



St Patrick's National School, Drumcondra, D09XH52

Scoil Phadraig, Droim Conrach, Ath Cliath D09 XH52

Email: secretary@saintpats.ie Telephone: (01)837371 Charity number:2011645

Wellbeing Statement

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Rationale

The promotion of wellbeing is central to the Department of Education's mission to enable children and young people to achieve their full potential and contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development. Schools play a vital role in the promotion of wellbeing through a range of activities and approaches to support the academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of all children and young people. Our education system is crucial to equipping children and young people with the knowledge, skills and competencies to deal with challenges that impact on their wellbeing

(Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018)

St Patrick's National School seeks to promote and support all aspects of the children's wellbeing as a core value of our ethos. We strive to ensure that all our students can flourish in an environment that is nurturing, supportive and progressive. We are guided by our mission statement, the aim of which is to ensure that each child, through confidence and self-belief may achieve their full potential and we believe that this can be achieved when wellbeing is present.

Our understanding of wellbeing is in keeping with the World Health Organisation definition of wellbeing being present "when a person realises their potential, is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of their life, takes care of their physical wellbeing and has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community. It is a fluid way of being and needs nurturing throughout life." (WHO, 2001)

In the school environment, social and emotional skills do not exist in isolation but interact with cognitive skills development. The role of the school is now understood as a place which develops the 'whole child', who should leave school with a balanced set of cognitive, social and emotional skills to face the challenges of the 21st century (OECD 2014).

Schools play a key role in developing and enhancing young people's wellbeing as they spend a large proportion of their time in school during their formative years. Children and young people learn more effectively and have better academic outcomes if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves and feel acknowledged and supported in their schools. National and international research highlights that the wellbeing of our children and young people is critical to their success in education and in life. (Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018).

St Patrick's National School has already developed innovative approaches to wellbeing promotion and we aim to further support children by optimising opportunities to learn about their own wellbeing. As well as being a place of academic learning, our school provides opportunities to develop friendships and social networks, to respectfully encounter diversity and to access support structures. This policy documents existing and developing work in wellbeing promotion in St Patrick's NS. Its implementation is an ongoing, reflective and self-evaluative process that aims to focus on supporting children in having a sense of purpose and fulfilment, and the skills necessary to deal with life's challenges. It also aims to be responsive to the changing needs of the school and the children in our care.

Introduction

As part of the Third Cycle of School Self-Evaluation (SSE) 2022-2026, schools were asked to initiate and review the area of wellbeing. As part of our evaluation, we surveyed all staff members with regards to Key Areas identified in the Wellbeing Framework for Practice (Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Policy and Planning, Relationships and Partnerships) and identified areas of strength and potential for development. We continued our evaluation with a parent survey through Google Forms to investigate their opinions about their children's wellbeing in school and to identify our strengths and further areas for development. Similarly, a pupil survey was provided to pupils in 1st and 2nd class, and we sought feedback from a focus group from 3rd-6th class. Statements of the Wellbeing Effective Practice which we agreed to focus on were:

Statement K: The school building is accessible for all children and young people and accommodation is modified to meet the needs of all.

Statement M: Indoor and outdoor space is provided to facilitate social interaction and physical activity and quiet time.

Statement P: Staff, children and young people are welcoming and inclusive of those from different cultural backgrounds, those with additional needs and all sexual orientations.

Statement R: The physical environment is modified to meet the needs of children and young people with additional and/or complex needs.

This policy statement sets out the vision and ambition of St Patrick's NS to ensure that the experience of our children from the early years throughout their primary education will be one that promotes, enhances, values and nurtures their wellbeing. Key to this ambition is building on the good practice already in place and the capacity of our school to assess, understand, evaluate and promote the key factors that will lead to optimal promotion of student wellbeing in our school setting.

We adopt a preventative, multi-component, continuum of support approach to the promotion of wellbeing with the provision of both whole school and targeted interventions that promote school-based protective factors and reduce school-based risk factors. We are committed to the ongoing review and development of the four key areas and indicators of successful wellbeing promotion as outlined above. This involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process to identify, consolidate and improve specific areas of school life that impact on wellbeing. This policy takes cognisance of the fact that Wellbeing is an active, adaptive and changing process and involves all the partners and participants in our School community.

Our wellbeing policy is:

Child-centred: The wellbeing needs and the best interests of our children are a central focus of this policy. This requires us to respect and value the voice of children and young people and foster their belonging and connectedness to our school community.

Fair and inclusive: All children receive fair and inclusive opportunities to develop their wellbeing in ways that are responsive and suitable to their particular needs and contexts. Practices are tailored and relevant, building on the existing strengths of children, school staff, families and school communities.

Evidence-informed: This policy promotes the use of evidence-informed practice, which brings together local experience and expertise with the best available evidence from research.

Outcomes focused: This policy promotes continuous improvement practices and the use of data relating to outcomes to guide practice in our school in relation to the promotion of wellbeing for all children.

Partnership/Collaboration: The wellbeing of our children is a shared responsibility. Working in partnership with parents, guardians, school staff and external agencies is crucial to ensuring this policy is implemented.

