?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, in what way? • If no, for what reason?
Cultural accommodation	<p>Does this approach take cultural diversity into account?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, could you provide an example of how cultural diversity has been accommodated? • If no, for what reason? – can you tell me more about that/what do you think that is/do you think it is a need?
Effectiveness	<p>How would you describe the approaches' effectiveness at supporting/addressing students' wellbeing needs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please explain how programme effectiveness is measured? [<i>Follow-up on what types of measures and who has access to that info</i>]. • What do you see as the gaps or limitations in this programme that may influence its effectiveness?

Challenges associated with developing and implementing wellbeing approaches	Has your school experienced any challenges in the implementation of this programming? If so, what kind of challenges?
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Follow-up support is available to students and staff experiencing challenges related to wellbeing	Tell me what particular follow-up opportunities or supports, if any, are available for students experiencing wellbeing related issues?
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Note. Bullet points provide examples of follow-up questions

Interview Procedure. The researcher conducted the interviews (ensuring consistency of interviewing practices) with key wellbeing staff members from those secondary schools that were implementing a wellbeing approach at the time of the interview. The interviews were conducted in a private space, either face-to-face or via Zoom video conferencing, as determined by the participant. Regarding face-to-face interview location, the parameters of this choice included a private room within a public building (e.g., school or library). Several interview locations were chosen, including vacant staff offices and library discussion rooms. Importantly, these parameters ensured confidentiality and a sense of safety for the participant.

The interview utilised a semi-structured, open-ended, iterative guide to gain first-person narratives of participant experiences. In each case, I began the interview with a brief introduction, allowing space for rapport-building. The purpose for which the provided information would be used followed, as well as an expression (verbal) of appreciation. The information provided here was also clearly outlined in the information sheet and consent form given before the interview (Appendix A). Participants were given time to ask questions

and raise concerns, ensuring participants' understanding of their rights – for example, the right not to answer questions asked by the researcher and withdraw at any time. The semi-structured interview followed the introductory phase and concluded with the researcher thanking the participant for their contribution. The duration of the interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes.

The order of the interview questions varied subject to participants' responses and was thus conducted with considerable flexibility. For each interview, I took note of which topic had been addressed and moved to the next topic based on the nature of the conversation instead of following a strict interview schedule. Through delimiting the issues to be discussed in the interview, this guide helped to ensure that, in essence, the same information was gathered from each participant systematically and comprehensively. Further, these steps ensured that the interview covered the desired topics and generated detailed descriptions of wellbeing related programmes, initiatives or strategies, while allowing for in-depth, fluid, participant-directed discussion.

For transcription purposes (as stipulated in the information sheet and consent form), face-to-face interviews were recorded using a digital audio-recording device. Zoom interviews were recorded using the Zoom record function, which were saved to a password-protected file on the researchers' personal computer. This allowed the researcher to produce detailed verbatim interview transcripts stored on a University of Canterbury approved server, safeguarding participant confidentiality.

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyse the interview data – a widespread pragmatic approach to qualitative data analysis (Patel, Tarrant, Bonas, Yates & Sandars, 2015). Specifically, I adopted the six-phase framework for TA developed by Braun and Clarke (2006), to facilitate a rigorous process of analysis. This framework allowed me to

identify and describe important or interesting patterns in the data (i.e., themes), with meaning and experience examined at semantic and latent levels, as described in greater detail below.

The term trustworthiness describes a research study's quality and rigour (Freeman, deMarrais, & Preissle, 2007; Shenton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) described a need for researchers to determine a study's "truth value" – its applicability, consistency, and neutrality. They further argued that the criteria for quantitative studies – objectivity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability – are inappropriate constructs for qualitative or naturalistic inquiry. Lincoln and Guba (1985) thus proposed four constructs – confirmability, credibility, transferability, dependability – that adequately reflect the assumptions of qualitative work. These four constructs correspond with criteria employed by positivist investigators; credibility pertains to the consideration of internal validity, transferability to the external validity or generalisability of a study, dependability to reliability, and confirmability to objectivity. The specific quality assurance strategies employed in this study (integrated below) encouraged in-depth engagement and reflection, and facilitated a systematic and thorough approach to data analysis; rather than focusing on code 'accuracy' alone (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data. This phase facilitated an initial engagement with the data and generated initial and provisional analytic ideas. I became immersed and intimately familiar with the interview data during transcription by reading through each interview transcript. To facilitate analytical engagement, I asked additional questions as I read through the finished transcripts – such as, why might the participant be making sense of things in this way (and not another way)? What assumptions underpin this account? What worldview does this account imply or rely on? What implications could this account have?

To ensure that I could refer back to quotes deemed particularly salient to each of the key research questions, I kept notes (e.g., in transcript margins; in a separate book). This process enabled me to better understand what each participant was experiencing, allowing for more accurate interpretations of the data in later stages of analysis (Howitt, 2013; Willig, 2013). Though time-consuming, this process prevented me from (1) selectively choosing data to suit an argument; and (2) ensuring that data relevant to each research question was acquired from the full transcript and not limited to just the portions of the manuscript where the research question was explicitly addressed (Terry et al., 2017).

Phase 2: Coding. This phase involved open coding of the entire dataset (i.e., the interview transcripts). This descriptive coding remains close to the data, as these codes summarise small segments using the participants' words and without abstraction (Charmaz, 1996; Gilgun, 2005). Therefore, open codes build analysis from the bottom up, ensuring the integrity of the data. I generated succinct labels (i.e., codes) that identified important features of the data deemed potentially relevant to answering each research question. This was an iterative process by which initial open codes were reviewed, refined and updated as my familiarity with the interview transcripts increased.

Moreover, as was alluded to above, meaning and experience were examined at both semantic and latent levels. In a semantic focus, the explicit content of the data is reflected in coding and theme development. For example, participants frequently reported having utilised multiple models of wellbeing, such as positive psychology, or five ways to wellbeing as a basis for the formation of the approach. I developed the theme 'kete aronui' (i.e., a basket of knowledge; Moorfield, n.d.) to reflect this diversity, particularly because most school professionals explicitly referred to this collection of theories as their "kete". In a latent focus, concepts and assumptions underpinning the data are reported in coding and theme development. For example, I developed the theme 'assumptions' to reflect the

assumptions underlying participants' claims and justifications, particularly concerning cultural accommodation (e.g., limited diversity in the student population). In addition, as much as possible, I tried to employ an inductive approach. So apart from being guided by the research questions and objectives (deductive), the coding process and the identified themes were strongly linked to the language used by the participant in their responses (inductive; Patton, 1990).

There were several steps involved within the open coding of data to develop a series of categories, sub-categories and main categories. First, data segments were read, and keywords were highlighted, either line by line, or several sentences at a time. These data segments were copied directly into a Microsoft Excel™ spreadsheet adjacent to the data segment from which it was established. However, some data segments were too difficult to code without losing data integrity. Therefore, if I felt that a code's meaning was not clear, I would write the context or add a clarifying note to codes using the 'Insert Comment' function in Microsoft Excel™. This ensured that codes represented the data, and increased the accuracy of later code interpretation.

Generally speaking, reliability represents a more significant concern with thematic analysis than with word-based analyses, as more interpretation is required in defining codes, as well as applying the codes to portions of the transcript. To maintain rigour, the first supervisor reviewed the consistency of the coding scheme, whereby codes were randomly selected and reviewed. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved by returning to the original full transcript. Further, specific sections of interview transcripts were reviewed where it was difficult to discern an explicit or implicit code.

Notably, I did not opt for a 'coding reliability' version of TA. This model is thoroughly based on a positivist conception of reliability, whereby success is determined based on different individuals achieving the same outcome (identical coding through

administration of the same measure, e.g., the codebook). More specifically, this approach to coding (i.e., application of a quantitative measure of inter-rater reliability) was untenable due to the inductive nature of the coding scheme and the processes iterative nature.

Phase 3: Generating initial themes. This phase involved examining the codes and collated data to identify significant broader patterns of meaning (potential themes). Theme pertains to a more implicit and abstract level, which requires interpretation (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2003; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007). The purpose of a theme is to elicit the essence of participants' experiences (Morse, 2008) and explore the possibility and degree of shared experiences across participants, even if they are described in slightly different ways. Once the open codes were developed, I was able to identify those that related to each other semantically. Codes were only included if at least three participants described it in detail, or if the component was dominant within one or more interviews (i.e., one or two participants talked about a particular element in depth). I remained active during this process (themes did not just emerge) by re-analysing codes and searching for patterns that formed initial themes.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes. This phase involved checking the candidate themes against the dataset, to determine whether they tell a convincing story of the data and answer the research question. In this phase, themes were typically refined, which sometimes involved them being split, combined, or discarded. Themes were defined as a pattern of shared meaning underpinned by a central concept or idea. For example, various forms of action, as described by the participants, comprised school-based wellbeing approaches. Accordingly, I developed the theme 'manifest strategies' and grouped these various forms of actions together, as they all reflect the diverse composition of school-based wellbeing approaches. This also provides a good example of how the analysis developed from semantic to latent. If the analysis of wellbeing strategies had remained at the semantic level, the various focuses (i.e., curriculum-based versus specific event) would have remained discrete themes. However, by

recognising that school professionals viewed the various focuses as part of their schools' global wellbeing approach, there was an opportunity to move to the latent level theme 'manifest strategies'.

Furthermore, rather than focusing on coding 'accuracy' through quantitative reliability estimates, quality-assurance strategies, such as a review of candidate themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), focused on encouraging reflection, rigour, a systematic and thorough approach, and even greater depth of engagement. A more reflective version of TA such as this, views the researcher's subjectivity as integral to the process of analysis. Thus, quality remained a key concern. At best, inter-rater reliability can only show that two coders have been trained to code the data in the same way, not that the coding is somehow 'accurate' (Braun & Clarke, 2013), although I do acknowledge that these assumptions are contested strongly in a qualitative paradigm.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes. This phase involved developing a detailed analysis of each theme, working out the scope and focus of each theme, and determining the possible narrative around each theme. This moved the analysis to a more conceptual level, with thought given to how these themes connected to the research questions. It also involved deciding on an informative name for each theme. Defining and naming each theme should provide the reader with a sense of what each theme is about. As an example, the researcher and her primary supervisor developed the theme 'manifest strategies' to reflect the various forms of actions schools were implementing as part of their wellbeing approach.

This phase also included a negative case analysis. This involved searching for and discussing elements of the data that did not support or appeared to contradict patterns or explanations that I had identified in the earlier phases of data analysis (described above). It also provided an opportunity to consider whether elements of the data fitted better under a different theme. In these cases, I returned to original interview transcripts to re-familiarise

myself with how the participants contextualised this information (i.e., where this information was deemed relevant).

Phase 6: Writing up. The final phase required me to weave together the analytic narrative and data extracts and contextualise the analysis in relation to existing literature. The analytical narrative refers to the descriptive and interpretative commentary presented to the reader in Chapter 6. It provides the context of quoted data, describes what is analytically important, and addresses each of the research questions.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter presents the analysed data and creates a narrative around the data. The main themes and subthemes are discussed below in relation to the respective research question. Quotations are integrated throughout this chapter to ensure that the results are firmly anchored to the reflections of each school professional and their experiences in their school in the development and implementation of their wellbeing approaches. In this chapter, I will employ the following terms. A school's *wellbeing strategy* is their entire approach to supporting student wellbeing through applying theory and practical strategies. *Manifest strategies* are the specific programmes, pedagogical frameworks, and events that have an explicit connection to student wellbeing.

RQ1. What is the theoretical basis or framework underlying the school-based wellbeing strategy?

Most school professionals were forthcoming about the theoretical basis or framework underlying the school-based wellbeing strategy. They consistently emphasised the importance of evidence-based practice in developing and implementing the schools' wellbeing strategy. However, despite having established a set of guiding theories, most school professionals maintained that the approach was a "work in progress". Most described how their school has continued to consider national and international research ongoing.

1. Kete Aronui. Multiple wellbeing theories and frameworks exist, often with conceptually overlapping constructs. This theme reflects the diversity of wellbeing theories and frameworks underlying school-based wellbeing approaches. The school professionals typically considered three main components in development and implementation: theory, evidence, and practice issues.

Most school professionals utilised various theories to develop and implement their approach; many referred to this as their "kete". Participants most commonly cited general

positive psychology theory and principles (n=8), the five ways to wellbeing (n=7; Aked, Marks, Cordon, & Thompson, 2010) used in the “Alright?” campaign to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Cantabrians after the Canterbury Earthquakes, the PERMA model (n=5; Seligman, 2011), character strengths frameworks (n=3), positive education frameworks (n=2), and the SEARCH Institutes positive youth development framework (n=1).

Approximately half of the participants reported having incorporated culturally specific models in some capacity, including Fonofale (n=7), Hauora (n=6), Te Whare Tapa Wha (n=6), Te Pae Mahutonga (n=2), and Te Waka (n=1). Interestingly, a few participants shared their school's desire to develop their own wellbeing model, although none had progressed this far. A few schools shared that they started this process but decided to “scrap it” because of time constraints and their commitment to evidence-based practice (see Reese’s quote below). A few schools that had intended to develop their own wellbeing model decided it was not necessary.

There are so many good models already there that we can adapt to our particular context. Recreating it just slows down the process. And I don't think we should be experimenting with others children when we would not want people to experiment on our own. Research is good (Reese).

Most participants explained that theory provided a more detailed understandings of factors that can influence student wellbeing. It also helped the school professionals and their school leadership team to identify strategies that could be used to effect change, while also providing a rationale for why. That said, in addition to wellbeing theory, schools used additional resources to supplement their approach, including government initiatives (Kahui Ako, Grow Waitaha), government frameworks or reports (ERO), and resources from private organisations such as the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience (NZIWR).

2. Systemic approach. Most participants described how their school had developed a strategic plan for moving forward with a systemic approach (which specified the next steps) to create shared understandings and engage key stakeholders in discussions about student wellbeing goals and strategies. School professionals identified two domains across the school system as important, including school culture and wellbeing roles and responsibilities

2.1 School Culture. All school professionals emphasised the need to establish a strong positive school culture to facilitate student wellbeing provisions. The concept of a strong positive school culture encompasses the quality of both individual relationships and the wider social context. It also reflects the ideological predilections of schools' approaches. As such, it considers the wide-ranging belief systems or ways of thought, that (equally) influence the development (e.g., strategies selected) and implementation (e.g., engagement, delivery, etc.) of school-based wellbeing approaches. For example, the ideologies of collaborative individualism and prevention often intersected with schools' wellbeing strategies (described below).

School professionals and schools reported using a range of strategies to foster a positive environment, including encouraging good communication and caring relationships among all members of the school community, using student-centred teaching approaches that cater for different learning needs and temperaments, acknowledging each students' interests and strengths, setting clear guidelines for behaviour, and providing constructive but caring guidance when needed. For example, school professionals consistently identified student-student and student-teacher relationships as an important contributor to students' wellbeing and also the effectiveness of any school-based strategies designed to foster wellbeing.

2.1.1. Collaborative Individualism. Although collaborative individualism might seem like an oxymoron, it represents two vital components discussed by school professionals in relation to robust and meaningful wellbeing approaches. All school professionals believed

that collaboration was necessary to ensure the approach sufficiently matched student needs and available resources. For example, most participants across schools highlighted the need to actively gather and use student and whānau voices. Alex commented on how student involvement throughout the development and implementation process was “really useful”. Morgan described one pathway through which their school had gathered student voice, stating: *We had student forums about all our existing ideas and all the new wellbeing things that are out there that we haven't been doing and what might work, what might not work.* With regard to whānau involvement, Jesse commented on how their school had attempted to involve whānau in implementation in real-time, stating:

We try and align what we're teaching the kids with the parents. So, for example, when we do specific programmes with our students, we send an email to their parents to try and get them to then reinforce some of those messages at home. So, the parents are a key part.

The *individualism* part of ‘collaborative individualism’ represents the belief that students must develop the capacity to engage in activities or strategies to promote or maintain their wellbeing. Most school professionals emphasised the need to promote student agency, where students take ownership of their wellbeing. They described how the manifest strategies implemented in the provision of school-based wellbeing approaches (detailed below) support students to develop the requisite understandings and abilities to *live a good life*. Further, a few school professionals explained that agency is encouraged because students will not necessarily have the same access to support services or resources when they leave school.

School professionals encouraged students (as well as staff and whānau) to engage with the approach of their own volition. For example, Alex explained how students are allocated free periods in which they are encouraged to engage with the wellbeing strategy, despite this

having limited success. Alex stated, *“Our students get a lot of free time. So, we ask them to give an hour to their wellbeing module. But it hasn’t gone that well”*.

Students typically did not gain credits towards national qualifications (i.e., NZQA) for participating in the manifest strategies. However, one school professional explained that credits are available through wellbeing related programming to those students who are not meeting requirements to get them on track. Additionally, a few school professionals described how their approach incorporated optional wellbeing-related activities (e.g., option classes, website, etc.), which were mainly intended for senior students. The issues associated with optional wellbeing-related activities are addressed further in section 6 below.

2.1.2. Prevention. Prevention reflects the value of a safe, nurturing, and supportive school culture in preventing an escalation of mental health challenges or illnesses. Most school professionals believed that effective implementation of their wellbeing strategy could prevent a considerable number of students from developing mental health challenges that required more specialised support services. For example, Blair said, *“I think we’ve got a chance to stop the moderate going to severe, but we’re not going to stop [those students] with severe challenges (Blair)”*. A few school professionals used the metaphor of the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff as an example of ineffective strategies that they were trying to avoid and instead focusing efforts on helping students to develop effective coping strategies. For example, Riley stated, *“We want to make sure that our counsellors and youth workers who support with mentoring aren’t the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. So, we’re trying to put this fence around the top (Riley)”*.

Further, Blair highlighted the potential positive long-term impacts of a preventative philosophy, with reference to reducing the stigma and prevalence rates of more serious mental health challenges. Similarly, Yael acknowledged the potential for generalisability

beyond the school environment in that students might learn to apply these coping skills to various (and inevitable) challenges throughout their lives.

If we can prevent and we can embed things into the system that are effective and useful and have, you know, positive outcomes, well then we're more likely to reduce (a) the stigma and (b) the long-term effect of being unwell, whether that be severe mental health, anxiety, stress, whatever (Blair).

I guess for us as a school, I don't know what the right word is here, but having things in place to prevent, that preventive approach is what we're aiming to do.

Remembering too that [students] are young people, and that growth for them is learning about it and having the processes to work through, so they understand, so they're actually gaining something from it too, that if they are to be in a different situation, they know how to go about it safely, for them and for others, and not sabotage things (Yael).

2.2 Wellbeing Roles and Responsibilities. School professionals consistently commented that school's had developed wellbeing roles and responsibilities to support the development and implementation of the wellbeing-oriented strategies, and most school professionals clearly outlined how their own role fits within this scope. They communicated that select school professionals guide and manage the development, implementation, evaluation, and improvement of the approach through the strategic deployment of resources provided. This was a consistent focus across each interview. According to the participants, a vital component of this role is to increase the knowledge base of teachers within the school about student wellbeing, with practical guidance and associated best practice. The following quotes from multiple school professionals provide insight into the ways schools have provided

professional learning and development (PLD) opportunities around wellbeing to facilitate strategy implementation, particularly to staff.

We've done five or six PLD sessions across the last two years of introducing five ways to wellbeing. Advancing what they know – here's what it is, here's how you can apply it in your life, here's how you can apply it in your classroom, here's how you can apply it in your departments. We ran a mental health first aid course [for staff] about the most likely things you'll see in a mental health crisis, here's their reasons for it, and here are five things you can do (Morgan).

We bring people into school to work with staff, whether it be restorative practices people or someone like Lucy Hone. We've had Michael Hempseed from the collaborative trust come in and do a bit around self-harm, anxiety and suicide (Riley).

All of our staff, our teaching and support staff, have had professional learning around the science of wellbeing. We've all done our character strengths and embedded those and played with them in our teams. We've also used Dr Sven Hansen to develop our whole organisational understanding of resilience. We also spent a whole year implementing PERMA-V with our staff, and through that process, we focused on each pillar and did lots of activities to bring to life each pillar. We've made PERMA-V relevant to teaching and learning, every single pillar. For example, with the meaning pillar, we constantly try to bring our teachers back to the purpose of their role. We are making those robust links with research so that the teachers actually understand why every day in their classes PERMA-V is relevant (Sage).

The structure and composition of student wellbeing roles and responsibilities varied. A few school professionals were considered the lone figurehead for student wellbeing. In

other words, these professionals assumed sole responsibility for approach administration (e.g., formation of policies, plans, and procedures; setting up of objectives and goals; implementing rules and regulations), and management (e.g., consulting the literature; determining best practice; providing guidance and support; monitoring effectiveness, etc.). However, most schools had established a team of school staff (teaching and support) with designated wellbeing roles and responsibilities. In this case, participants described how these teams worked together to support student wellbeing at varying levels (e.g., individual students, department areas, whole-school system), sharing the previously mentioned responsibilities related to the wellbeing approach. The following quotes illustrate how these teams are working together at an individual student and whole-school level, respectively.

On a weekly basis, key people like our head of counselling, myself, [staff member name] in charge of students, and [staff member name] in charge of learning support, we meet, and we have a list of students that we're concerned about that, it's not people we're concerned about individually, but people that, students that would be seeing a counsellor, probably have some learning issues, maybe behavioural and maybe not a lot of family support. We catch up weekly around what we've all done to support those students, and that ranges just from someone keeping in touch with mum too, you know, a counselling session. Then we would use outside agencies from that meeting where it's needed (Alex).

We started with a student wellbeing committee, which has formed into a student and staff wellbeing council. They constructed their own five targets, they put together pink shirt week, instead of pink shirt day, they launched the five ways to wellbeing throughout all the students, they also organised a day focused on being active and got things happening around the school (Morgan).

These variations in role structure and composition notably impacted the time available for school professionals to be involved. In a few cases, the wellbeing approach was the participants' sole responsibility—school professionals in this position dedicated most (if not all) of their work towards student wellbeing. These school professionals were from high decile schools or schools with a large student population. They noted that they could allocate more time to develop, implement and review their schools' approach. In contrast, the majority of school professionals expressed that they balance these responsibilities with their regular teaching role.

Participants also described that the roles for leading and implementing a school's wellbeing strategy included considerable accountability. More than half of the participants expressed that their leadership role in this domain required frequent conversations with the principal regarding wellbeing initiatives, particularly about progress and required resources (e.g., time, financial, materials, human, etc.). Accountability was not just related to the need to determine if a wellbeing strategy is effective but extends to how the overall wellbeing approach shapes other school policies and how it is administered and governed. Jesse reported meeting with the school's board of trustees to discuss the effectiveness of their school's approach and the desired outcomes. Notably, Jesse expressed that the board had reasonable expectations:

The board members were realistic about outcome expectations. They understood that we would not see kids go from a 5 out of 10 to a 10 out of 10, and they love school just because we have started to implement these strategies. Because school still sucks for a lot of kids.

Relatedly, most school professionals believed every teacher is responsible for student wellbeing. As such, they consistently viewed pedagogical practice as integral to the effective implementation of school-based wellbeing approaches. This helps to elucidate why school

professionals adopted those specific working methods mentioned below, particularly where teachers are assumed to integrate wellbeing strategies in classes.

Informed by the chosen theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence about effective strategies, school professionals identified techniques to overcome the barriers and enhance the enablers. However, several barriers to development and implementation remained and are addressed in RQ6. Further, although the specific strategies implemented (outlined below) varied, the overarching ideologies of partnership, self-empowerment, and prevention remained consistent across the schools.

RQ2. What are the strategies that comprise a school-based wellbeing strategy?

Initially, most school professionals appeared overwhelmed by this question. Many questioned where to begin, reflecting the diverse multi-component nature of the school's strategy. School professionals first established the strategy's content (see manifest strategies below). They then identified possible delivery modes (i.e., how each of those techniques would be implemented). The final selection of behaviour change techniques and mode of delivery was primarily based on what school professionals considered locally relevant, likely to be feasible and could be implemented as a "cohesive" intervention. Research evidence often informed approach targets and which strategies or modes of delivery were likely most effective. Practical issues helped determine which strategies were acceptable to key stakeholders (e.g., staff, students, whānau, and the wider community) in the relevant setting and could be feasibly implemented with the available resources. It is important to note that this is a recursive process. No school professionals believed their school's wellbeing strategy to be complete.

3. Manifest Strategies. This theme refers to the forms of actions schools used, in various capacities, to establish and enhance efforts to support and prioritise student wellbeing. The strategies, broadly speaking, similarly aimed to assist students in developing the skills and

competencies to manage their wellbeing. These strategies took the form of classroom-based activities and discussions, student and staff surveys, and school-wide events. Five subthemes were identified in the interviews, and each is described in more detail below.

3.1. Specific programme or framework. Schools often implemented a specific wellbeing programme or framework, but these varied considerably in form, content, and target audience. The majority of schools implemented a combination of internally and externally developed wellbeing programmes or frameworks, which varied slightly in frequency and duration. However, most school professionals were hesitant to label internally developed strategies as a specific programme or framework. Moreover, both types of programmes primarily targeted students in years 9 and 10, with less than half of the participants indicating programmes that specifically target senior students.

For example, Table 6 below lists the external programmes that some schools had adopted as well as the internal strategies. As can be seen, several schools were implementing one or more externally developed and delivered programmes (e.g., Rite Journey or Travellers) designed to support year nine students who, as a cohort, tend to experience significant change and challenges as they transition to high school or experience personal difficulties (e.g., parental separation, bullying, etc.). One school representative indicated that this strategy provided perspective for students and a sense of connection to others as they realised that others are facing similar circumstances, stating, “*It’s really developing skills for them to cope and to understand that other people have also been through some fairly major things*” (Ash). Further, over half of participants indicated their school’s involvement with external organisations, such as Grow Waitaha and Kahui Ako, helped them establish a community of learning and support around school-based wellbeing provisions.

Table 6

Externally Adopted Wellbeing Programmes and Internal (to the school) Wellbeing Strategies Across Participants.

External Programmes	Participant	Internal Strategies	Participant
Right Journey	Reese, Sage, Ash	Peer support	All
Travellers Programme	Ash	Life skills	Morgan, Riley, Ash, Alex
Kahui Ako	Riley, Shannon, Shay, Yael	Event	Morgan, Riley, Shay
Grow Waitaha	Morgan, Reese, Shannon, Shay, Ash, Frankie, Alex	Recruitment Process	Riley, Sage, Shannon, Shay
VIA Character Strengths	Jesse, Riley, Sage, Ash	Professional Learning and Development	All
		Website	Morgan, Shay, Ash

All participants reported that their schools had employed internal strategies that endeavour to teach students the steps required to persist throughout the learning process: self-evaluation, self-monitoring, and goal setting, along with strategic planning and implementation. Further, a few school professionals described how their school's commitment to student wellbeing is clearly communicated in the recruitment process for new staff (see below quote). Those strategies in Table 5.1 not mentioned above are outlined in subsequent paragraphs.

We make sure that as staff are coming on board, we say this is what it's about. Right from the get-go things like collaborative practice and wellbeing are just at the

forefront, and including questions to that effect in the interview so that people know that if they're coming on board, they're coming along with us (Riley).

3.2. Surveys and Assessments. A majority of the school professionals reported that their school used surveys and assessments to develop an increasingly student-centred learning environment. Of particular note, these surveys and assessments varied in terms of their focus on current and developmental factors which impact wellbeing, positively or negatively. Consistent with a focus on applied positive psychology principles (as described above), a few schools employed strengths-based assessments. The *Values in Action (VIA) Classification of Strengths* (Peterson, 2006) was adopted by three of the schools to assist students (and teachers) in recognising and utilising individual and collective strengths (e.g., knowledge, proficiencies, skills, and talents). Participants whose schools employed the VIA assessment pointed to two objectives: (1) to help students develop their self-concept and identity; and (2) to help teachers and other school professionals (e.g., counsellors, deans, etc.) establish a context for understanding individual students and supporting their identity development. In particular, one participant commented on how awareness of character strengths provided a medium for student self-understanding:

Through the character strengths, we're giving them a language to understand their behaviour, but we're also giving them a language to understand who they are (Riley).

A majority of school professionals reported that a focus on strengths allows students to identify and value internal character traits and external resources that others cannot easily see while also encouraging understanding and celebration of individual differences. Participants also believed that strengths assessments were intended to help teachers focus on student strengths, challenging a historically dominant deficit lens. This was particularly evident in

how Riley described efforts to integrate an understanding of students' strengths in restorative practices:

You might be going through a restorative process with students, and we will say, "What character strength did you overuse at that time?". And it could be something like, oh, you know, bravery is really high or fairness and so, sometimes a student will get into a conflict with another student because they see, you know, whatever is happening over there, "that is really wrong, and I want to fix that". And so, we can talk to kids and say, look, you have overused your character strength of fairness. You need to dial that down. What can you do? And then they will look at the character strengths across the board and say, look, I maybe need to show bravery at this time to, to sort of fix this and apologise, and also forgiveness because I really understand that so and so did not do that for whatever reason.

Despite the notable emphasis on students' strengths, most schools considered preventive efforts to be equally important in fostering wellbeing. Approximately one-third of schools reported using surveys to assess risk factors among particularly vulnerable students (e.g., those who had experienced mental health challenges, parent separation or divorce, violence, abuse, or neglect, etc.). To identify students who would benefit from more targeted support, one school used a short, confidential, online Student Wellness Survey completed by all year nine students (see Ash's quote below). Survey questions asked about significant life events and trauma that may have occurred over a students' lifespan.

All year nines complete a questionnaire about events and major traumas that might have happened in their lives. If you [student] score so many points, say five out of seven, or five of these events or traumas have happened like grandparents dying, the number of schools

they've been to, family breakdowns, any major trauma that may have happened. From that, we identify [students] who perhaps need a bit more support. So, we identify very early on those who need lots of support – high anxiety, you know, school avoidance, things where they're low mood and so on. But this next group is sort of that next tier – they seem to be coping in their lives but, there could be at some point some things surfacing. I think it's about eight times. We take them out of class and go into interval or class and lunch. They're together for about an hour and a half each session. There's a lot around confidentiality and respecting the privacy of the group. The counsellor has to be involved in that and several other trained staff (Ash).

3.3. Opportunities to establish a sense of community. School professionals consistently described their desire to develop a sense of community within the school as part of their manifest strategies. McMillan and Chavis (1986) defined a sense of community as, “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members needs will be met through their commitment to being together” (p. 9).

Every school offered some form of regularly programmed peer support to establish a sense of community. Specifically, the school professionals interviewed posited that peer support plays a vital role in establishing a sense of community because it provides students with relevant knowledge, understood as values, beliefs, behaviours, and ways of meaning-making, for example:

One is very much a check and connect, and it's to build, sort of that collegiality, safety. If teachers need to follow up on, or if they've heard that maybe something's going on, they'll check and connect with that student. They'll push house activities, that sort of idea. We have another longer session which is a full period where I'm not going to say teaching, but it's an opportunity for conversations to take place. So, I guess there's a bit

of that coaching/mentoring. And that might be based on something that is happening inside or outside of the school because it is a good and safe place to address issues or concerns (Yael).

The different forms of peer support incorporated across schools included horizontal (single year groups) or vertical (mixed year groups) form classes, peer mentors, tuakana-teina relationships (i.e., a relationship between an older and a younger person that is specific to teaching and learning), use of the house system, and community-based mentoring with adult mentors. There were notable similarities between these different forms of peer support. Most of these strategies similarly attempt to assist students during their transition from primary or intermediate school to secondary school, provide (select) senior students with leadership opportunities, and promote a positive and inclusive school climate. Most school professionals felt that these peer support initiatives provided students with a school-based whānau group, where members shared the responsibility to care for and support each other. For example, Ash explained how the vertical form classes have broken down barriers between the different year levels, stating:

We have these vertical groups. It is sort of like a family within the house family within the school family. That really changed our whole campus from the year 13's being very groupie and obvious. Whereas younger girls went through the school, and older students who had left would still message them a happy birthday. So, it is a very cool relationship that has broken down barriers between the year groups across the school.