Documents which have informed our Wellbeing Policy planning:

1. Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (DES, 2018)
2. The Revised Primary School Curriculum
3. Schools for Health in Ireland: Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School (HSE, 2013)
4. Looking at Our School: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools (DES, Inspectorate, 2016)
5. Well-Being in Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH & HSE, 2015)
6. Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009) Wellbeing Protective and Risk Factors
Risk and protective factors relating to wellbeing promotion that are specific to our school setting have been identified. Protective factors have been found to promote positive outcomes for children and young people, even when they have been exposed to risk factors (Cooper, Jacobs, 2011).

Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

The Department's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice assists schools in ensuring that wellbeing promotion is embedded within the school's existing practice. The school's review and development process using the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides guidance and practical resources to assist in the further enhancement of whole school approaches to wellbeing promotion. The Wellbeing Framework for Practice outlines: 1. Key areas of wellbeing in education 2. Indicators of success in each of these areas 3. Statements of effective practice to guide schools 4. Suite of online wellbeing resources.

Looking at Our School: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools

Looking at Our School articulates the Department's holistic view of learning in schools. The framework sees wellbeing as both an enabler of learning and an outcome of learning. It emphasises the need for children and young people to develop a broad range of skills, competencies and values that enable active citizenship, lifelong learning and personal wellbeing. The framework asserts that in providing good quality learning experiences, teachers need to also consider children and young people's wellbeing and that effective school leadership and management involves creating and maintaining a positive, secure and healthy culture where the holistic development of all children and young people is enabled. *Looking at Our School* also provides a coherent approach to improving outcomes and experiences for all children and young people. It is used to assist schools in embedding self-evaluation processes and reflective practices and it provides a structure for implementing new initiatives. The domains and standards of *Looking at Our School* can therefore support schools in promoting and enhancing the wellbeing of all members of the school community.

What is Wellbeing?

"Wellbeing is present when a person realises their potential, is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of their life, takes care of their physical wellbeing and has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community. It is a fluid way of being and needs nurturing throughout life." (World Health Organisation, 2001)

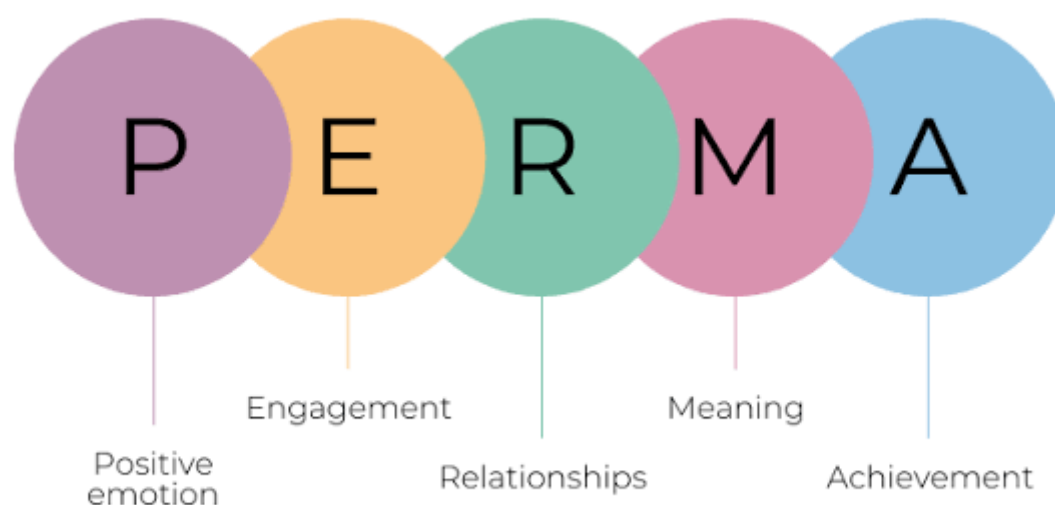
Wellbeing is multidimensional: 1. Physical 2. Social 3. Mental 4. Emotional 5. Spiritual

The Mental Health Foundation (2002) suggests that children who are mentally healthy possess the ability to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, spiritually
- initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships
- use and enjoy solitude
- become aware of others and empathise with them
- play and learn
- develop a sense of right and wrong
- resolve (face) problems and setbacks satisfactorily and learn from them (Alexander, 2002)

The science of wellbeing is studied as Positive Psychology. Positive psychology is underpinned by Professor Martin Seligman's PERMA Theory of Wellbeing (2011). PERMA Theory outlines 5 core elements of wellbeing.

Table 1: PERMA Theory of Wellbeing



In St Patrick's NS, we focus on building these 5 elements of wellbeing by:

- Increasing and prioritising positive emotions
- Teaching emotional regulation skills

- Encouraging children to utilise their skills
- Providing challenging activities to facilitate growth
- Identifying and using character strengths
- Promoting and supporting inclusion
- Communicating high expectations
- Fostering positive relationships
- Providing support
- Teaching life skills
- Facilitating connection to the school community
- Improving self-efficacy
- Celebrating success

Wellbeing Protective and Risk Factors

Risk and protective factors relating to wellbeing promotion that are specific to our school setting have been identified. Protective factors have been found to promote positive outcomes for children and young people, even when they have been exposed to risk factors (Cooper, Jacobs, 2011).