When discussing form classes, almost all participants described how teachers were assigned to and responsible for one group, typically comprising 14-18 students. These teachers were expected to monitor each student's wellbeing in their group, as they included limited numbers of students. School professionals commented that this expectation arose because these teachers had more opportunities to build relationships with students and a

greater capacity to provide pastoral care than would be possible in subject classes. This will be addressed in more detail in response to RQ3 – How do schools provide follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties? Students often remained in the same group for the entire duration of their enrolment. The below quotes illustrate the perceived benefits of these stable groups, particularly in terms of relationship continuity. That said, a few school professionals noted that these groupings changed for senior students.

We have this head of school system, and I was lucky enough to be that for five years, where you take a group [of students] on at year nine and then they're your babies for five years (Morgan).

It's supposed to be that idea where there's a group of students that stay together as a class throughout their time at [school], and they stay with that same teacher too. That teacher follows them through the different year levels so, that's their key relationship person within the school. (Yael)

In addition, a small number of school professionals (n = 3) commented that school-wide events and activities were also used to establish a sense of community. These events and activities included Pink Shirt day, Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW), and a specific student wellbeing week. For most schools, these were regular annual or biannual events; for example, Morgan described how students helped coordinate a biannual school-wide event:

[The students] put together pink shirt week, instead of pink shirt day, where we launched the five ways to wellbeing throughout all the students, and we did that twice this year. We did it again in mental health awareness week, where we had a day focused on being active, and we got things happening around the school.

A range of activities consistent with the objective of establishing school culture and community also occurred regularly in peer support, albeit on a smaller scale. A few of the

school professionals described how, at times, these activities could be flexible and tailored to the needs of the students. For example, one participant stated:

Sometimes [form classes] have birthday parties, sometimes they go out for breakfast, sometimes they go and sit under the tree and share morning tea, [or] sometimes the seniors just need to stop and talk and find out what's happening with each other (Ash).

Participants believed that school-wide events and peer support initiatives provided students with opportunities to build positive relationships and opportunities for connection to wider support networks. One school professional described the potential long-term impact of such positive relationships, connections, and support networks, stating, *“If they can use their mates, that's what you want, because when they leave school, we're not going with them, their mates are” (Jesse).*

Notably, this reflects the future-oriented nature of wellbeing approaches across many of the schools. The majority of school professionals recognised that the secondary school context had natural limitations concerning wellbeing strategies, one being that students are enrolled for a limited period. These attempts to establish a sense of community were cited as a critical component for supporting wellbeing in the immediate school context and was also described as a way for schools to help students develop the skills and relationships to have a support network when things get difficult outside of the school context and after their enrolment has ended, when they may have less obvious or accessible support options.

3.4. Engaging parents and communities with schools. The notion of engaging parents and communities with school professionals to ensure student success is embedded in Aotearoa's key education policy (e.g., the NZC, Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017, and Ka Hikitia; Ministry of Education, 2008, 2013). Accordingly, this theme reflects an increasing acknowledgement on behalf of schools of how the interactions (or lack thereof) between whānau, school, and broader community contribute to wellbeing outcomes, consistent with an

ecological understanding of child and adolescent development. It also speaks to the efforts schools have made to engage key stakeholders in the school community (i.e., school professionals, students, and whānau) in wellbeing provisions through attempts to equip these groups with the required knowledge and skills (e.g., through parent education and professional development).

Parental engagement, considered broadly, comprises partnerships between families and schools, raising parental awareness of the benefits of engaging in their children's education, and providing them with the skills and opportunities to do so (Emerson, Fear, Fox & Sanders, 2012). Parental engagement recognises that parents and teachers play an essential role in children's learning, development and wellbeing. In this regard, most school professionals emphasised parental engagement concerning wellbeing, with Sage commenting on the importance of ensuring a shared language, "That's *probably the next key part of our journey, is making sure that the parents have the language*". This emphasis was particularly evident in how participants described their school's efforts to include and engage parents in their approach. Schools varied considerably in the commitment, energy, and skills applied to these partnerships (outlined below). Efforts to facilitate parental engagement were associated with communication, participation in strategy implementation, and capacity building. Notably, participants felt that moving towards a family-school partnership approach typically required a significant change in school and family attitudes and school culture.

3.4.1. Communication. Participants described their attempts to facilitate parent engagement by building and sustaining partnerships that connect learning in home and school contexts through parent-teacher communication. A few school professionals identified from teachers as the first port of call for parents (and students), whether they wish to pass on information about their child, have questions or concerns, or would like to arrange a meeting.

These participants particularly emphasised relationship continuity as a key aspect of this communication, as the form teacher had a better chance to establish an ongoing relationship with students as their involvement was not bound to a specific subject (e.g., Science, English, etc.) and had greater continuity across one or more years. Participants believed relationship continuity supported parent-teacher relationship building. For example, Frankie shared that at their school:

A small number of students are grouped together when they start school, and a teacher is allocated to each group. These students and the staff member stay together for up to five years, and the parents would also get to know that tutor really well and have a good relationship.

3.4.2. Shared participation. One school professional described how parents participated in implementing their school's wellbeing programme concerning a sex and relationships component in the health curriculum. This particular example exemplifies the perceived utility of parental engagement in ensuring positive connections across different learning contexts, relative to school-based wellbeing approaches:

We invite the year 11 parents to learn about sex education with their kids, especially around porn. It is classic, because most parents don't want to have these conversations with their kids, and most kids don't want to have these conversations with their parents. So, our teachers try to bring them together. It's horrific and terrifying, but it's been quite good (Alex).

Partnering with community-based organisations can also facilitate increased communication and collaboration between support services beyond the school. Almost half of the participants reported incorporating community-based organisations or support services

into their wellbeing strategies, such as 24/7 Youth Work. These school professionals believed an alliance with a broader array of professionals could provide students' academic support and mentors that may not be available in the home, particularly those considered high-risk for difficulties with academic performance and wellbeing. The below quotes illustrate the various community-based organisations schools have partnered with concerning student wellbeing.

In terms of wellbeing, the counselling department works with a lot of external organisations. Everything from Southern Regional Health School to the psych units at Canterbury University. They work with us around testing, resourcing and other bits and pieces. We have a very strong counselling department, and the head of the department [is linked in with the] Canterbury University, so we've got lots of good links there (Shannon).

Rite Journey has been in place for a long time. That's a collaboration between 24/7 Youth Work and us (Reese).

There are external organisations who want to work with our students, specifically Pacifica mentor programmes and other places like Te Waka and other organisations with who we liaise (Blair).

Wraparound services exemplify an inter-agency approach focused on targeting a hierarchy of needs. A wraparound approach differs from many other service delivery strategies (Burchard, Bruns, & Burchard, 2002) in that it attempts to provide a comprehensive, person, and family centred way of responding when children or young people experience significant challenges (wellbeing or others). A few school professionals offered examples of how support services are being integrated into the school environment, particularly concerning support for high-risk students, somewhat emulating a wraparound approach. In most cases, participants described using a range of support services to meet particular needs. For example, Shay commented, "We've got to the point where it's different

strategies for different needs.” Wraparound services will be addressed in more detail in response to RQ3 – “How do schools provide follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties?”.

3.5. Capacity building. Most school professionals described using a capacity-building strategy to strengthen and build the knowledge, skills, and confidence of school staff and whānau, with a view to develop and implement a formalised parent education programme. Approximately half of the participants expressed how parent education efforts encouraged parents to be involved in their child’s education and contribute to positive development more generally. For example, two school professionals described how just a few of their parent education evenings had encouraged parents to use a strengths-based approach to discipline by providing instruction and relevant examples. More generally, another participant recalled a parent education evening intended to support parents in their parenting role. In each case, learning was mainly conducted in group settings to build learning communities (networks) and encourage social support. Riley commented on how they had encouraged parents to use character strengths when managing children’s behaviour:

We got them to look at their character strengths, and how they could use character strengths and change, [or] flip the conversation around to the positive side rather than, ‘don’t do this’. It’s, you know, “you’re very zesty with your brother at the moment.” You know, when someone’s punching the crap out of their younger brother, “could you maybe dial down your zest and bring up your kindness”, or something like that (Riley, school four).

Parent education evenings seemingly provided an effective medium for information sharing and support. According to one school professional, parents attend these evenings with a willingness to learn, evidenced by the questions asked and notes taken. Notably, however, parent education was not confined to parent evenings. A

small number of schools employ online parent learning modules via their school website. In reference to a particular external wellbeing programme, one school professional stated, “*It’s on our website, and it’s got a whole raft of things that parents can access around anxiety and homework, and at the moment COVID-19*” (Ash).

A majority of participants cited professional learning and development (PLD) sessions as an opportunity to strengthen the engagement of school professionals, particularly teachers, in implementing the wellbeing strategies mentioned above. In most cases, a small number of the prescribed PLD sessions were dedicated to wellbeing (student and teacher focused). Most school professionals frequently mentioned the following session topics: wellbeing-related models, neuroscience, resilience, trauma-informed practice, restorative practice, and self-care strategies. Relevant conferences (e.g., the Wellbeing in Education New Zealand (WENZ) conference), communities of learning (e.g., Kahui Ako, Grow Waitaha), and targeted training programs provided additional PLD opportunities for select school professionals (i.e., wellbeing leads, interested staff members). Moreover, the challenges associated with capacity building will be described in a later section, as they extend beyond aspects of wellbeing initiative implementations.

3.6. Delivery medium. This theme refers to the diverse forms of delivery schools used to deliver the above manifest strategies. Though school professionals reported an assortment of delivery mediums, they were divisible into two broad categories: *explicit wellbeing pedagogy* (i.e., explicit, intentional teaching) and *implicit wellbeing pedagogy* (i.e., implicit, opportunistic, or unstructured teaching). In each category, however, the intent to develop the knowledge and skills required for students to sustain or enhance wellbeing remained consistent.

3.6.1. Explicit Wellbeing Pedagogy. This category encompasses wellbeing provisions within an organised and structured context, specifically designed for learning. Seven school professionals reported utilising individual strands in the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) to teach about wellbeing. For example, one school professional described instances where several curriculum leaders focused on wellbeing as a learning context within the general curriculum. These strategies were embedded in specific curriculum subjects, including core and elective subjects. For example, Reese stated:

Many of our curriculum leaders are using wellbeing as a context. For example, in science, looking at the teenage brain and positive affect or something like that, or [in] English, looking at character strengths and delving into some human virtues.

Further, less than half of the participants described explicitly teaching about wellbeing topics as part of a strategy to shape students' learning mindsets, self-regulation, and understanding of character. A couple of school professionals described how their school offered a combination of compulsory and optional well-being-oriented classes, where students were explicitly taught about wellbeing. For example, Jesse and Riley respectively stated:

Wellbeing is taught in the classroom by teachers in terms of language, character strengths, growth mindset, mindfulness (Jesse).

We also have selected classes that are like option classes. Within those, we look at the impact of social actions and how we might use a wellbeing model like PERMA-V or the five ways to wellbeing to support others. So, there's like a whole class devoted to that (Riley).

These school professionals also explained how some of these classes utilise a range of activities to support students in developing wellbeing management strategies. In some cases, participants described how students were given the freedom to choose

which activities to engage with. Specifically, these activities spanned physical (e.g., sports activities, walking, dancing, etc.), cognitive (e.g., playing chess, crosswords or reading), social (e.g., spending time with friends), creative (e.g., painting or colouring) and spiritual (e.g., meditation) wellbeing domains. For example, Alex explained, “[The students] *might play board games, do puzzles, colour-in, do a meditation, although that has mixed results. They might go and sit somewhere, or write a reflective journal*”.

Relatedly, several schools described implementing distinct strategies within the Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum. For example, “[A senior] *health class developed a website that has lots of things like, smiling mind [app-based meditation] and access to other free applications* (Ash). Additionally, Frankie explained how students involved in the HPE curriculum set up and run a breakfast club, stating:

We have a breakfast club, and the [students who participate in health and physical education] do a cook-up [one a week] that students can come and join. I think that really does enhance wellbeing in this particular school because a lot of kids don't have enough food.

In contrast, a small number of schools seemingly viewed the HPE curriculum as a wellbeing initiative in and of itself. Specifically, five schools cited the HPE curriculum as a medium for delivering one aspect of their wellbeing strategy as it has a strong emphasis on Hauora.

One school professional described specific strategies used by staff members, at their discretion, to stimulate student learning and engagement in wellbeing provisions in such organised and structured contexts. For example, Reese described how one teacher played a particular genre of music before each class to make the classroom a “pleasant” environment for students. Another teacher at this same school encourages students to take a moment for mindfulness during class. Notably, much of this change required

self-awareness and reflection on the part of the teachers. Moreover, the challenges associated with adopting this new way of thinking will be described in a later section, as they extend beyond and apply to other aspects of wellbeing implementations.

On account of the varying levels of adaptation of formal instructional strategies evidenced above, there is some reliance on specific aspects of the prescribed curriculum content as a wellbeing initiative in and of itself. However, the majority of school professionals described adjustments made during the development and implementation process to ensure an informed curriculum and effective pedagogy, consistent with the actions and ideologies that comprise the initiative (addressed in subsection 2.1 above).

3.6.2. Implicit Wellbeing Pedagogy. This category encompasses wellbeing provisions that work through conversation and the enlargement of experience. Further, most professionals described how an explicit emphasis on wellbeing concepts (outlined above) helps shape the context in which learning takes place and can play a significant role in developing students' self-concept and identity.

About half of the school professionals described how teachers check in with students throughout the day – frequently cited as “check and connect”. As an example, one participant commented on how core classes have integrated “check and connect”, whereby teachers check in with students, asking questions such as, “How are you?” and “What’s on top?”. However, “check and connect” extended beyond informal conversations. For example, one school professional described that teachers are encouraged to consider differences in students' mental, emotional, and physical states in determining wellbeing. School professionals felt that these check-ins provide teachers insight into students' wellbeing and indicate which students to follow up with. This was addressed in subsection 3.3 above, where Yael said teachers might use “check and connect” to follow-up with certain students experiencing difficulties. Another participant stated that teachers might share information

concerning vulnerable students with designated professionals to maintain student wellbeing (e.g., form teacher, school counsellor, learning support coordinator, etc.).

Several school professionals also cited conversations and role modelling as strategies that allow students to develop relevant knowledge, skills, and values. When describing how conversations and role modelling are vital in creating a wellbeing culture, one participant recalled how the principal had told students at an assembly how they had demonstrated particular character strengths while on holiday. Another school professional spoke to the importance of positive male role models in developing the ability to recognise emotions and their impact (i.e., EQ) and destigmatising mental ill-health. Another participant spoke of how the school amended its end-of-year reward system to ensure various aspects of character are celebrated. The rewards are intended to reflect the multi-domain nature of strengths; that is, they extend beyond academic and extra-curricular achievements.

Although vastly different in their composition, similarities existed across schools regarding specific strategies, guiding ideologies and systemic approaches (addressed in RQ1). The majority of schools implemented external programmes and internal strategies, which emphasised assessment, a culture of connectedness, and professional and parent development.

RQ3. How do schools provide follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties?

Most school professionals acknowledged follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties as an integral component of school-based wellbeing provisions.

However, they tended to select the layering support strategies; few provide specific details regarding follow-up support protocols and what they look like in practice. As such, the resulting information offers a broad description of the school's follow-up support protocols for student wellbeing.

4. Multi-tiered system. Most schools applied a school-wide, multi-tiered framework to assist preventative strategies and follow-up support provisions. These follow-up support provisions were consistent with extant tiered support frameworks, in that school professionals clearly articulated three levels of support (i.e., universal, targeted, and intensive).

4.1. Tier one. At the first tier of support – universal support – wellbeing provisions are provided to or are routinely available to all students and whānau. As was alluded to earlier, school professionals consistently placed emphasis on the need for student-centred pedagogical practice that looks to improve and prioritise student wellbeing. According to participants, the strategies and practices provided at this level are largely intended to help schools create respectful relationships, develop students’ personal and social capabilities (i.e., self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness), use a strengths-based approach to resolve conflict (character strengths), and engage whānau.

Moreover, a few participants described their school’s efforts to provide additional universal support to students during particularly challenging times. As an example, Riley explained how their school attempted to support students during the COVID-19 lockdown period:

We’re making sure that, with our learners, while we’re offsite at the moment that um, someone has checked in with every student. We’ve got [x number of] kids at the moment, and we want to know, you know, if you normally, do you normally hear from this kid heaps and the there’s some that are sort of um, wanting a lot of attention, some that are like, “yea I’m good, leave me to it” and, and the teacher’s know where those kids are at (Riley).

Related to this, most participants acknowledged the need to develop the capacity of school professionals to identify challenges related to wellbeing early, including mental health

and self-injurious behaviour (self-harm). This was assisted through the use of professional learning and development.

4.2. Tier two. The second tier – targeted support – comprises more deliberate and direct approaches to support students, whānau and school professionals. Some of these targeted interventions included the Rite Journey (Lines & Gallasch, 2009) and the Travellers Programme (Robertson & Boyd, 2012). Most often, this support took place in small groups, class groups, or year groups. School professionals consistently used questionnaires to identify cohorts of students who may have specific wellbeing needs or vulnerabilities. In addition, approximately half of the participants recognised the link between academic achievement and student wellbeing. For example, Morgan commented, *“The more learning support we can get, we can help students who are not traditionally successfully do well.”*

Yael explained how their school’s survey automatically identified students who were at risk, stating, *“Obviously I don’t want to know every single students’ results. Instead, the questionnaire sent me an alert when somebody registered under a certain threshold on say, a happiness scale, or indicated low overall wellbeing, low mood, or bullying [victimisation].”* In a similar vein, Alex recalled how one such survey identified a group of students experiencing sleep problems, *“I contacted the parents to let them know that this had come to our attention. I also sent them some links to information and support”* (Alex). As such, the school provided more targeted support to this group of students and their whānau to reduce the frequency and impact of these issues.

4.3. Tier three. The third tier of support – intensive support – encourages the provision of more tailored support provisions, which meet the specific and contextual needs of students. These support provisions are designed for students who are identified as requiring intensive tailored support to engage positively in education. Individualised support most often included school-based intervention programmes supported by specialist teachers

or mental health professionals (e.g., psychologists, counsellors, social workers, and youth workers). Furthermore, most school professionals referred to a pastoral care team, which typically comprised the school counsellor, deans, and other relevant members of the senior leadership team (e.g., careers advisor, boarding manager, learning support coordinator, and school nurse). For example, Blair talked about the variety of one-on-one counselling approaches that were available to students at their school provided by student support staff, including *supportive counselling, solution-focused counselling, and strengths-based counselling*. Alex described how their school provides outreach counselling for disengaged or truant students and their whānau:

We have a counsellor that goes out into homes and works with those students that are truant. [They] support those, where the wellbeing is kind of at the point where they can't even get into school. Um, because that is what we were struggling with. We were like, we've got all the support at school, but we can't get them to come here.

Ash provided a specific example of how their school responded to a recent crisis situation:

We had one [student] with an attempt on her life..., so I've rung the mum, the dean has also been in touch. We also spoke to some of her friends that we know might have been affected by this.

In addition to these school-based intervention strategies, each school professional noted the involvement of diverse external organisations (i.e., external specialist mental health services, community groups). However, school professionals did not describe these in detail as they did not perceive their involvement with students to be part of their schools' approach beyond the referral process.

Most schools had implemented strategies across all three tiers, albeit to varying degrees.

School professionals consistently emphasised a desire to further develop tier one (universal support) strategies. This aligned with the ideology of prevention addressed in subsection 2.1.2. above. Additionally, just over half of the school professionals expressed concern about their schools capacity to provide adequate support at tier three (intensive support).

Specifically, they indicated that school staff are not adequately trained or supported to support students with mental health challenges that require more specialised support services.

For example, Jesse stated, “We’re *not going to stop the severe. We’re not equipped for that*”.

The issue of guidance was addressed under the theme Kete Aronui above, though in relation to development and implementation more broadly.

RQ4. How do schools ensure a culturally sensitive approach to the implementation of wellbeing related actions or initiatives?

Most participants found this question difficult to answer. Specifically, they struggled to identify how their school’s wellbeing strategy specifically accommodated culture. A few immediately indicated that their approach did not accommodate culture. These participants often expressed assumptions around the relevance or urgency of cultural accommodations. For instance, a few talked about how their student population was not very diverse, and thus while important, felt it was a lower priority (see Jesse’s quote below). Further, Sage explained that their decision was based on student survey data.

It’s a very white school. There are no two ways about it. The percentage of Maori students we’ve got here would be 5%, at a guess. So, just because it’s important and a school goal doesn’t mean we are doing it (Jesse).

The [student survey] data says that our Pasifika and Māori students are more engaged, happy, and proud to be at [this school] than our European students. So, because of that, it wouldn’t be my priority. It’s just a different context (Sage).

5. Diverse definitions of culture. School professionals perceived “culture” differently - there was diversity in participants definitions of culture. Some identified it as biculturalism, while others emphasised multiple cultures (e.g., Filipino and Pasifika). Those few participants that referred to biculturalism viewed te reo Māori (the Māori language) and tikanga Māori (Māori cultural practices) as valuable and relevant in the education context more broadly (see quotes below). However, the role of te reo and tikanga in the wellbeing strategy specifically was unclear, as is illustrated in this quote from Morgan below.

We do a cultural rituals unit in drama about how you perform and construct a ritual. Instead of [the teacher] providing examples, [the students] all brought cultures and traditions from their own homes, which required them to speak with their families and learn about their past and bring it together, so we constructed something that is a combination of their cultures (Morgan).

We do Te Reo in Year 9, we've got an amazing Kapa Haka group, and the Māori language is very much integrated into a lot of things (Sage).

As alluded to above, a few participants emphasised the need for cultural diversity and other forms of whānau diversity to be accommodated. For example, Frankie recognised that different cultures might be associated with different values and beliefs about, for instance, raising children and education, stating, “*Most staff are cognizant of cultural difference to a reasonable degree. They seem to have an awareness of the different structures, or what the impacts are in say a Pasifika family with church, community, or work, or supporting siblings or extended family*”.

Despite limited evidence of cultural accommodation within their wellbeing strategy specifically, most school professionals expressed understanding of the importance of cultural considerations. For instance, Morgan explained how wellbeing could be conceptualised differently across cultures, stating, “*Wellbeing can look different for different cultures and*

ethnicities, and it has a different meaning for people". Cultural accommodation was consistently identified as an area requiring improvement. A few school professionals described how their school is attempting to build cultural competency, particularly in staff PLD. While there is room for growth, most school professionals recognised the importance of cultural accommodation and expressed their desire to acquire cultural knowledge across multiple cultures, but as is evident in the quotes above, this was far from being realised in any of the schools.

Although the majority acknowledged the importance of culturally responsive school-based wellbeing approaches, it has evidently been overlooked. A few school professionals identified this as a limitation of their school's wellbeing strategy. However, the majority remained uncertain of the relevance to their school, referencing limited diversity in the student population.

RQ5. How do schools demonstrate evidence of effectiveness?

Most school professionals believed that their school's approach had positively impacted student wellbeing and acknowledged the importance of measuring effectiveness. However, most found this question difficult to answer, as they did not believe they had sufficient evidence (i.e., evidence gathered from legitimate forms of measurement). Moreover, contemporary measurement is considered somewhat pre-emptive or not fully reflective of true effectiveness (as defined by most school professionals); recall the future-oriented nature of wellbeing approaches across many of the schools (addressed in subsection 3.3 above)

Across schools, the ideal indicator of effectiveness is students flourishing in the future, living a good life, and contributing to society. Notably, participants emphasised the

importance of future-focused outcome measures in determining effectiveness. For example, Jesses commented:

In my head, effective is 25 to 30-year-olds who are good people. If we can sew enough seeds, by the time they leave this school, they've got some idea about some of this stuff. I think that's when it becomes effective. It's almost like we're planting seeds. We won't see the trees until relatively later on because they don't get this stuff until relatively later on.

In addition, a few participants spoke to the importance of students having the capacity to manage their own wellbeing. As an example, Shay outlined the importance of self-empowerment, in that should start to take responsibility for their wellbeing and implement preventive strategies accordingly:

I think just the agency where people take control of their health and wellbeing, where it's not outsourced to others. Your first port of call is you have the self-care strategies to look after yourself. That psyche, I guess, to me, would be a success. We feel agentic in our lives. At the moment, I think we're a little bit like; it's someone else who has to pick up our pieces and things like that.

Forms of evidence. School professionals justified their perceptions of a positive impact with reference to survey data, feedback (from students, staff, and whānau), and experiential knowledge. Most schools used various surveys to establish effectiveness – including the Wellbeing@School School Self-Review Tool (SSRT; Ferral, Darr, Shih, Boyd, & Fisher, 2012), and the Me and My School survey (New Zealand Council for Educational Research [NZCER], n.d.). For example, Table 7 below lists the various surveys schools have used. School professionals determined in advance the outcome measures for behaviour change. Mediators of change could be measured to evaluate the proposed pathways of

change. The selection of outcome measures was based on the availability of reliable and valid measures that could be used feasibly.

Table 7

Measurement Surveys Used by Schools to Establish Effectiveness

Survey	Participants
Assessing Wellbeing in Education (AWE) survey	Jesse, Ash
Wellbeing@School School Self-Review Tool (SSRT)	Riley
Me and My School survey	Sage, Shannon, Alex
Depression Anxiety Stress Scales	Morgan
The Christchurch East Wellbeing study's survey tool	Alex
Internally developed survey	Frankie

Although the majority of schools had used one or more surveys only one school professional provided evidence of effectiveness. For example, Morgan stated:

We used a survey that is used at Hillmorton Hospital to talk to people experiencing depression, anxiety, and stress. The results indicated a thirty percent decrease in ten weeks across an extremely high needs class, with sixty percent of students with diagnosed mental health illnesses. Ten to fifteen percent more who had one but didn't know yet.

Further, every school professional also cited anecdotal forms of evidence – including shifts in language and behaviour. Language often involved the increased expression of ‘mental state’ (e.g., emotion, beliefs, etc.) and mental wellbeing (e.g., anxiety, stress, flourishing, resilience, etc.) across the school community. It also reflected a broadened sense

of self-understanding for students, with a few participants describing how some students have utilised character strengths on their CV. As an example, Riley stated:

We see that with our senior students as they come through. We see [students who have] been with us for four years putting things on their CV's like, I have a love of learning, rather than just going, I came top in my geography class. It's a nice way for them to frame it.

Language also reflects specific feedback relating to the wellbeing approach (or aspects of the approach). Specifically, approximately half of the participants mentioned having received feedback from school community members (students, staff, and whānau). Alex provided an example of the type of feedback that they considered evidence effectiveness, from a student perspective, stating:

In this work, the little bits that keep us going, if you like, are those times where a student will give you feedback and just say, "This is so great. I'd forgotten how good painting is for my wellbeing. I'm so glad that I'm back doing it. I wouldn't have done it if it wasn't for the module".

Behavioural examples of effectiveness consistently reported by participants were students reaching out, whether to support staff (e.g., counsellors) or their whānau when experiencing well-being-related challenges. Blair commented that *effectiveness would be the kids reaching out to those adults and having those conversations, and accessing help. That [when] they know that their wellbeing is not so great, they seek help, and they engage.*

Schools utilised various forms of evidence to establish effectiveness, whether legitimate or anecdotal. However, although a few school professionals emphasised that different year levels had different support needs, no school professionals indicated that their school had assessed changes in needs cross-sectionally or longitudinally. This measurement

assisted schools in identifying the obstacles and challenges encountered in implementing their wellbeing strategy, addressed in RQ6 below.

RQ6. What are the obstacles or challenges in the implementation of the wellbeing approach?

Questioning about obstacles or challenges in implementing the wellbeing strategy provided insight into the barriers and “speed bumps” those involved in implementation have experienced thus far. Most participants were forthcoming and described these issues in detail. Notably, school professionals emphasised the unexpected nature of obstacles or challenges given the degree of change required. For example, Sage commented, *I think any sort of cultural change, which is in essence what a wellbeing focus is, isn't easy and comes with challenges through and through*. In response to questions about the challenges in the implementation of the wellbeing approach, all school professionals highlighted the following: engagement (regarding students, staff, and whānau), resourcing, and guidance (or lack thereof).

7. Engagement. All participants reported issues with engagement concerning students, staff, and whānau. Attitude, knowledge, and capacity were consistently highlighted as undercurrents that present obstacles or challenges in implementing the wellbeing application. Attitude refers to student, staff, and whānau beliefs and behavioural dispositions regarding the place of wellbeing in secondary education. According to most participants, a considerable number of students and staff have indicated little positive regard for the application. It is unclear whether this reflects the knowledge students and staff have concerning secondary education as a context for wellbeing provisions. It may also be attributed to the broader conception of secondary education's meaning and purpose and the related expectations of students and staff. Jesse described how effective implementation might require reshaping of current conceptualisations of secondary education, stating, *“We've got to change the*

attitudes of staff around education is more than two plus two. So, we've actually got to change our whole school philosophy".

Notably, student and staff engagement are highly reliant on intrinsic motivation. School professionals indicated that a considerable portion of students struggle to comprehend the potential positive long-term implications the wellbeing strategy could have throughout their life (beyond school). This has impacted their willingness to engage. For example, Alex commented:

It's easy to get through to the parents because they get the value of it, but students will be like, "I'm not going to get NCEA now because I need more credits". They don't trust you enough at the start. It's sort of like, just trust us, we'll monitor, we'll watch how you're going, but you don't need [credits] now. I think students have a very narrow understanding of their schooling and their career, and their life. It must be all about NCEA, and they don't really get that's secondary to how they feel about themselves, and that if they're not coming and not engaging because of wellbeing related matters, then they're never going to get NCEA anyway. I don't know how you get kids to get that. That's a challenge.

Similarly, although the idea exists that *student wellbeing is every teacher's responsibility*, school professionals indicated that staff are typically offered discretion in the implementation process. While many provided specific examples of how staff integrate wellbeing concepts into the mainstream curriculum (addressed in subsections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 above), there was no mention of quality assurance strategies (e.g., performance evaluation). Furthermore, approximately half of school professionals believed that the personal characteristics of staff could impact how a number of those strategies mentioned above are implemented. For example, Shannon emphasised the importance of staff's personal characteristics in effective programme delivery, stating:

As with any program that we put into the school, if we don't have the right people to facilitate the program, it's a waste of time. You can dream up any sort of idea for what you'd like the students to be learning, but the fact is, you've got to have the right people delivering that content.

Similarly, participants noted that the essence of quality in their wellbeing strategy is embodied in the staff's knowledge. Most viewed knowledge as familiarity, awareness, or understanding of the wellbeing strategy, whether manifested as descriptive knowledge (e.g., understanding the importance of the strategy or their role) or skills in implementation (e.g., role modelling, explicit teaching, coordinating follow-up support). The below quotes illustrate how Sage and Shannon (among others) communicate the importance of knowledge in strategy implementation.

You do rely on all of your leaders to understand the nuances of wellbeing and live it and model it in their micro messages. That's been a challenge. I sit in on our senior leadership group and try to bring in a perspective but, for some people, the strengths-based perspective is not naturally where they would sit. (Sage).

One of the main issues I think all schools have, is convincing the staff that wellbeing is a science and not just saying kumbaya around the campfire. So, validation of wellbeing and its place in the school curriculum is a challenge, but I think we are gaining traction on that one (Shannon).

Capacity reflects the staffs' ability to perform duties needed to validate the successful implementation of the wellbeing application. Of particular note is a focus on staffs' professional capacity instead of personal resources. Most school professionals emphasised workload and expectations numerous times. For example, Reese explained the impact the National Standards has had on implementation, stating:

At the start, teachers were terrified to get it wrong because the model we are in requires us to report every year to the board of trustees about our results and why they were different. So, there's an understandable fear that if I adjust my focus from the academic mark to the person's social-emotional learning, what if that goes down? For a nine-year period, under a National lead government, we had numbers, 85% pass rate, 90% pass rate. It was all about an achievement number. The National Standards came in, and it was all about a number.

Relatedly, the results showed that approximately half of the participants viewed the education system as an obstacle or challenge in the implementation of the wellbeing approach. These system-level constraints can restrain staffs' capacity to enact the school's expressed ideals concerning wellbeing provisions. The following quotes, stated by Sage and Jesse, respectively, illustrate how the current emphasis on academic achievement in the education system serves as a barrier to schools wellbeing provisions:

We're a school that is a system within a system and a system that's assessment-driven, where workloads are increasing so, it's very easy for people just to see contradictions (Sage).

That's the biggest challenge we've got is our ability to change the lens of what we reinforce because we're still an academic school. So, part of our challenge at the moment is challenging the school around our philosophies around what success is because it goes back to that growth mindset stuff (Jesse).