In St Patrick's NS, we implement a preventative wellbeing promotion process that has a focus on strengthening school-based protective factors and minimising school-based risk factors. Wellbeing Protective Factors include:

1. Positive relationships with peers and teachers - including positive teacher classroom management strategies and a sharing of positive behaviour management practices with parents
2. A sense of belonging, security and connectedness for all pupils in our school through the creation of a positive, inclusive school climate and participation in school and community activities
3. Opportunities for social and emotional learning including the development of attention and planning, self-awareness, emotional regulation, relationships, responsible decision making and problem solving skills
4. Opportunities for the development of knowledge and skills providing a sense of mastery and self-efficacy
5. Fostering expectations, recognising contributions, effort and achievement and providing opportunities for success
6. Protocols and support systems that proactively support children and their families should difficulties arise
7. Opportunities to develop the necessary skills to cope with using online technology in a safe and appropriate way
8. Wellbeing of school personnel and professional development for teachers and staff in our school setting.
9. Facilitating connection to the school community

Wellbeing Risk Factors include:

1. Patterns of non-attendance, reduced participation, social withdrawal or feelings of disconnection from school
2. Bullying experiences or challenges in forming and maintaining positive peer relationships
3. Academic barriers or learning needs, including social, emotional or behavioural support needs
4. Cultural or linguistic differences that may affect a student's sense of belonging
5. Transitions between schools or key stages that may impact stability or wellbeing
6. Limited family-school connection or reduced opportunities for collaborative communication
7. Inconsistent expectations or boundaries
8. Reduced opportunities to develop social and emotional skills such as problem-solving, self-regulation and coping strategies

The Role of the Teacher

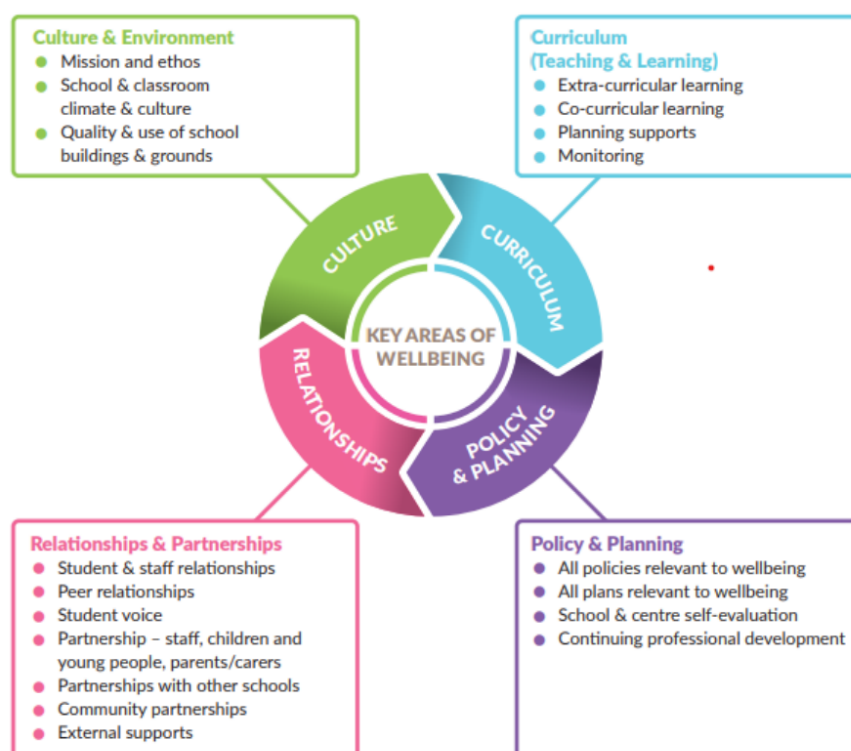
The role of the teacher has been found to be paramount to children's wellbeing and reaches beyond teaching and learning. The relationship that teachers develop with the child has a key influence on wellbeing development. Access to 'one good adult' that can guide and support a young person at a vulnerable time is an identified protective factor. The classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and he/she can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education.

The presence of one supportive adult is critically important to the child's wellbeing, sense of connectedness, self-confidence and ability to cope with difficulties. Teachers are sometimes that 'one good adult' acting as a protective force in a child's life. The classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and he/she can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education. It is essential that all staff continue to develop their competence and confidence in the promotion of wellbeing. This can be achieved through accessing continuing professional development (CPD) which includes the sharing of expertise and learning, and having opportunities to model and engage in collaborative working. (Wellbeing Framework for Practice 2019)

The staff of St Patrick's NS strive to nurture and support all children in their care and to fulfil their role as a 'protective factor' in situations where their guidance and support is critical to a child's wellbeing. Teachers, SNAs and SET teachers collaborate to ensure all aspects of wellbeing are addressed for vulnerable children. Teachers and SNAs who have engaged in CPD regularly share new expertise with colleagues. Examples of shared practice in St Patrick's NS is the modelling and subsequent adoption of programmes such as Zones of Regulation, conflict resolution and Low Arousal strategies for behavioural intervention, and sensory movement breaks. The curricular elements of wellbeing promotion are explicitly taught through SPHE programmes such as Friends for Life/Fun Friends, Weaving Wellbeing and Stay Safe.