8. Resourcing. A few school professionals emphasised the need for additional resources. It is evident that, for these schools, the current resourcing does not support wellbeing provisions that are focused on long term outcomes. Specifically, Reese explained how inadequacies in the pastoral care department, attributed to departmental competitions for resources, are not consistent with the preventive ideology most schools mentioned above.

What we don't have is the time or facilities to focus more on improving outcomes long-term, like mental health. We have to pay for a lot of that out of our bulk operations grant, so is it a counsellor or is it a new classroom? So, it's very difficult for counsellors. They could be seeing a student who has experienced significant trauma that would need weekly sessions for 12 months, but we don't have the facility for that. So, they have to do a lot of putting out fires and dealing with crisis moments (Reese).

9. Limited guidance. Every school professional highlighted the limited practical guidance available for wellbeing approach development and implementation in schools, particularly in the Aotearoa context, as an issue. Information appropriate for the formation of school-based wellbeing strategies is difficult to discern from the literature. For example, Ash expressed that the extensive literature on strategies, models, and frameworks concerning wellbeing presents a challenge for determining the relevance and prioritisation of information. Further, Reese believed that relevant research is not easily accessible (or digestible) to school professionals, stating:

All the work that's been done isn't necessarily being shared with enough people in a way where we can say, oh great, for example, UC's done this work about student belonging and voice, here are ten strategies they've researched that have worked in these environments, here's how you can apply it in your classroom.

Relatedly, school professionals felt that wellbeing had become a buzzword. A considerable number of wellbeing related resources are available to schools (with associated costs). For example, Shay commented on the proliferation of wellbeing resources in recent years, stating, *"A few years ago when we started, there was kind of nothing. Now it's almost like every second person is offering something for wellbeing. It's become its own little industry"*. School professionals consistently emphasised the importance of evidence-based

practice. Specifically, Reese articulated their concerns about the traction wellbeing has gained in terms of evidence-based practice (EBP):

So, we are part of probably four different wellbeing PD things that are happening around the city. I think the biggest danger is, is that there's a tendency for people to want to create something brand new, and create it based on their feelings and ideas, rather than any kind of evidence and you know, I've got children and I don't want someone saying "oh here's a wellbeing mental health practice that I'm just going to give a go".

In addition, a few participants clarified that there was a distinct difference between a wellbeing programme and a wellbeing strategy. To these school professionals, a wellbeing programme is not sufficient in establishing a positive, caring school climate. Ash explained that this distinction is not adequately addressed in the literature, in terms of levels of implementation, stating:

I think it's challenging to know how to go from running programs to genuinely embedding wellbeing across everything. I think a lot of people are struggling with that, and I think although we talk about it at those wellbeing need meetings, no one really has the answer to that.

The analysis indicated that most schools experienced considerable obstacles or challenges associated with their wellbeing approach. These spanned the development and implementation phases. Although the place of wellbeing in education is well evidenced, there remains a need to further communicate this to key stakeholders, including staff, students, whānau, the wider community, and funders. Further, additional support is required, whether by increasing resources available for successful implementation, or by making research findings more accessible to school professionals.

Results Summary

The participants in this study outlined the composition of the wellbeing strategies at their respective schools and shared their experiences with strategy implementation. The school professionals consistently emphasised the importance of evidence-based practice in developing and implementing the schools' wellbeing strategy. In line with this, the theme "Kete Aronui" was created to reflect the diversity of wellbeing theories and frameworks underlying school-based wellbeing approaches. Although vastly different in their composition, similarities existed across schools regarding specific strategies, guiding ideologies and systemic approaches (addressed in RQ1). Most schools implemented external programmes and internal strategies, which emphasised assessment, a culture of connectedness, and professional and parent development.

Further, most school professionals acknowledged follow-up support for students experiencing wellbeing difficulties as an integral component of school-based wellbeing provisions. Most participants did not reference the three-tiered "Intervention Triangle" (Boyd et al., 2017, p. 10). However, their tendency to select the layered support strategies is consistent with this approach, in that school professionals clearly articulated three levels of support (i.e., universal, targeted, and intensive). Although most participants viewed cultural responsiveness as important, they struggled to identify how their school's wellbeing strategy specifically accommodated culture. Moreover, the findings suggest that despite its supposed importance (as reported), most participants remained uncertain of the relevance to their school, referencing limited diversity in the student population as a rationale.

In regards to strategy measurement and effectiveness, most school professionals believed that their school's approach had positively impacted student wellbeing and acknowledged the importance of measuring effectiveness. School professionals justified their perceptions of a positive impact with reference to survey data, feedback (from students, staff, and whānau),

and experiential knowledge. This measurement assisted schools in identifying the obstacles and challenges encountered in implementing their wellbeing strategy, such as engagement, resourcing, limited guidance. The following chapter will discuss these findings in more detail.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The present study explored the implementation of wellbeing strategies in secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region. Twelve participants representing 11 secondary schools were interviewed about the composition of strategies at their respective schools and their experiences with strategy implementation, including cultural sensitivity, effectiveness, and challenges. Although there was evidence of individual differences in participants' perceptions of how school-based wellbeing strategies facilitated student wellbeing, commonalities were evident in theoretical underpinning, strategy composition, cultural responsiveness, follow-up support, and participants' perceptions of effectiveness and challenges. The following sections of this final chapter will discuss the findings in light of the six research questions that framed this study, alongside wellbeing theory and previous research. I will also provide a critical reflection of the strengths and limitations of the study and highlight practice and research implications where relevant.

Theoretical Underpinning

Most school professionals were forthcoming about the theoretical basis or framework underlying their schools' wellbeing strategy. The findings from the interviews revealed that the participants considered three main components throughout formation and implementation: theory, research evidence, and practice issues. They consistently emphasised the importance of theoretical and evidence-based practice throughout these stages. Most schools utilised multiple theories to develop and implement their approach (outlined below); many referred to this as their "kete" (basket). Notably, a few school professionals shared their schools want to develop their own wellbeing model to ensure appropriateness. However, none had progressed this far. A few shared that they started this process but decided to "scrap it" because of time constraints and their commitment to evidence-based practice. A few schools that had intended to develop their own wellbeing model decided it was not necessary.

The schools also used additional national resources to supplement their approach, including government initiatives (e.g., Kahui Ako and Grow Waitaha), government frameworks or reports (ERO, 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b), and resources from private organisations such as the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience (NZIWR). Similarly, successful educational innovations, such as whole-school wellbeing strategies, are not simply the product of cutting-edge ideas. They involve the translation of concepts and theories into clearly operationalised, empirically supported applications (Robinson, 2018; Quinlan & Hone, 2020). Schools and education systems have increasingly engaged with evidence-based approaches, drawing on research to inform strategy design and build the implementation capacity of individuals and systems (Butler, Critelli & Rinfrette, 2011).

In recent years, applications of wellbeing models in school settings have become common (Anderson & Graham, 2016; Simmons, Graham & Thomas, 2015; Soutter, O’Steen & Gilmore, 2012; Clement, 2010). As was mentioned above, most schools in the current study utilised a variety of theories to develop and implement their approach to supporting student wellbeing, most commonly citing general positive psychology theory and principles (n=8), the five ways to wellbeing (n=7; Aked, Marks, Cordon, & Thompson, 2010) used in the “Alright?” campaign to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Cantabrians after the Canterbury Earthquakes, the PERMA model (n=5; Seligman, 2011), character strengths frameworks (n=3), positive education frameworks (n=2), and the SEARCH Institutes positive youth development framework (n=1). The participants consistently explained that theory provided more detailed understandings of the diverse, multi-systemic factors that can influence student wellbeing. Further, it helped the school professionals and the school leadership team identify change strategies, while also providing a rationale.

There is a growing body of research evidence pointing to the benefits of promoting student wellbeing, and this literature highlights approaches that have been shown to be effective. With regards to wellbeing models, Robinson (2018) stated a wellbeing model should support the process of whole-school wellbeing development and the integration of wellbeing principles in the day to day life of the school community. As such, there is a need to ensure all members of the school community are acquainted with the selected model(s). Notably, a few participants in the current study specified that professional learning and development and parent education sessions afforded (select) staff members and (interested) parents an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the selected model(s).

The development and implementation of whole-school wellbeing approaches require a systemic approach that articulates a robust design rationale. Given the importance of empirically supported instruction and intervention, several guides have emerged to support schools in the development and implementation process (O'Toole et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2017). For example, the Education Review Office report series provided an overview of good practice to help equip teachers, leaders, and trustees to establish whole-school wellbeing and respond to wellbeing concerns effectively. In addition, Quinlan and Hone (2020) developed *The Educators' Guide to Whole-School Wellbeing: A Practical Guide to Getting Started, Best-Practice Process, and Effective Implementation* (Quinlan and Hone, 2020) to support schools in developing idiosyncratic and contextualised wellbeing strategies. Here, Quinlan and Hone (2020) propose a variety of benefits of adopting a wellbeing model (listed below). Therefore, by continually and strategically critiquing research and application, rather than simply “adopting and implanting”, school professionals and schools can systematically maximise opportunities for all students to experience wellbeing.

Quinlan and Hone (2020) propose that system-wide school-based wellbeing models that are theoretically anchored provide for the following:

- Helps schools develop a shared language of wellbeing;
- Assists communication between all members of the school community;
- Serves as a visual reminder of wellbeing;
- Provides a framework against which progress can be tracked (e.g., the school might assess progress according to each element);
- Acts as an agreed framework for decision making and prioritisation

Despite the number of wellbeing models that exist to guide the integration of literature findings and other sources of evidence into practice, their practical guidance is limited and not easily accessible. Insufficient attention has been given to how existing theory can inform the optimal implementation of design features commonly used in wellbeing initiatives (O'Toole et al., 2017). For example, in the current study, one participant expressed that the extensive literature on strategies, models, and frameworks concerning wellbeing presents a challenge for determining the relevance and prioritisation of information. Another participant believed that relevant research is not necessarily easily understood by or accessible for school professionals. Consistent with other disciplines, there is no systematic basis for determining which of these theories is best suited for use in this context. Much of the research does not specify or examine the different ways theory can be translated and used in school-based wellbeing initiatives. Alternatively, there is insufficient research to demonstrate how specific design features of wellbeing initiatives can be implemented in the secondary educational context and the implications of implementing features in different ways. More broadly, there is little systematic operational guidance about how to develop school-based wellbeing approaches. In light of these findings, additional theory-based guidance is needed to inform

optimal strategy implementation across contexts. Moreover, although implementation research has started to emerge, there is an ongoing need to investigate the impact and utility of specific aspects of school-based wellbeing strategies. In this regard, specific research recommendations are suggested in the implications for future research section below.

Strategy Composition

Initially, most school professionals appeared overwhelmed when asked to describe the strategies that comprised their schools' wellbeing strategy. Many questioned where to begin, reflecting the diverse multi-component, whole-school nature of the school's strategy. The school professionals outlined their strategy's content (e.g., specific programme or framework, surveys and assessments, community building strategies, and capacity building) and delivery mediums (e.g., explicit and implicit wellbeing pedagogy). The interview findings indicated that these decisions were based on whether they were appropriate, feasible, or could be implemented as a "cohesive" intervention.

In line with the recommendations by Quinlan and Hone (2020), most participants reported that their schools strived to incorporate a whole-school approach to student wellbeing rather than a specific programme. However, consistent with previous research, and as alluded to above, most school professionals shared that selecting from the many different wellbeing programmes now available was difficult (Greenberg et al., 2017; Macfarlane et al., 2017; O'Toole et al., 2019). A systematic review of effective wellbeing interventions employing a whole school approach identified commonalities in intervention approaches: building positive mental health, beginning with younger students, balancing universal, targeted, intensive support strategies, and expressing a long-term commitment (Weare & Nind, 2011). These interventions also attempted to establish a positive school culture, teach

wellbeing to students, provide education and training to provide context and support implementation, and partner with local and national agencies.

Consistent with a whole-school approach, Wyn, Cahill, Holdsworth, Rowling, and Carson (2000) proposed that health-promoting schools apply wellbeing strategies across three areas or ‘spheres’ of practice: (a) curriculum, teaching, and learning; (b) school organisation, ethos, and environment; and (c) partnerships and services. In the present study, the curriculum sphere was evident in many of the participants’ descriptions of their school’s wellbeing strategies. Approximately half of the school professionals identified explicit wellbeing pedagogy as a component of their wellbeing strategy, requiring deliberate lesson planning, scope, and sequencing. Teaching wellbeing literacy refers to the vocabulary, knowledge, and skills people can apply to understand and maintain or improve wellbeing (Oades, Slade, & Jarden, 2017). In line with this, research suggests that it is more advantageous to support people to increase their repertoire of options (e.g., their wellbeing language) and teach them to adapt in accordance with the context, rather than impose universal wellbeing concepts derived from a natural science paradigm (Alexandrova, 2017; Oades, Ozturk, Hou, & Slemp, 2020).

In the present study, participants described the explicit delivery of wellbeing literacy during class time, which required deliberate lesson planning and sequencing. It also included parent education sessions and professional learning and development sessions for school staff.

Research suggests that teaching wellbeing can build implementation capacity and advance understanding of the dynamic processes that enable and inhibit wellbeing and resilience (Slemp et al., 2017; White & Kern, 2018; Quinlan & Hone, 2020). Consequently, a multitude of wellbeing curricula and programmes are available to schools. The best are

scientifically validated or apply evidence to support practical and developmentally appropriate teaching strategies (Brunwasser, Gillham, & Kim, 2009; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; McGrath & Nobel, 2010). Further, the plurality of SEL, wellbeing, strengths-based, values-based, prevention and intervention programmes makes it difficult for educators to discern if anything has any real evidence-base. As such, the participants reported that their schools selected or developed strategies that best fit their (and their school communities) needs and resources. For example, the participants assessed the appropriateness of the strategy in light of the available time and budget, most pressing or relevant issues or topics, and teacher willingness and capacity for delivery. Notably, a few school professionals described the tension between developing their own or using such external programmes.

Research points to the need to consider the plethora of places and interactions in schools that can build wellbeing (Allison, Waters, & Kern, 2020; Kern et al., 2020, 2020; Kern, Park, Peterson & Romer, 2017). Although explicit wellbeing pedagogy, co-curricular activities, and parent and teacher education strategies reflect various intervention levels, they are inadequate in establishing a whole-school wellbeing approach when implemented in isolation. Research suggests that the most effective school-based wellbeing strategies are founded on comprehensive whole-school approaches in which promoting wellbeing becomes an integrated and sustained process in the school and part of the core business of the whole-school community (Hazel, 2017). This is frequently referred to as the “caught” curriculum and reflects the overall culture, feeling or tone of a school. It appears in the school policies, language or dialogue, interactions between school community members, and implicit norms (Quinlan & Hone, 2020; White, 2016). In essence, it is “the way things are done around here”.

In the current study, most participants underscored the importance of positive student-teacher relationships in fostering wellbeing directly or indirectly by contributing to positive school culture. For example, approximately half of the participants stated that teachers are encouraged to check in with students throughout the day. One participant explained how core classes have integrated “Check and Connect”, where teachers ask questions such as, “How are you?” and “What’s on top?”. “Check and Connect” is an umbrella phrase that one school created to refer to a series of activities intended to benefit both students and staff. It has helped foster a relationship-based approach and was designed as a prevention tool. This is consistent with previous research demonstrating the importance of establishing positive student-teacher relationships for student learning and development (Legette, Rogers, & Warren, 2020; Quin, 2017). Positive student-teacher relationships profoundly shape students’ sense of belonging, facilitating SEL skill development, increased classroom participation, and an overall improvement in academic performance (Gregory & Weinstein, 2004; Hamre & Pianta, 2005). While research suggests the powerful influence of teachers in the lives of young people (Lynn, McKay, & Atkins, 2003), other evidence points to a level of dissonance regarding increasing expectations and requirements to support student wellbeing (discussed below; Berryhill, Linney, & Fromewick, 2009; Spratt, Shucksmith, Philip & Watson, 2006).

School professionals consistently described their desire to develop a sense of community within the school as part of their wellbeing strategy. The schools employed common strategies to achieve this sense of community, including peer support and school-wide events (e.g., Pink Shirt Day, Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW), which is a campaign to help students understand what boosts their wellbeing and mental health, and a specific student wellbeing week). These attempts to establish a sense of community were cited as a critical component for supporting wellbeing in the immediate school context and were described as a way for schools to assist students in developing the skills and relationships to maintain a

support network when things get difficult outside of the school context. This was how some schools sought to address one natural limitation of the secondary school context - being that students are enrolled for a limited period. Whilst these strategies contributed to positive school culture, a few participants noted the potential positive long-term impacts of the support networks formed as a result. Specifically, they stated that ideally, the support networks they established with peers and others outside of the school environment could be integral after each students' enrolment has ended, when they may have less obvious or accessible support options.

In order to promote the wellbeing of individual students, it is important to recognise the powerful role of families, whānau, and communities (Dubroja, O'Connor, & McKenzie, 2016; Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). The notion of engaging whānau and communities with school professionals to ensure student success is embedded in Aotearoa's key education policy, including the NZC, *Ka Hikitia: Managing Success* (Ministry of Education, 2008), and *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success* (Ministry of Education, 2013). All school professionals acknowledged the importance of partnering with whānau and communities to ensure effective implementation. Almost half of the participants reported incorporating community-based organisations or support services into their wellbeing strategies, including 24/7 Youth Work. A few school professionals offered examples of how such services are integrated into the strategy, particularly concerning support for high-risk students, somewhat emulating a wraparound approach.

Efforts to facilitate parental engagement were associated with communication, participation in strategy implementation, and capacity building. Further, a few school professionals identified form teachers as the key person (other than students), facilitating bidirectional information sharing between the school and whānau. Additionally, most school professionals described using education evenings to build on the knowledge, skills, and

confidence of whānau, to develop and implement a formalised parent education programme. Notably, participants felt that moving towards a family-school partnership approach typically required a significant change in school and whānau attitudes and school culture.

Considerable conceptual and systemic change was required to facilitate schools efforts to implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing. The current study suggested a shift from the predominant view of secondary schools as exclusively academic institutions. All of the participants believed that schools needed to contribute to students' non-academic development to a greater degree than current practice. Shifting the purpose of education beyond academic development to enable and sustain student wellbeing is robustly discussed in the literature. Research shows that students experiencing better wellbeing demonstrate better academic performance (Gräbel, 2017), lower absence rates (Suldo, Thalji, & Ferron, 2011), higher self-control, and lower procrastination (Howell, 2009). Young people who perform well at school have also been shown to access more opportunities during their lives and enjoy better health (Adler, 2017; Sawyer et al., 2000). The school representatives in the current study seemed acutely aware of this need and reported generally good support from their school community in pursuing such goals, while also recognising that the journey ahead would be a long one.

Cultural Responsiveness

Effective school-based wellbeing strategies that involve coordinated classrooms, school-wide implementation, and family and community involvement align with notions of kaupapa Māori (Macfarlane et al., 2017). This may encourage teachers and schools to develop policies and implement programmes that reflect cultural and ethnic demographics and tailor educational approaches that better respond to the needs of diverse learners. Durlak et al. (2011) that, when this occurs, students are positioned to develop positive social

behaviours and relationships and a sense of purpose; improved attendance and academic achievement; and decreased emotional distress, conduct problems and risk-taking behaviour.

The participants in this study underscored the importance of ensuring their school's strategy was culturally responsive. Specifically, the participants identified several factors that related to the importance of ensuring their school's wellbeing strategies were culturally responsive, including their schools' definition of culture (i.e., bicultural versus multicultural), cognisance of inter and intra-cultural difference regarding wellbeing, and efforts to build cultural competence (e.g., Professional Learning and Development). However, despite this stated importance, the interview findings indicated that most professionals struggled to identify how their school's wellbeing strategy specifically accommodated culture. Moreover, these participants often expressed assumptions around the relevance or urgency of cultural accommodations. A few talked about how their student population was not very diverse, and thus while important, felt it was a lower priority.

Similarly, there is growing recognition of the importance of cultural competency and safety for individual practitioners and organisations in achieving equitable wellbeing. Multiple complex factors drive indigenous and ethnic health inequities, including colonisation and historical trauma, racism (causal and systemic), and marginalisation (Reid, Rout, Tau, & Smith, 2017; Tinirau, Smith, & Haami, 2021). In the Education Matters to Me study (Office of the Children's Commissioner [OCC], 2018), Māori and Pacific students spoke of their unique experiences of the education system. These young people provided insights into the marginalisation and discrimination they experience at school. Such factors have contributed to differential exposure of Māori and Pacific peoples to risk factors (Clark et al., 2013; Roy et al., 2021), together with inequities in access to, and the quality of, care received from health services. In order to make a positive difference for Māori learners, Ka Hikitia has challenged the education sector to work with greater urgency. It prompted

attitudinal change and has forced a paradigm shift from a position previously entrenched in deficit-oriented theorising of Māori learners to a position of agency, targeting potential and opportunity (Macfarlane, Macfarlane, & Gillon, 2015). These strategies acknowledge that Māori have experienced persistent inequitable education outcomes and that addressing these disparities is the concern of all those involved in education (Macfarlane et al., 2017). Ka Hikitia, in principle, resonates with ideals relevant for Māori by championing Māori language, identity and culture, and knowing, respecting, and valuing who students are, where they come from and building on what they bring to the education setting.

In a similar way, the participants and schools had begun to integrate cultural knowledge and practices into their wellbeing strategies. For example, a few participants spoke to their school's efforts to include Māori language and provide opportunities for students to engage in kapa haka (a complex and varied art form with many different dances and performances which enable expression of cultural identity and heritage; The Haka Experience, n.d.). Nonetheless, despite its established importance, in the current study and previous research, culturally responsive implementation requires further attention and effort. The majority indicated that Māori (and other ethnicities) knowledge and cultural practices had not been sufficiently integrated into their wellbeing strategies and thus identified cultural responsiveness and competence as a work in progress. Moreover, most participants questioned the relevance of culturally responsive implementation to their school, often referencing limited diversity in the student population. One participant felt it was more helpful to focus on the similarities between cultures rather than the differences, stating, "Culture is accepted but is also irrelevant". However, according to this participant, a large portion of the student population communicated (via a student survey) that culture was not sufficiently taken into consideration by the school. This suggests that many students viewed

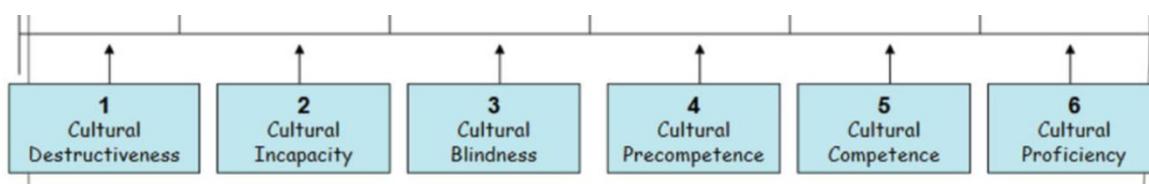
this school's efforts to ensure culturally responsive practice as insufficient. It also suggests that the notion of culture as irrelevant is contrary to culturally responsiveness.

The process of ensuring culturally responsive wellbeing strategies may be framed within the context of the cultural inclusion continuum (Figure 3 below; Cross, Baron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989, cited in Britt, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, Naswall, & Henderson, 2017).

Cultural destructiveness is characterised by attitudes, policies, and practices that reinforce the superiority of one culture over another and are destructive to a cultural group and its individuals. *Cultural incapacity* reflects an individual or organisations limited skills or capacity to be effective with individuals from diverse cultural groups. *Cultural blindness* is the belief that culture makes no difference (i.e., all people are, and should be treated, the same) and involves providing services equal for all. It reflects an inability to understand how people of a different culture might view particular matters due to rigid adherence to the views, attitudes, and values of one's own culture, making it challenging to identify alternatives. *Cultural pre-competence* requires recognition and acknowledgement of cultural differences. It involves accepting the need for culturally competent policies and procedures but making small changes or not proactively seeking solutions. *Cultural competence* is respecting and accepting cultural differences and actively implementing and evaluating policies and practices that support these beliefs. *Cultural proficiency* is about actively refining the approach through continual learning and assessment of cultural awareness, knowledge, and responsiveness.

Figure 3

The Inclusion Continuum



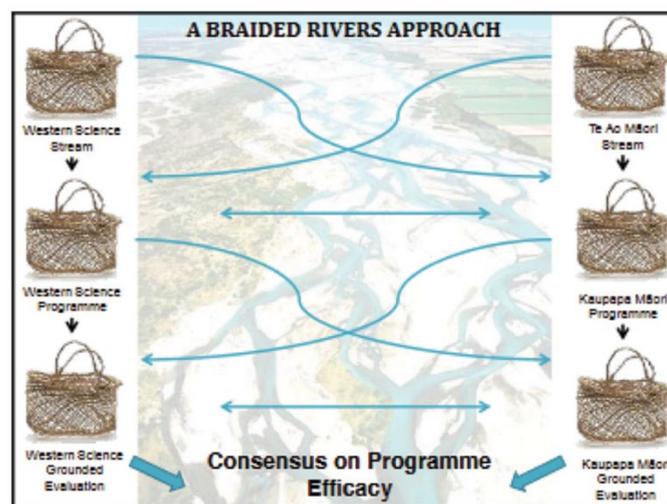
The results of the current study reflect a wrestling between cultural blindness and cultural pre-competence. Most participants and schools recognised and acknowledged cultural differences, and demonstrated a commitment to ensuring cultural responsiveness and competence by making small changes (e.g., utilising cultural models, incorporating Māori language, propelling cultural clubs) and providing learning opportunities through professional development for select staff members. More broadly, the wellbeing strategies apply to ecological conceptualisations of wellbeing (discussed above) and facilitate reciprocal communication between systems (e.g., peers, school, whānau, and the wider community), valuing collective interests. Similarly, Berryman (2014) points to the need for collaboration within communities, stating the importance of a team approach, in which parents, professionals, and cultural experts collaborate to define and address child and whānau needs. This approach is most effective when whānau expertise informs and guides the professionals involved, and is appropriately implemented by those professionals (Macfarlane, Macfarlane, Graham, & Clarke, 2017).

Despite that, the majority of participants and schools did not implement specific strategies to support the wellbeing of students that identify as Māori, Pasifika, or other cultural or socially marginalised groups. Instead, the strategies were implemented for all students. It is possible that the school professionals and schools do not know how to integrate Western and Indigenous knowledge in their strategies, given the consistent adoption of an ‘add-on’ approach. Thomas’ (1993) suggested that an add-on approach has little or no relevance to developing cultural competency, as “learning can only take place over an extended period of time” (p. 2). Similarly, while having some benefits, infrequent courses or workshops (the add-on approach) are not effective for developing cultural competency (Britt et al., 2017). Consistent with this, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, and Gillon (2015) argue that “all too often Western and Indigenous knowledge are represented as two totally incongruent and

oppositional knowledge systems” (p. 55). Accordingly, they suggest that the challenge is establishing that “one world view is not prioritised at the expense of the other” (p. 11). Therefore, the findings indicate that the participants perhaps have a perceived level of cultural competence that may or may not coincide with their actual levels of cultural competence.

Figure 4

He Awa Whiria: A Braided Rivers Approach

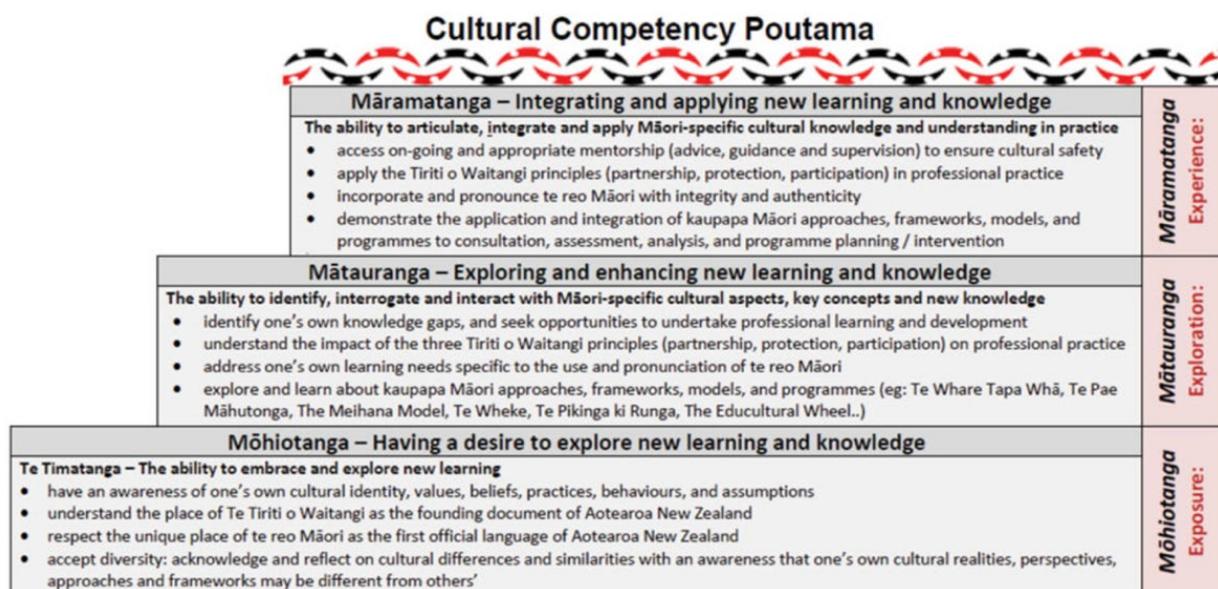


Two frameworks explain how Western and Māori knowledge can be blended to ensure that neither needs to cede or sacrifice (Macfarlane et al., 2015). *Tō Tātou Waka* ('our canoe'; Macfarlane, Blampied, & Macfarlane, 2011) provides a framework for blending cultural knowledge and practices within the development and implementation process that can be generalised to other cultures and situations (Macfarlane et al., 2011). It represents a shared approach in which the process of moving forward (paddling) is carried out in a collaborative partnership, thereby promoting the convergence of cultural and educational practice in our present-day bicultural society (Macfarlane et al., 2011). *He Awa Whiria* (a braided river; Ministry of Social Development, 2011) is a framework for programme development and evaluation (Figure 4 above). It is based on the analogy of two knowledge

streams – Western science and Indigenous Māori – which interconnect and, in time, converge. Both streams in this framework are viewed as distinct, and knowledge can inform the other. Likewise, evaluation methodology from one stream can be applied to the other.

Figure 5

He Poutama Whakamana: A Framework to Guide Cultural Competency



In light of these developments, schools should be encouraged to implement a graded approach to ensuring culturally responsive wellbeing strategies. These changes can be developed over time, starting with broader, more accessible strategies (e.g., professional development workshops) to incorporating Māori content and processes, which require staff to have a greater skill level. This graded approach suggests a set of steps that build on each other, comparable to the Macfarlane (2011) Cultural Competency Poutama (Figure 5). Macfarlane (2011) describes how individuals and organisations typically move from *Mōhiotanga* (a desire to explore new learning and knowledge through exposure) to *Mātauranga* (exploring and enhancing new learning and knowledge through exploration), to *Māramatanga* (integrating and applying new understandings through experience). Explicitly

implementing such frameworks to facilitate reflective practice and goal setting could help schools make better progress in ensuring their wellbeing strategies are culturally responsive. Further, it is recommended that strategy development and implementation be undertaken in partnership with Māori as part of an ongoing collaborative relationship with cultural experts to support students from diverse cultural backgrounds appropriately.

Follow-up Support

Most schools employed a multi-tiered framework of preventative strategies and follow-up support provisions. The findings from the interview revealed that schools tended to select layered support strategies. These provisions were consistent with extant tiered support frameworks in that school professionals clearly articulated three levels of support (i.e., universal, targeted, and intensive). However, because few provided specific details regarding follow-up support protocols and what they look like in practice, the information obtained provided a broad description of follow-up support protocols related to student wellbeing. Implementation frameworks aligned with the three levels or tiers of processes and practices from public health (Sugai & Horner, 2006; Walker & Shinn, 2002) – universal, targeted, and intensive – to accommodate students with varying levels of need. The tiers have an additive intervention value in that each tier builds upon the previous tier (Fox, Carta, Strain, Dunlap, & Hemmeter, 2009). The second and third tiers rely on the provision of practices in previous tiers to promote optimal outcomes.