Multicomponent Approach to Wellbeing Promotion

The Department of Education and Skills Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice assist schools in ensuring that wellbeing promotion is embedded within the school's existing practice. They advocate a multicomponent approach to wellbeing promotion to ensure that all of the key areas that contribute to wellbeing promotion are given a focus



Key Area 1-Culture and Environment

St Patrick's N.S aims to cultivate an environment that enhances wellbeing for all who learn, work and visit. Our school environment is one that consciously fosters warm relationships, encourages participation, develops pupil and teacher autonomy and provides clarity of boundaries, rules and positive expectations. We aim to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff and members of the whole school community, both in and out of school. We foster positive relationships, respect and consideration for others, where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities. The staff strives to create a culture and climate which is accepting and supportive for students, staff and parents. Through nurturing quality relationships within the school we promote the wellbeing of students and staff members as well as fostering a shared responsibility for promoting positive wellbeing. We are proud of our school and grounds in which our students can safely learn and be active. The proposed new sensory school garden is a shared goal of our students, teachers and parents and will form part of our School Improvement Plan for 2025/2026 and the coming years.

Key Area 2- Curriculum

Wellbeing promotion is central to all areas of teaching and learning in St Patrick's NS. Teaching and learning is inclusive, engaging and differentiated. We deliver an integrated curriculum that recognises the richness and uniqueness of the individual through a differentiated approach, and the importance of high quality teaching and learning experiences for all. Wellbeing promotion is addressed across the curriculum through:

1. SPHE
2. Literacy
3. Integrated Play (formerly Aistear)
4. Physical Education
5. Religious Education
6. SESE subjects
7. Arts Education

SPHE:

Social, Personal and Health Education is central to pupil development in its broadest sense and is an essential part of a school's curriculum. The SPHE curriculum strongly supports the social and emotional wellbeing of our pupils, by placing an emphasis on progressing children's social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and learning. SPHE encompasses the development of emotional literacy which is the ability to understand emotions, listen to others and empathise. This includes provision of safe, secure and comfortable environments that enable children to share their concerns. Key characteristics of the SPHE programme delivered in our school:

1. It is viewed as a continuous and developmental process
2. It comprises of high quality programmes such as Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall, FUSE antibullying
3. We acknowledge a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community in ensuring children's wellbeing
4. It is based on the needs of the child
5. It is effective and consistent in delivery
6. It has been developed in an integrated and cross-contextual way
7. It engages children in activity based learning (NCCA 1999)

Literacy:

Children who engage with reading are three times more likely to have high levels of mental wellbeing than those who do not (UK National Literacy Trust, 2018).

We strive to foster a love of reading and provide opportunities for a culture of reading to flourish in our school through explicit literacy teaching and the integration of Literacy stations, story time, DEAR time, Library time, use of Building Bridges, Link to the local library, visits from authors, World Book Day etc into our programme for literacy. We use a range of assessment tools to monitor each child's progress in reading attainment and to provide additional support where needed.

Integrated Play (Aistear):

The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework encompasses four themes - Wellbeing, Identity and Belonging, Communication, Exploring and Thinking. Much of children's early learning and development takes place through play and hands-on experiences. Through these, children explore social, physical and imaginary worlds. These experiences help them to manage their feelings, develop as thinkers and language users, develop socially, be creative and imaginative, and lay the foundations for becoming effective communicators and learners. (NCCA, 2009) St Patrick's NS has adopted aspects of the Aistear programme into its Infant Education programme enabling our youngest students to engage playfully with activities and role play which foster language, communication and social skills development.

Physical Education:

Through physical education children can experience the joy of physical exertion and the satisfaction of achievement while developing skills and positive attitudes that enhance self-esteem. Physical education provides opportunities to develop desirable personal and social attributes: the concept of fair play, the acceptance of success and failure, and the ability to co-operate in group situations. These opportunities contribute to the understanding and promotion of a healthy life-style. Physical education, as an integral part of the total curriculum, provides vital opportunities for the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of the child. (Primary School Curriculum)

St Patrick's NS has a vibrant programme for PE. We also have extracurricular/ teams delivered by volunteer staff. We maintain strong links with local sports clubs and organisations such as Na Fianna GAA club and Clonliffe Harriers Athletics Club and participate in their in-schools training programmes. St Patrick's NS is represented in inter-school competitions such as the leagues in table tennis and basketball, Cumann na mBunscoile (GAA) and Santry Sports (Community Games). We encourage walking, cycling or scooting to school as part of our Active School Charter. Additional provision is made for some children to strengthen core/ motor skills through our sensory circuit programme.

Religious Education:

St Patrick's NS is inclusive of children of all faiths or no faith. Our SPHE programme is taught cross-culturally. General themes around respect, the environment, community welfare etc are taught at the whole class level. The school, its chaplain and parent body work together in preparing children for sacraments.

SESE:

Social, environmental and scientific education (SESE) provides opportunities for the child to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural dimensions of local and wider environments; to learn and practise a wide range of skills; and to acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes. SESE enables the child to live as an informed and caring member of local, national, European and global communities. (Primary Curriculum)

St Patrick's NS adopts an active learning approach to SESE subjects. Our aim is to foster curiosity, develop language and critical thinking skills and to enable children to acquire knowledge and skills through active participation and engaging learning experiences. In addition to the core curriculum there may be opportunities for children to participate in field trips to places of historical and geographical interest. The goal for PA fundraising this year is to commence stage one of our school sensory garden in which the children can actively observe seasonal changes and

experience the joy of watching, listening to, smelling and touching the natural growth of plants and flowers they themselves will be involved in.

Arts Education:

Arts education enables the child to explore alternative ways of communicating with others. It encourages ideas that are personal and inventive and makes a vital contribution to the development of a range of intelligences. A purposeful arts education at primary level is life-enhancing and is invaluable in stimulating creative thinking and in promoting capability and adaptability. It emphasises the creative process and so ensures that the child's work is personal and has quality. Attempts at artistic expression are valued, self-esteem is enhanced, spontaneity and risk-taking are encouraged and difference is celebrated. It is this affirming aspect of the creative arts that makes participation such a positive experience. Arts education is integral to primary education in helping to promote thinking, imagination and sensitivity, and arts activities can be a focus for social and cultural development and enjoyment in school. Arts education encompasses a range of activities in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature. (Primary Curriculum)

St Patrick's NS has a rich tradition of celebrating creativity and fostering the development of the imagination through our Visual Arts, Music and Drama programmes. In addition to curricular provision for Arts subjects, the school participates in a range of Arts related experiences which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Art competitions
2. Artist in Residence scheme
3. School Choir, Carol service and nativity
4. Seachtain na Gaeilge Ceolchoirm
5. Peace Proms
6. After-school programmes in Visual Art, Drama, Dance and Music

Key Area 3 Policy and Planning

St Patrick's NS regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils to ensure that they are current and in accordance with the school's vision and ethos. Aspects of the school self-evaluation and the school improvement plan incorporate wellbeing. Wellbeing promotion is addressed in school policies and plans including but not limited to:

1. Physical Education
2. Religious Education
3. SPHE
4. RSE
5. Code of Behaviour
6. Bí Cineálta
7. Child Safeguarding
8. Critical Incidents
9. Health and Safety
10. Acceptable Use Policy
11. Additional Educational Needs
12. Healthy Eating Policy
13. Attendance Strategy and Policy
14. Homework Policy

St Patrick's NS continues to develop strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community, which is a central part of the wellbeing process. We effectively engage with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and wellbeing, teaching and learning. The following stakeholders meet and collaborate regularly throughout the school year:

1. Parents/Guardians
2. Teacher groups
3. Board of Management
4. In-School leadership and Management Team
5. Parents Association
6. Student Committees
7. Voluntary/sportsgroups
8. State agencies
9. Support services

Two-tiered Approach to Wellbeing Promotion

In St Patrick's NS we adopt a preventative, two-tiered approach to wellbeing promotion, with interventions at both universal whole school and individual targeted levels.

1. Whole School Approach

Our whole school approach involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change and improvement to enhance specific areas of school life which impact on wellbeing. By adopting a whole school approach, we aim to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for our pupils, including a culture of positive, pro-social behaviour, a feeling of inclusion, optimum learning experiences, strong social cohesion, increased social capital and ultimately, a strong foundation for mental health and wellbeing. In St Patrick's NS, we embrace School Support for All as a whole school approach that focuses on promoting wellbeing for all members of the school community. School Support for All is a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching, early identification and intervention for children who are showing mild or transient signs of difficulty. Students flourish where there is a whole school approach to supporting their growth and wellbeing. Our Whole School Approach involves:

1. Raising awareness of wellbeing promotion
2. Regular review and development of policies relating to wellbeing such as critical incidents, Bí Cineálta, child protection etc
3. Sharing professional development opportunities in wellbeing promotion for school staff
4. Implementing the SPHE curriculum which includes a focus on whole school approaches to wellbeing and health promotion
5. Implementing universal evidence based programmes and interventions
6. Establishing school structures for supporting staff and students
7. Establishing mechanisms such as student councils to ensure that the voices of children are heard
8. Planning, collaborating and appropriate sharing of information between schools when children are making the transition into primary school or moving into post-primary school
9. Liaising with appropriate external agencies and services eg NEPS psychologists, Tusla, NCSE etc

Benefits of a Whole School Approach

Adopting a whole school approach has been found internationally to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for individual children including:

1. Better learning results for pupils
2. Increased pupil self-esteem
3. Improved behaviour
4. Lowered incidence of bullying
5. Increased inclusion
6. School environment is safer and more secure
7. Improved relationships within the school
8. More involvement of parents/guardians
9. Better use of outside agencies
10. More proactive in promotion of staff wellbeing

Whole School Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing

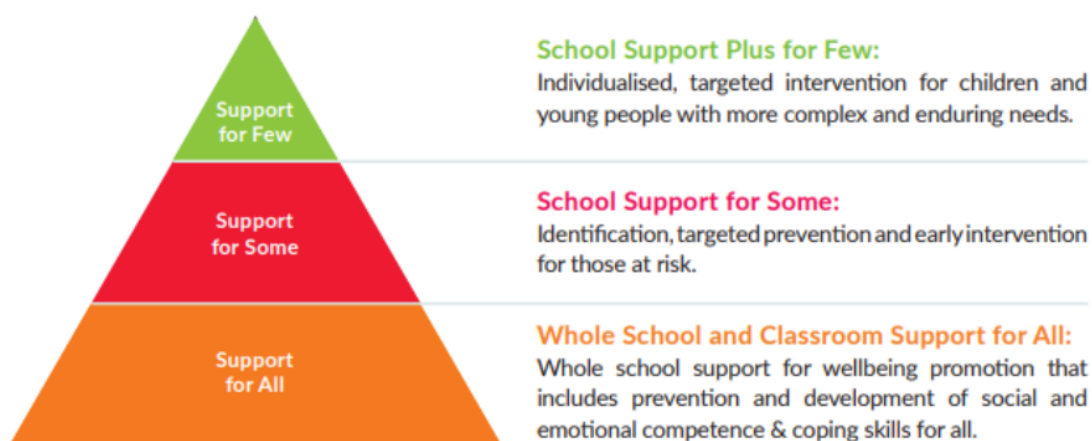
St Patrick's NS implements a number of programmes and initiatives that support the wellbeing of our pupils, including but not limited to:

1. SPHE Curriculum (Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall)
2. Integrated Play (Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework)
3. Continuum of Support Model
4. Student Committees: Student Council, Green School Committee, Active Committee, Wellbeing Committee
5. Art displays
6. Project based learning
7. Outdoor learning
8. Partnership with the local Sports providers
9. External PE coaches e.g. GAA, soccer
10. Healthy Eating policy
11. Active School Programme
12. Active Week/Sports Day/ swimming/ Cycle safety
13. Wellbeing Wednesdays
14. Monthly assemblies
15. Themed weeks (e.g. Maths Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Internet Safety, Grandparents Day)
16. Promoting the Arts – Christmas Concerts, tinwhistle classes, Choir, art competitions, Art displays
17. After School Clubs
18. Provision of hot lunches
19. Attendance Strategy
20. P.A. events such as the Halloween Fair, Easter Raffle, Cycle of Wednesday, Family Quiz, Christmas treats

2. Individual and Targeted Support

The Continuum of Support recognises that individual children and young people can have different needs at different times. Those at greater risk and with greater needs may require more specific and targeted support, in addition to the support provided to all children and young people in their class-based groups. Children and young people with additional needs and vulnerable groups are particularly at risk in the area of wellbeing (NCSE, 2014).

Table 1: Continuum of Support



The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) supports schools in promoting the wellbeing and mental health of all children and young people. While supporting all, NEPS prioritises support for those at risk of educational disadvantage and those with special educational needs.

The Student Support Team:

Comprised of:

Principal (Ms Bassett)
Deputy Principal/ Sen Coordinator (Mr Duffy)
Class Teacher (Ms. Kealy)
Class teacher: (Mr Williams)
Assistant Principal 1 (Ms Doyle)
Assistant Principal 2 (Ms. Quinn)

The Student Support Team provides one-to-one and group support to pupils with identified needs across the full spectrum of wellbeing, including social, emotional, behavioural and environmental factors that may be affecting their experience in school

The Special Educational Needs Team meets regularly to discuss the educational, social and wellbeing needs of pupils in the school as a whole, under the continuum of support model. Through this process, children may be identified who would benefit from additional support in school, at home, and/or from external agencies. Where a pupil's needs do not fall within the remit of the Special Education Teacher, particularly when the concerns relate to wider wellbeing issues, the pupil will be supported through the Student Support Team. This includes areas such as emotional wellbeing, social relationships, attendance patterns, family circumstances, or other contextual factors that may be impacting the student's experience in school.

Students who experience difficulties in life will find it difficult to have cognitive space for learning. The Student Support Team undertakes the following:

1. To liaise with external professionals about the welfare of the child
2. To liaise with the parents/ guardians of the child
3. To share information in a confidential setting
4. To coordinate a targeted response to the needs of a student
5. To review and monitor the students with care needs

Referral to the School Support Team

All staff members of the school community have a responsibility to be observant of the needs of our students. The process of referral to the school support team is as follows:

1. The class teacher will refer a student directly to the Special Education Co-ordinator
2. The Special Education Co-ordinator will forward information to the Principal
3. A parent may also raise concerns regarding their child to the class teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal.

Once a student is referred to the Student Support Team:

1. the teacher may call home to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss concerns
 2. a classroom support or school support plan may be initiated for the child
 3. Intervention plans and individual targets are developed
 4. Specific needs may be discussed with external agencies or professionals such as National Educational Psychology Service (NEPs), HSE personnel (Primary Care Team, Assessment of Need Team, Early Intervention Team, School Age Team), TUSLA/National Educational Welfare Board, National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
 5. Student support plans are reviewed and updated throughout the school year Documentation and Communication of School Support Plans
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6. Support plans are drafted, shared with parents for consultation, and then finalised before a programme of support commences
 7. Support plans are uploaded to the child's Aladdin documents
 8. Information regarding additional support is included with the handover documents which are shared between teachers at the commencement of each school year
 9. Any confidential information or information which evokes the implementation of the Child Safe Guarding Policy are dealt directly by the Designated Liaison Person – DLP, (or Deputy DLP in their absence), and communicated with parents/guardians.

External Agencies and Specialist Support Services

Some children will require additional support from specialist support services external to the school. In the event of a child presenting with mental health concerns, which are above and beyond the capacity and ability of the school to provide adequate support, the school may decide upon either of the following courses of action:

1. Follow existing policies which enable staff to access and refer directly to an external service.
2. When deemed necessary, the school team, with the consent and collaboration of parents/ guardians, may recommend a referral to the local General Practitioner (GP) or other appropriate professionals who can advise on referral pathways. For children with mental health difficulties, the referral will likely be made to the local HSE Psychology Service/Primary Care Team or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Indicators of Success

We will use the Wellbeing Indicators of Success to identify our strengths and targets for improvement, and to actively monitor our progress and outcomes in relation to wellbeing promotion over time. We achieve this by accessing the opinions and views of all stakeholders throughout the process. To date we have sought opinions and suggestions from all stakeholders with regard to indicators of wellbeing specific to our school, prioritised on the basis of additional measures that would improve wellbeing for all or for children with specific needs, and reviewed our progress. We are committed to regularly reviewing practices affecting the four key areas of wellbeing using the Wellbeing Indicators of Success outlined below.