The first tier (universal) represents an emphasis on creating an environment that promotes student wellbeing throughout the whole school. This level involves the entire school community, the quality of the relationships with students, parents, and community agencies; the school ethos; and the nature of school policies. The second tier (targeted) includes targeted practices that identify and address the needs of children at risk for challenging behaviours. A range of programs and interventions are available which address the needs of

students experiencing mental health difficulties. For example, a few schools used the Rite Journey (Lines & Gallasch, 2009) and Travellers (Robertson & Boyd, 2012) programmes to support year nine students who, as a cohort, tend to experience significant change and challenges as they transition to high school or experience personal difficulties (e.g., parental separation, bullying, etc.). These programmes provide schools with a structured process through which educators can provide support. The third tier (intensive) is designed for students requiring intensive tailored support to engage positively in education. Individualised support typically included school-based intervention programmes supported by specialist teachers or mental health professionals (e.g., psychologists, counsellors, social workers, and youth workers). Additionally, every school professional noted the involvement of diverse external organisations (i.e., external specialist mental health services, community groups).

Such an approach aligns with the models seen in a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS; Sugai & Horner, 2009), Response to Intervention (RTI; Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005), and Positive Behavioural Intervention and Supports (PBIS; Carr et al., 2002). It recognises that different levels of partnering are necessary for supporting students' diverse wellbeing needs. In this way, the multi-tiered framework of preventative strategies and follow-up support provisions implemented across the participating schools is consistent with their emphasis on prevention (outlined above). Similarly, MTSS, RTI, and PBIS frameworks are based on the premise that supports are provided early, monitored systematically, and adjusted intentionally to respond to present needs. This helps to prevent the more traditional reactive practice of waiting for a young person to demonstrate mental health and wellbeing challenges, then beginning the process of evaluation and intervention, and in some cases, involvement of traumatic incident response teams.

When implemented appropriately, MTSS, RTI, and PBIS can provide the basis for an integrated student support system that is facilitated by multiple school stakeholders with

complementary expertise in various domains. In the current study, the participants indicated that school professionals participate in clearly defined activities designed to identify student needs and provide supports where needed. Although most of the participants did not explicitly refer to the tiered approach, many described how they manifest a collaborative approach to supporting students' needs across the three tiers. For example, most schools had developed support systems (e.g., parent education, multi-disciplinary triage meetings, links to external organisations) to provide appropriate resources. This is consistent with a whole-school approach because service delivery operates at nearly every level of the school system, and multiple stakeholders are required to coordinate implementation efforts to foster a sense of belonging, promote positive outcomes, and reduce risk factors for students (O'Toole et al., 2019). Typically, school teams comprised of general and special education teachers, administrators, and a mixture of support personnel and specialists (e.g., reading specialists, speech-language pathologists, and school psychologists) work together throughout the implementation of services for RTI. These teams regularly conduct and participate in ongoing professional development through regular meetings and collaborative activities, establish and maintain protocols for students assessment and intervention, examine and monitor the appropriateness of core instruction and interventions, and systematically review student data. Additionally, parents are typically informed about the service delivery framework for RTI and are notified about and involved in team meetings about decisions affecting their children.

There is clear evidence that schools can, and do, play a key role in identifying wellbeing needs at an early stage, working jointly with others to support young people experiencing challenges, and referring young people to specialist support (Calear & Christensen, 2010; Campos, Dias, Duarte, Veiga, Dias, & Palh, 2018; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymniki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2014). While this multi-tiered system guides school professionals in planning and responding, the variety of school settings and contexts, together with students' diverse

support needs, means that schools should invest considerable time, research, and consultation to identify the best-suited strategies for their needs. It is also necessary to emphasise that school professionals are not trained mental health professionals and cannot be expected to deliver therapeutic interventions. Over half of the school professionals expressed concern about their schools capacity to provide adequate support intensive support (i.e., tier three). They indicated that school staff are not adequately trained or supported to support students with mental health challenges requiring more specialised support. For example, Jesse stated, “We’re *not going to stop the severe. We’re not equipped for that*”. Instead, they can be supported to promote student wellbeing and more effectively identify the signs of mental health and wellbeing challenges. In this way, school professionals may, as many stated, serve as the fence at the top of the cliff instead of the ambulance at the bottom.

Strategy Effectiveness Measurement

Growing evidence suggests that school-based wellbeing strategies can successfully influence meaningful changes in health-related behaviour and wellbeing (Quinlan & Hone, 2020; Slemp et al., 2017; White & Kern, 2018). The recent emphasis on evidence-based practice is welcomed as part of the general move to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of interventions that promote positive youth development. In the present study, every school professional acknowledged the importance of effective measurement, both in assessing student wellbeing generally and the effectiveness of wellbeing strategies. Most estimated that their school’s strategy had positively impacted student wellbeing based on the information obtained through the measurement strategies employed in their school. That said, most assessments and evaluations had been informal and anecdotal (i.e., observational or felt experience). Moreover, many indicated that their schools had made an effort to identify and define outcome indicators to measure the effectiveness of the wellbeing strategies, though this was largely aspirational rather than formally defined. For example, long-term

effectiveness indicators, such as students continuing to flourish after leaving school, contributing to society, and living a good life, were identified across the participants. These findings support the need to determine criteria to measure the effectiveness of school-based wellbeing strategies for future research and practice (Hou, Chin, Slemp, & Oades, 2021).

Despite that, the current study suggested that assessment and evaluation practices required further consideration and optimisation. The participants consistently questioned whether their school had gathered sufficient evidence from legitimate forms of measurement to make this judgement, as most forms of evidence were anecdotal (e.g., observed shifts in language and behaviour). Further, the participants focused on the applicability of existing measurement instruments. Although research suggests that measurement provides valuable insights concerning immediate individual and organisational changes (Butler & Kern, 2016; Oades, 2017; Seligman, 2011; Vella-Brodrick, Rickard, & Chin, 2018), the current study indicated that most participants viewed contemporary measurement instruments as pre-emptive or not entirely reflective of actual effectiveness. In other words, they believed these instruments could not reveal the true impact of wellbeing initiatives. From an ecological perspective, wellbeing is situated across psychological, social, and societal systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) and is shaped by diverse influences. The significant determinants of wellbeing extend beyond the educational context. As such, wellbeing requires the engagement of stakeholders at multiple levels, and schools have limited influence in some spheres. Effective actions are typically multi-component and intersectoral, requiring capacity for action within individual sectors and coordination of investment across sectors. Given the emphasis on long-term effectiveness indicators and the diverse influences on wellbeing (Taylor et al., 2017), it can be understood why the participants in this research believed current measurement tools alone could not adequately evaluate the impact of school-based strategies.

Effective implementation requires that as evidence-based practices are applied in classrooms and schools, educators regularly investigate outcomes to determine whether they appropriately address specific wellbeing needs. Measurement improves understanding of how students and staff are functioning across various domains (including wellbeing, life satisfaction, stress, and mental health symptoms) at a point in time, combined with differences between subgroups (i.e., year levels and departments; Quinlan & Hone, 2020). It provides an opportunity to evaluate the acquired knowledge of wellbeing and related skills (e.g., mindset, compassion, optimism). Additionally, regular school evaluation can help determine whether processes and practices effectively serve their intended function (Kitchen, Bethell, Fordham, Henderson, Li, & OECD, 2019). These efforts are vital for establishing when school implementation requires refinement or modification to best support students and to maximise the utility of the applied measurement tools.

These findings point to the need for the school's wellbeing strategy's to be better operationalised and tied to a focused theory of change model so that any assessment is highly relevant to their strategy. Therefore, although many school professionals pointed to an aspiration towards long-term effectiveness, that goal should be reached by achieving more short-term and specific goals that are more relevant to a school's sphere of influence. This appeared to be missing from the participant's discourse on effectiveness. Moreover, placement of these strategies within a focused theory of change would naturally lead to equally focused assessment and evaluation.

Because the impact of any process or practice is greatly affected by the quality of its implementation, effective implementation requires attending to whether school practices adhere to extant guidelines for implementation. Regularly monitoring the fidelity of implementation of assessment processes, instructional decision making, and intervention

provision can facilitate educators in determining whether the strategy maximises opportunities for all students to experience wellbeing (O'Toole et al., 2019; Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004). As such, it is recommended that, in addition to outcome measurement, schools evaluate their staffs' knowledge and use of evidence-based interventions and implementation of the wellbeing strategy. Information collected on implementation can then be used to impact future training opportunities for school personnel (Gansle & Noell, 2007; Slemp et al., 2017). Establishing effective processes for accountability will ultimately allow for increased, more efficient investment and innovation and evaluation where there is limited evidence. The Education Review Office has taken a step forward in providing an overview of school-based wellbeing strategies in Aotearoa (ERO, 2016a, 2016b). Moving forward requires ongoing monitoring of progress by both schools and independent reviewers.

Challenges Associated with Development and Implementation

The participants described several challenges they and their schools' experienced throughout the development and implementation process of their wellbeing strategies. Notably, they consistently emphasised the unexpected nature of these challenges, given the degree of change that was (and is) required. Every school professional identified attitude, knowledge, and capacity as factors that have challenged implementation. Specifically, most participants stated that a considerable number of students and staff had indicated little positive regard for the wellbeing strategy. Elias et al. (2003) highlighted that change initiatives often do not explicitly communicate the functional theory of learning and action. Klinger, Cramer and Harry (2006) suggest that professional development opportunities should focus on the what and how of these initiatives, combined with the why and when. As was mentioned previously, the participants indicated that professional learning and development (PLD) and parent education sessions afforded (select) staff members and (interested) parents an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the selected model(s).

Therefore, although most schools have made an effort to communicate the what, how, why, and when of their strategy, it is possible, given that these opportunities were offered to, or taken advantage of, by select people, that those staff members who have indicated little positive regard for the wellbeing strategy, do not fully understand the need and rationale.

Research has demonstrated that teachers' attitudes towards, or acceptance of, change initiatives, can impact implementation success (Ainley, Withers, Underwood, & Frigo, 2006). A literature review on implementation fidelity found a positive association between teacher support for the programme, combined with their confidence and ability to use interactive methods and programme adoption (Dusenbury et al., 2003). Similarly, change initiatives with genuine teacher buy-in are typically better implemented and sustained (Chodkiewicz & Boyle, 2017; Desimone, 2002). Datnow and Castellano (2000) maintain the importance of teacher buy-in for implementation because, despite support provisions, inevitably, it is up to teachers to implement change initiatives. This is consistent with the current study as the participants indicated that teachers were typically left to implement the strategy of their own volition. This suggests that monitoring strategies need to be put in place to monitor and support implementation within the school.

Although research points to the powerful influence of teachers in the lives of young people (Lynn, McKay, & Atkins, 2003), other evidence suggests a level of dissonance regarding the increasing expectations and requirements to support student wellbeing (Berryhill, Linney, & Fromewick, 2009; Spratt, Shucksmith, Philip & Watson, 2006). Consistent with this finding, the participants identified teachers' and school leaders' professional obligations and academic standards as barriers to teacher engagement and thus effective implementation. This challenge is perhaps due to the increasing responsibilities and expectations that have been placed on teachers and schools over the years. In line with

previous research, the participants suggested that despite expectations that secondary schools would support student wellbeing, the government minimally acknowledges this expanded teacher role, continually pushing schools to increase academic standards (Finney, 2006). For example, one participant stated that many teachers were reluctant to implement wellbeing strategies in the classroom context for fear of decreased academic achievement. The current study suggested that many students were similarly unwilling to engage in wellbeing implementations because credits were not necessarily offered (although they were available to students who required them). Relatedly, many participants alluded to the need for systemic change in the education system to acknowledge the value of wellbeing implementations and cultivate better understanding and acceptance of holistic educational approaches, which is consistent with current findings (Chodkiewicz & Boyle, 2017).

Moreover, the propensity of teachers and school leaders to engage in wellbeing education and professional development and adapt their current educational practices must be considered in light of resourcing. Reform often entails increased workload in addition to learning how to do things differently. Implementation of change involves modifying well-established behavioural ecologies requiring changes in relationships and novel practices that take time and effort (Gansle & Noell, 2009). However, these necessary time concessions are often overlooked, considering the dynamic and routinised nature of schoolwork. Supportive policy and resourcing serve as a strong impetus for achieving change in practice settings (Samdal & Rowling, 2011). Time and resource allocations communicate support and lend authority to it (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002). Initiatives that start sufficiently can be cut short before becoming institutionalised when funding is withdrawn. In implementing a whole-school approach to student wellbeing promotion, being time-poor commonly features in lists of challenges reported by schools (Hazell, 2006; Khan, Bedford & Williams, 2012; Orpinas, Horne, & Stainszewski, 2003; Wyn et al., 2000). Schools must also

creatively determine how to use their limited financial budget. As some participants shared, wellbeing initiatives came with considerable expenses and may not be considered a priority when competing against other academic necessities (including new classrooms) or traditional programmes.

Lastly, school professionals believed that wellbeing had become a buzzword given the considerable number of wellbeing-related resources available to schools. That said, while professionals and organisations have developed a variety of costly wellbeing programmes since data collection, Aotearoa's government recently announced that 75.8 million dollars would be invested over four years to support the wellbeing of young people. The proposed initiatives, combined with existing Ministry of Education wellbeing programmes, mean that a variety of wellbeing supports will be made available. These supports will provide the sector, community groups, iwi, and others, with additional resources to identify new, innovative, and localise solutions to address students' wellbeing needs. The package also provides more of the front line specialist support schools have requested in order to support students' wellbeing. Thus, this funding will hopefully better equip schools, whānau, and community groups to more effectively manage the range of mental health and wellbeing challenges that have emerged since COVID-19.

Strengths and Limitations

The present study had a number of methodological strengths and limitations. There were inherent limitations concerning the study design due to the limited scope of a Master's thesis. For example, the present study employed a mono-method design. Criticism of mono-method research is long-standing. Many researchers have stated that it is not adequately cross-validated (Martin, 1990). Further, the data was collected from single informants, excluding one school where two school professionals participated in the interview. Thus, the

perceptions of those interviewed may differ from other professionals at these schools; however, in each case, the participant was identified as the key staff member intimately involved with the school's wellbeing strategies.

A mixture of strengths and limitations concern the sample of participants. The participants represented a range of schools by type, authority, student gender, and area, which should help ensure a breadth of experiences. However, there was a clear bias in the sample of school professionals from schools with a higher decile (see Table 5.2). The cohort of participants themselves was quite homogenous in that all were of New Zealand European ethnicity. Additionally, the participants represented schools that were actively implementing some type of wellbeing strategy. Despite initially attempting to recruit schools not implementing a wellbeing strategy, none of these schools agreed to participate. These factors limit the generalizability of the data.

The data from the present study was gathered through semi-structured interviews with 12 school professionals from 11 secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region. Although I offered to provide the interview schedule before the interview, none of the school professionals took this opportunity. With this in mind, their responses may have relied on only those elements of the school's wellbeing strategy that were salient at the time of the interview. Further, the act of being formally interviewed may have influenced the level of transparency for some participants, despite the assurances of privacy and confidentiality. Socially desirable responding is always a threat in self-report studies, and in this case, some professionals may have felt the need to emphasise the positive aspects of their school's wellbeing strategies due to their own personal and professional investment in their approach (Salazar, 1990). As mentioned above, to address this issue, the participants were provided extensive information regarding the stringent confidentiality and anonymisation measures employed to safeguard their privacy.

Finally, on reflection of the skills and strategies I used in the interviews, I noticed a tension between prompting the participants' for additional or more specific information and being in danger of badgering participants. In each interview, I remained mindful that the professionals have various responsibilities and obligations. Consequently, I did not want the interview to take more time than was necessary. Nevertheless, having reviewed the interview transcripts, there were points during the interviews where it would have been worthwhile to encourage additional information or specific examples. As such, many opportunities for future research stem from the strengths and limitations of the present study and are outlined below.

Opportunities for Future Research

The strengths and limitations discussed above point to several avenues for future research to further replicate and extend these findings. A critical first step to ensuring effective implementation involves carefully considering ongoing research. Future research should obtain a sample of school professionals representing the full range of school deciles and a wider geographical spread. This would allow more diverse data to be collected and improve understanding of strategy composition and implementation efforts beyond the greater Christchurch region. Relatedly, researchers should obtain students' experiences of wellbeing strategies to honour youth voice and agency. This might help determine how emerging conceptualisations of student wellbeing and the associated implementations relate to and resonate with students and their educational experiences.