Key Areas	Indicators of Success
Culture & Environment	- Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. - Systems are in place so that the voice of the child/young person, teacher and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and ethos.
Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)	- Children and young people experience positive, high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, which provides opportunities for success for all. - Children and young people access curricular activities to promote their physical, social and emotional competence to enhance their overall wellbeing.
Policy & Planning	- Schools and centres for education use a Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process to develop, implement and review wellbeing promotion. - Schools and centres for education incorporate wellbeing promotion into whole school policies and practices.
Relationships & Partnerships	- Children and young people, their parents and other external partners are actively involved in wellbeing promotion within the school community. - All adults in schools and centres for education have an increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to children and young people, and signposting them to internal or external pathways for support when needed.

(Table 5 Framework for Practice 2019)

These Indicators of Success in the four key areas of wellbeing are further expanded upon as Statements of Effective Practice (See Appendix A) which provide a set of standards for wellbeing practices across the Continuum of Support at the whole school preventative level (Support for All) and also at the targeted and more individualised levels (Support for Some and Few). These Statements of Effective Practice formed the basis of the school's self-reflective Wellbeing Promotion Process.

Suggested Measures of Success:

1. Student attendance
2. Successful transition of pupils
3. Data gathered in school e.g. surveys, interviews, checklists
4. Data gathered through consultation with children, parents, teachers and other staff members
5. Information from inspectorate reports School Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process.

In implementing the improvement plan, we will refer to the Statements of Effective Practice in key areas and information gathered through consultation with key stakeholders, including staff, pupils and parents/guardians. This information was essential in highlighting positive aspects and strengths in our collective practice and in identifying areas for development- the analysis and judgement stage.

At an intervention stage, appropriate school interventions and strategies were generated and agreed. We have incorporated these actions into our School Improvement Plan (SIP).

At the monitoring stage, actions are reviewed on an ongoing basis which assists us in evaluating impact and tracking our progress in this process of continuous improvement.

Continuous Professional Development

Opportunities for whole- staff professional development occur throughout the year eg Bí Cineálta staff training, Child Safeguarding and staff training, Children First training, First Aid training, Sensory circuits training etc.

Whole-staff professional development for our school includes a focus on the following:

1. Identifying and building upon existing good practice in the whole-school implementation of SPHE
2. Providing a shared understanding of the wellbeing of children
3. Developing an understanding of child development
4. Exploring the factors that impact both positively and negatively on wellbeing

5. Providing opportunities for reflection on the school environment, classroom and whole school practice to establish and maintain healthy patterns of relationships
6. Raising awareness of the importance of consistency between home and school environments in the implementation of strategies and programmes which promote wellbeing
7. Considering the implementation of supportive practices in addressing and resolving conflict and other issues arising between children
8. Raising awareness of the links between risk taking behaviours, bullying and the development of mental health problems
9. Exploring strategies to develop children's skills, attitudes and behaviours in dealing with peer pressure, bullying situations or situations involving risk
10. Equipping teachers to develop their personal capacity and that of the children, for resilience, self-control and coping in a variety of social situations.

Staff Wellbeing

Support for the wellbeing of staff is also an essential element in wellbeing promotion, and crucial to sustaining teacher/staff engagement, enthusiasm and the ability to model resilience. It builds staff capacity to cope with challenges and adapt to change, and creates conditions to support and motivate staff to be proactive and effective members of the school community. St Patrick's NS aims to be a safe and supportive environment for the people who work here. Staff members are supported in maintaining their personal health and wellbeing. We benefit from communally reflecting on our own wellbeing and general attitudes to mental health. All staff members have a role in promoting attitudes and modelling behaviour that is supportive of our collective wellbeing.

1. We strive to create an inclusive, connected and caring setting for permanent, temporary and visiting staff.
2. A collaborative approach to curricular planning, peer-mentoring systems, SET assistance and team teaching help ensure that teachers and SNAs feel supported in their classroom work.
3. School leaders endeavour to assist and advise staff members when required.
4. Our Social committee works hard to generate a variety of inclusive and enjoyable social events throughout the year.
5. All staff members are made aware of support for wellbeing which may be accessed through the Employee Assistance Service (EAS). Spectrum Life was awarded the EAS contract in July 2020. The service provided is known as 'Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile'. The EAS provides advice to employees on a range of issues including wellbeing, legal, financial, bereavement, conflict and mediation. It also provides advice and support to school leaders and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace. Where appropriate, short-term counselling is available to employees and their family members. In addition, online cognitive behavioural therapy is also provided to employees. A bespoke wellbeing portal and app is available offering a host of online services with access to live chats, videos, podcasts and blogs on topics around mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition. As part of the EAS, a Mental Health Promotion Manager is also available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives. Employee Assistance Service: Free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 or text 'Hi' to 873690010 - available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

This policy was ratified at the meeting of the Board of Management on 22/06/2026

Signed:



Natasha Basseet (Principal)

Date: 30- June 2026



Anne Looney (Chairperson)

Date: 30th June 2026

Wellbeing Statement

Summary for Parents/Guardians/Staff

This wellbeing policy outlines the commitment of St Patrick's National School to promoting the holistic development of all pupils, in line with the Department of Education's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018). The school recognises wellbeing as essential to enabling children to reach their full potential academically, socially, emotionally and physically. It adopts the World Health Organisation's definition of wellbeing, emphasising resilience, a sense of purpose and connection to community.