Evaluative research provides essential information regarding the effectiveness of specific strategy components (e.g., whole-school approaches, specific programmes and interventions, and assessment and evaluation processes). Additionally, to increase the robustness of this measurement, future research could consider using quantitative wellbeing measurements, such as the "PERMA™ Meter-Measures Flourishing" questionnaire in company with interviews (Seligman, 2011; Rashid et al., 2017). Quantitative methods may provide more

generalisable measurements and help to consider wellbeing outcomes not identified in qualitative methods. Critical attention to the use of methods that maximise the validity and replicability of research findings is needed to help ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to support positive outcomes for all students. Increased attention to the distinction between valid and reliable research findings can improve the ability of schools and external stakeholders to make informed decisions about how best to address students' needs (Albers & Glover, 2007; Glover & DiPerna, 2007). A solid standard for identifying credible research should guide effective whole-school wellbeing practice implementations.

The present study highlighted several challenges associated with strategy development and implementation. Implementation in schools was challenging as these strategies require fundamental changes in the way schools are organised and operate. Very little research has been conducted investigating teachers' experiences and challenges when working towards a whole-school approach. Specifically, it would be beneficial to explore the expressed impact of professional obligations and standards on strategy implementation. Although this study contributed to this knowledge gap by drawing on the experiences of wellbeing leaders, it did not obtain the expertise of teachers who may or may not be implementing their schools' strategies. It may also be worth exploring whether these challenges apply to the broader secondary schools' network, particularly those not currently implementing a wellbeing approach. This could encourage the implementation of systems that could alleviate the associated pressures educators and schools experience and other barriers to implementation.

Conclusion

Enhancing the outcomes of developing young people in Aotearoa is of great importance. This thesis explored the implementation of wellbeing strategies in the secondary educational setting. While the findings were broadly consistent with the extant literature on wellbeing and whole-school approaches, they elaborated on and provided further insights. As

an original contribution, it was the first study to examine the perceptions and understandings of school-based wellbeing strategies from the perspective of school professionals in the greater Christchurch region, a geographic region that has faced substantial natural disasters and human tragedies over the last 12 years. Further, it outlined practice implications and made several significant contributions to existing literature.

The findings indicated that the schools represented in this study have attempted to facilitate a number of immediate and long-term positive wellbeing outcomes by providing opportunities for life skill development and creating opportunities for self-determination or youth empowerment, promoting positive student-teacher relationships, and partnering with whānau and the wider community. The wellbeing strategies spanned three areas or ‘spheres’ of practice: curriculum, teaching, and learning; school organisation, ethos, and environment; and partnerships and services. This reflected each school’s commitment to employing a whole-school approach to student wellbeing rather than solely implementing specific programmes. Many proximal and distal factors that influenced the capacity of teachers and schools to implement wellbeing strategies were also identified. This confirms that the integration of practices conducive to wellbeing in the secondary educational context is complex. To ensure an evidence-based approach and facilitate development and implementation, the school professionals and schools have attempted to integrate theory and research in practice, with limited guidance on selecting, delivering, measuring and understanding the impact of implementation strategies.

The present study addressed some of the limitations or constraints that were present in the ERO research (ERO, 2015a, 2015b). First, because the schools were not expected to meet predetermined expectations, a more realistic “day-to-day” perspective of how secondary schools’ implemented wellbeing policies and practices were obtained. The study’s

exploratory nature provided school professionals with an opportunity to reflect on the broader workings of their schools' wellbeing approach, where they described multiple challenges associated with implementation and identified factors that have impeded their efforts. This is important considering effectiveness measurement requires a commitment to understanding the setting or community, emphasising particular strengths and difficulties (Kelly & Hess, 1986).

Second, exploring the theoretical lens or model underlying these strategies improved understanding of the rationale for strategy composition and highlighted that the strategies are primarily based on evidence. Finally, the ERO evaluation did not consider whether the wellbeing approaches were culturally safe, appropriate, competent and inclusive. The persistent and growing mental health inequities in Aotearoa support the ongoing prioritisation of Māori and Pacific children and young people in shaping the development and implementation of school-based wellbeing approaches. The present study demonstrated that further effort is required on behalf of schools adapted to ensure culturally responsive strategies. Fortunately, various cultural competency frameworks have been developed to guide and facilitate cultural competence, such as *He Poutama Whakamana* (Figure 5; Macfarlane, 2011).

To summarise, while there is a need to implement targeted interventions that affect student wellbeing, including strategies that promote resilience, mindfulness and self-care, or efforts to counter stigma and marginalisation, these interventions are not sufficient on their own. It is necessary to support schools in developing and implementing whole-school wellbeing strategies through research, policy, and systemic activities. Without this level of support, contextual factors, such as the accessibility of research evidence, limited resources, and systemic and societal demands placed on teachers and schools may be barriers to effective implementation.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Information and Consent Forms

College of Education, Health & Human Development
ERHEC Ref: 2019/62/ERHEC



Student Well-being Applications in Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study in the Greater Christchurch Region.

Interview Information Sheet for School Wellbeing Staff Member

Kia ora. Thank you for completing the questionnaire and the first part of this study. As mentioned in the original information sheet, the second part of this study involves completing a short interview. Below are a few reminders about this study, the nature of the interview, your rights as a participant, and how we will care for the information you share today.

The primary aim of this research project is to document how secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region are implementing student wellbeing applications. The interview will include several questions that build on the information you shared in response to the questionnaire. More specifically, I will ask about how your school chose and developed their wellbeing strategy, your views of its effectiveness and limitations, how adaptable it is for a diverse student body, and how staff have engaged in facilitating this strategy. This follow-up interview will take approximately 20 minutes.

With your permission, I will record the audio of the interview, which will then be used to transcribe the interview verbatim. After transcribing the interview, the audio recording will be deleted. Once your interview is transcribed, you may review your transcript. Please indicate on the consent form if you would like to do this.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time. You may ask for your raw data to be returned to you or destroyed at any point. If you withdraw, I will remove all information relating to you and your school. However, once analysis of raw data starts, it will become increasingly difficult to remove the influence of your data on the results.

In the performance of the above-mentioned tasks and application of the procedures of this project, I and my supervisors have identified the following as potential risks of participation, and how they may be minimised and/or managed. First, depending on the circumstances at your school, discussion of student wellbeing may result in mental and/or emotional stress. In order to minimise and manage this potential risk, the questionnaire and interview questions do not enquire about personal or sensitive topics, but rather address the policies, procedures and strategies that your school implements to safeguard student wellbeing. At any time, you will be able to skip questionnaire or interview question(s), pause the interview, and/or withdraw from the interview. Moreover, you will be provided with contact details for relevant support services at the time of the interview.

Second, as this project asks you to evaluate the strengths and limitations of your schools' wellbeing related programming and/or policies, social risk may cause concern. You may, however, be assured of the complete confidentiality of all data gathered in this investigation. All identifiable information that you discuss in the interview will be de-identified, ensuring that your identity, and the identity of your school, will NOT be made public. Specifically, a study ID code number will instead be used to identify you and your school, and your role will not be disclosed, nor will specific information about your school. For example, geographic location will not be disclosed, and schools will be described at the group level (not individually) according to broad categories such as single sex or co-educational; state, integrated, or private; urban or rural). Moreover, all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form, and will be destroyed five years post-project. This will ensure data is only accessible by myself and my supervisors.

The results of this study will be published as a thesis (which is a public document available through the UC library) and may be published in other academic outlets such as journal articles or conference presentations. If you wish to receive a copy of the summary of results of this project, please provide your email address at the bottom of the consent form.

This project is being carried out as a requirement for the Master of Science in Child and Family Psychology by Emma Green under the supervision of Dr. Myron Friesen (myron.friesen@canterbury.ac.nz; phone – 03 369 5598). He will be pleased to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about participating in this project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nga mihi nui
Emma Green
emma.green@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

College of Education, Health, & Human Development
 Email: emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Student Well-being Applications in Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study in the Greater Christchurch Region.

Interview Consent Form for School Wellbeing Staff Member

- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.
- I understand the potential risks that are involved in this study and how they will be managed.
- I understand that participation is voluntary, and that I may withdraw at any time. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information I have provided should this remain practically achievable.
- I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and her supervisors, and that any published or reported results will not identify myself as a participant or my school. I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed five years post project.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher (emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or her supervisor (myron.friesen@canterbury.ac.nz) for further information. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- I wish to receive a copy of the interview transcript.
- I agree to the audio recording of the interview.

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date _____

Email address (*for report of findings, if applicable*): _____

College of Education, Health & Human Development
 Email: emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
 ERHEC Ref: 2019/62/ERHEC



Student Well-being Applications in Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study in the Greater Christchurch Region.

Information Sheet for Principals/Board of Trustees

Kia ora. My name is Emma Green. I am currently working toward a Master of Science in Child and Family Psychology at the University of Canterbury. I am inviting your school to participate in the following research project titled, '*Student wellbeing applications in secondary schools: A scoping study in the greater Christchurch region.*'

The primary aim of this research project is to document how secondary schools in the greater Christchurch region are implementing student wellbeing programmes, initiatives, or strategies. The growing fields of positive psychology and positive youth development provide promise for supporting the positive development of all young people within community settings. As such, the importance of understanding how schools are implementing wellbeing applications, along with the challenges and opportunities that accompany these endeavours, is an important step in the research in this area. Thus, this research project seeks to learn from those schools who are involved in wellbeing programmes, initiatives, or strategies, in their own words, about the experience of implementing these applications in the secondary school setting. For those schools who have yet to implement a specific wellbeing application in the secondary school setting, we are interested in learning about the resources and supports that would be required to assist your school in implementing a student wellbeing strategy, as well as your schools existing strengths.

I am attempting to recruit one key wellbeing contact person from each school to participate in this study. For those schools who have a wellbeing application, this person should have good knowledge about the school's wellbeing application, such as why and how it was selected, how it is implemented, who is involved, and how the information about student wellbeing issues is managed. For those schools who have yet to formally implement a specific student wellbeing initiative, we would like to recruit one key leader who works in the area of student pastoral care.

Participation in this study involves one staff member involved in student wellbeing to first complete a short questionnaire (approximately 10 minutes). Then, for those schools who are currently implementing a student wellbeing strategy, I would like to conduct a short follow-up interview with the key staff member (approximately 20 minutes). After the staff member has completed the questionnaire, I will send them an information sheet and consent form for the interview and schedule a time that is convenient, should they agree to continue participation. The interview will include several questions that build on the information shared in response to the questionnaire. More specifically, I will ask about how your school chose and developed their wellbeing strategy, the staff members' views of its effectiveness and limitations, how adaptable it is for a diverse student body, and how staff have engaged in facilitating this strategy.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your school at any time. If you withdraw your school, all information relating to the staff member and your school will be removed. However, once analysis of raw data starts, it will become increasingly difficult to remove your schools' data.

In the performance of the above-mentioned tasks and application of the procedures of this project, I and my supervisors have identified the following as potential risks of participation, and how they may be minimised and/or managed. First, depending on the circumstances at your school, discussion of student wellbeing may result in mental and/or emotional stress. In order to address this potential risk, the questionnaire and interview questions do not enquire about personal or sensitive topics, but rather address the policies, procedures and strategies that your school implements to safeguard student wellbeing. At any time, the staff member will be able to skip questionnaire or interview question(s), pause the interview, and/or withdraw from the interview. Moreover, the staff member will be provided with contact details for relevant support services at the time of the interview.

Second, as this project asks the staff member to evaluate the strengths and limitations of your schools' wellbeing related programming and/or policies, social risk may cause concern. You may, however, be assured of the complete confidentiality of all data gathered in this investigation. All identifiable information discussed in the interview will be de-identified, ensuring that the staff members' identity, and the identity of your school, will NOT be made public. Specifically, a study ID code number will instead be used to identify the staff member and your school; while the staff members' role will not be disclosed, nor will specific information about your school. For example, geographic location will not be disclosed, and schools will be described at the group level (not individually) according to broad categories such as single sex or co-educational; state, integrated, or private; urban or rural. Moreover, all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed five years post-project. This will ensure data is only accessible by myself and my supervisors.

The results of this study will be published as a thesis (which is a public document available through the UC library) and may be published in other academic outlets such as journal articles or conference presentations. If you wish to receive a copy of the summary of results of this project, please provide your email address at the bottom of the consent form.

This project is being carried out as a requirement for the Master of Science in Child and Family Psychology by Emma Green under the supervision of Dr. Myron Friesen (myron.friesen@canterbury.ac.nz; phone – 03 369 5598). He will be pleased to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about participating in this project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Emma Green

Email: emma.green@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

College of Education, Health, & Human Development

Email:

emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

ERHEC Ref: 2019/62/ERHEC

College of Education, Health, & Human Development
 Email: emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Student Well-being Applications in Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study in the Greater Christchurch Region.

Consent Form for Principals/Board of Trustees

- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand what is required of the school if we agree to take part in the research.
- I understand the potential risks that are involved in this study and how they will be managed.
- I understand that participation is voluntary, and that the school may withdraw at any time. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information provided should this remain practically achievable.
- I understand that any information or opinions provided will be kept confidential to the researcher and her supervisors, and that any published or reported results will not identify the staff member or the school. I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed five years post project.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher (emmagreen@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or her supervisor (myron.friesen@canterbury.ac.nz) for further information. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- Please tick if you would like to receive a summary of the findings from this research.

By signing below, the school agrees to allow a staff member to participate in the questionnaire and interview of this research project, upon their individual consent.

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Student wellbeing key contact name and email address:

Appendix B: Interview Schedule

1. How does your school “do” wellbeing?

- Could you please describe the resources and activities that comprise wellbeing related programming or initiatives in your school?

2. Please tell me how the school came to a decision about implementing this programme.

- What appealed to you about this programme?
- Were there any specific factors that this programme addressed that you felt were particularly relevant for your school context? Please describe. [*Probe for dimensions of wellbeing such as, meaningful relationships across the school community, student involvement, and those educational policies and practices that encourage wellbeing promotion*].

3. Are these applications informed by a one or more theories of wellbeing, such as the PERMA model, Positive Youth Development, Social Emotional Learning, Te Whare Tapa Wha?

- If **yes**, in what way?
- If **no**, for what reason? **

4. Does this programming take cultural diversity into account? *

- If **yes**, could you provide an example of how cultural diversity has been accommodated?
- If **no**, for what reason? – can you tell me more about that/what do you think that is/do you think it is a need?

5. How would you describe the programme’s effectiveness at supporting/addressing students’ wellbeing needs? *

- Can you explain how programme effectiveness is measured? [*Follow-up on what types of measures and who has access to that info*].

- What do you see as the gaps or limitations in this programme that may influence its effectiveness?

6. Have you experienced any challenges in the implementation of this programming? If so, what kind of challenges? *

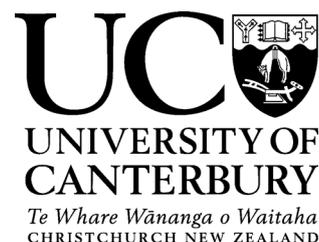
7. Could you tell me what particular follow-up opportunities or supports, if any, are available for students experiencing wellbeing related issues?

8. What type of professional development opportunities are available for school staff to help ensure that the programme is effectively implemented?

Appendix C: Ethics Approval

HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

Secretary, Rebecca Robinson
Telephone: +64 03 369 4588, Extn 94588
Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz



Ref: 2019/62/ERHEC

17 October 2019

Emma Green
College of Education, Health and Human Development
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Emma

Thank you for providing the revised documents in support of your application to the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. I am very pleased to inform you that your research proposal “Student Well-Being Applications in Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study on the Greater Christchurch Region” has been granted ethical approval.

Please note that this approval is subject to the incorporation of the amendments you have provided in your emails of 23rd September and 14th October 2019.

Should circumstances relevant to this current application change you are required to reapply for ethical approval.

If you have any questions regarding this approval, please let me know. We

wish you well for your research.

Yours sincerely

pp. R. Robinson

Dr Patrick Shepherd
Chair
Educational Research Human Ethics Committee

Please note that ethical approval relates only to the ethical elements of the relationship between the researcher, research participants and other stakeholders. The granting of approval by the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee should not be interpreted as comment on the methodology, legality, value or any other matters relating to this research.