St Patrick's NS aims to create a nurturing, inclusive and supportive environment where all children can flourish. The policy is child-centred, fair, evidence-informed, outcomes-focused and built on collaboration between staff, families and the wider community. Wellbeing is viewed as dynamic and requires continuous reflection and development.

As part of the School Self-Evaluation process (2022–2026), the school gathered feedback from staff, parents and pupils to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Key focus areas include accessibility, inclusive environments, and spaces that support social interaction, physical activity and quiet time. The school adopts a preventative, whole-school approach to wellbeing, alongside targeted support for individual pupils.

The policy identifies protective factors that enhance wellbeing, such as positive relationships, a sense of belonging, opportunities for social and emotional learning and strong support systems. It also recognises risk factors including bullying, disengagement, learning difficulties and poor home-school connections. Addressing these factors is central to the school's approach.

Teachers play a vital role in promoting wellbeing, with strong teacher-pupil relationships identified as a key protective factor. Staff are encouraged to engage in continuous professional development and collaborate to support pupils effectively. Programmes used in SPHE e.g. Friends for Life/Fun Friends, Zones of Regulation and other wellbeing initiatives are used to explicitly teach social and emotional skills.

Wellbeing is embedded across four key areas:

1. **Culture and Environment:** The school fosters a safe, inclusive and respectful atmosphere that promotes positive relationships and active participation. Initiatives such as a planned sensory garden support this goal.
2. **Curriculum:** Wellbeing is integrated across all subjects, including SPHE, literacy, physical education, arts and play-based learning. These areas support emotional literacy, creativity, physical health and social development.
3. **Policy and Planning:** Wellbeing is reflected in school policies such as safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion and health and safety. Regular review ensures alignment with the school's ethos.
4. **Relationships and Partnerships:** Strong collaboration with parents, staff, external agencies and the wider community is central to supporting pupil wellbeing.

The school employs a two-tiered approach: a whole-school strategy that promotes wellbeing for all pupils, and targeted interventions for those with additional needs. The Student Support Team coordinates supports, working closely with families and external services where necessary.

Success is monitored through data such as attendance, feedback and school evaluations, with ongoing adjustments made to improve outcomes. Continuous professional development ensures staff are equipped to support wellbeing effectively.

Finally, the policy recognises the importance of staff wellbeing, promoting a supportive work environment and access to services such as the Employee Assistance Service. Overall, the policy reflects a comprehensive, inclusive and proactive approach to fostering wellbeing across the entire school community.

Please note: full document link: [Wellbeing Statement- St Patrick's N.S](#)

Appendix 2: Pupil Summary

WELLBEING STATEMENT : SUMMARY FOR PUPILS - ♥ OUR WELLBEING PROMISE AT ST PATRICK'S NS

AT ST PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, WE WANT EVERY CHILD TO FEEL HAPPY, SAFE, INCLUDED AND VALUED EVERY DAY.
WE BELIEVE THAT WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR SCHOOL, YOU CAN DO YOUR VERY BEST IN LEARNING AND IN LIFE.



♥ What is Wellbeing?

Wellbeing means:

- Feeling happy and safe
- Being able to handle worries and challenges
- Having friends and people who care about you
- Feeling like you belong in our school



♥ Our School is a Place Where You Can:

- Be yourself and feel accepted
- Make friends and build good relationships
- Learn new things and feel proud of your achievements
- Ask for help when you need it
- Take part in fun activities like sports, art, music and play



♥ How Teachers Help You

Your teachers and school staff are here to:

- Listen to you and support you
- Help you feel safe and confident
- Teach you how to understand your feelings
- Help you solve problems and get along with others



♥ What We Learn About Wellbeing

We learn about wellbeing in many ways, including:

- SPHE lessons (learning about feelings, friendships and staying safe)
- Reading and storytelling
- Playing and working together
- Sports and physical activities
- Art, music and drama

These help you:

- Understand your emotions
- Build confidence
- Make good choices
- Be kind and respectful



♥ Working Together

We work together with:

- Your parents/guardians
- Other teachers and school staff
- Helpers outside school



♥ Supporting Everyone

We help all children in our school by:

- Creating a kind and welcoming environment
- Encouraging teamwork and friendship
- Listening to your ideas (like through student groups)



♥ Things We Want to Prevent

We try to stop things that can hurt wellbeing, like:

- Bullying
- Feeling left out
- Worry or stress
- Not enjoying school

If something is wrong, we will listen and help.



♥ Our Goal

Our goal is to help you:

- Feel happy and confident
- Believe in yourself
- Be ready to face challenges
- Enjoy school and learning



♥ Remember

You are an important part of our school.

Your voice matters.
Your feelings matter.
You matter.