



Wellbeing Policy

Introductory Statement:

St. Michael's National School as part of our SSE process is currently developing a wellbeing promotion review and development cycle within the school, which is supported by the Department of Education and Skills (DoE) and the Health Service Executive (HSE). It is also strongly supported by the "Health Promoting Schools" Model. We are told that

"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." (WHO), 2001).

During our SSE process we gave questionnaires to parents, pupils and teachers .Each question and answer was then represented on a pie-chart .This information was then compiled and presented to the BOM and Teaching Staff and to our parents in our termly newsletter.

This information will now inform our SSE work , Curriculum Planning and School Timetable going forward .It was a very positive, informative process .Our compiled information is available to view in the school office by appointment.

We in St.Michael's believe in taking a whole school approach which is a multi-component, preventative, whole school approach to the promotion of well-being, with interventions at both universal and targeted levels, and this is a priority for our school.

This whole school approach involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life that impact on well-being. By adopting a whole school approach St.Michael's NS aims to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for our pupils, including improved behaviour, increased inclusion, improved learning, greater social cohesion, increased social capital and improvements to mental health.

This whole school approach supports the integration of systems within the school community. This creates capacity to be reflective and responsive to the needs of our school and the individuals who are part of the school community. Central to this is the role of the staff in building professional capacity to engage in a reflective process to implement and sustain well-being policy and strategies from within.

We aim to promote well-being, and social and emotional learning, and ensure a whole school approach to well-being promotion and early intervention, especially when considering appropriate use of external supports and services. Students flourish where there is a whole school approach to supporting their growth and where there is a shared belief in their potential for development, learning and well-being. The school is responsible for providing an environment that nurtures and supports students.

The Benefits of promoting pupil well-being in our school

By implementing a whole school approach to well-being the benefits include:

- Better learning results for pupils.
- Active and engaged promotion of staff health.
- A co-ordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs for all in our care.
- Increased pupil self-esteem.
- Lowered incidence of bullying.
- Our school environment becomes safer and more secure.
- There is a better understanding of schools' health aims.
- There are improved relationships within the school.
- More involvement of parents/guardians in our school.
- Better use of outside agencies.
- Pupils receive better quality education.

All of the above will then lead to a safe and happy space where all will become the best they can be and everyone, staff and pupils alike will reach their full potential .

The Department's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework

The Department's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice assists schools in ensuring that well-being 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 well-being promotion in the areas of:

- Culture and Environment
- Curriculum (teaching and learning)
- Policy and Planning
- Relationships and Partnerships

Environment

St. Michael's NS aims to foster an environment that enhances competence and well-being; one that consciously fosters warm relationships, encourages participation, develops pupil and teacher autonomy and cultivates clarity about 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 encourage and promote self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute to school life.

The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their own health. We continue to provide a climate in which good relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.

Curriculum and Learning

The teaching and learning in our school aims to be democratic, inclusive, engaging, differentiated, fostering expectations of high achievement and providing opportunity for success. The SPHE curriculum in our school strongly supports the social and emotional well-being of our pupils, by placing emphasis on children's social and

emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and therefore learning performance.

In line with best practice, the Continuum of Support model delivered within our school offers a flexible framework within which we can address all educational needs, including well-being needs of our pupils. (Please refer to Continuum of Support Policy for further information).

St. Michael's NS adheres to statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils. We provide challenges for pupils and staff through a wide range of physical, academic, social and community activities.

Policy and Planning

Policies are written documents which support the everyday running of the school through active implementation on a day-to-day basis. They form the background script by which the school navigates its way. They are developed and implemented by the whole school community. St. Michael's NS regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

Partnerships

St. Michael's NS continues to develop strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community, which is a central part of the well-being process. We efficiently engage with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning.

Role of teachers

It is essential that all staff continue to develop their competence and confidence in the promotion of wellbeing. The qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and she/he can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of well-being education. 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. The curricular elements of well-being promotion will be delivered by staff who are trained for this purpose having completed relevant CPDs.

School Based Initiatives that Promote Well-being

Our school implements a number of programmes and initiatives throughout daily school life that support the well-being of our pupils. This list is not exhaustive;

- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009) which encompasses

- *The four themes, Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communication, Exploring and Thinking. This programme runs from Junior Infants to 2nd class. • Project based learning from 3rd class to 6th class.

- SPHE Curriculum (RSE, Stay Safe, Friendship and Anti-Bullying)

- Circle of Friends (5th and 6th Class)

- Zippy's Friends (1st and 2nd class)

- Continuum of Support Model

- Safe Passage (Paul Fairbairn)

- Student Committees: Green School Committee, Active Flag Committee

- Outdoor Learning in our outdoor classroom and Forest School.

- Internet Safety Workshop (Barnardos)
- *Weaving Wellbeing
- *Model Me Kids
- *KDYS Transition Programme .
- External teachers for different strands of PE to promote active living e.g. GAA, Gymnastics, Swimming, Golf and Rugby.
- School subsidised swimming lessons - 6 week block for 3rd to 6th class pupils
- Hot Meals Scheme-portion -sized healthy food provided by our kitchen each day.
- Active School Flag
- *Spring Basketball League
- Cookery classes for 5th and 6th class
- *Annual Football League
- Themed Weeks (e.g. Maths Week, Science Week, Engineers Week, World Book Day, Active Flag Week)
- Promoting the Arts - whole-school Christmas performance, Seachtain na Gaeilge ,performances, Grandparents Day performances, Sports Day, Active Active Schools
- *Week, music lessons- tin whistle,Choir (Term 1)
- *Science Club (Term 2)
- SNA access and support in each classroom.
- Links **with** HSE personnel e.g. Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team.
- *Our OT, Paula Moloney.

*Our SLT, Alanna O Connor both of whom provide significant support and instruction.

*Forest School

*Zones of Regulation

Please see [sneemschool.ie/Initiatives/Emotional Wellbeing and Self-Esteem](https://sneemschool.ie/Initiatives/Emotional%20Wellbeing%20and%20Self-Esteem)

St. Michael's NS well-being protective factors

In our school well-being protective factors include:

- positive relationships with peers and teachers - including positive teacher classroom experiences that promote positivity, calm and differentiation, management strategies and a sharing of positive behaviour management practices with parents
- a sense of belonging, security and connectedness to school through a positive school climate and participation in school and community activities with opportunities for social and emotional learning including the development of attention and planning, self-awareness, self-management, relationship and responsible decision-making skills with opportunities for the development of knowledge and skills providing a sense of mastery and self-efficacy fostering expectations, recognising contributions, effort and achievement and providing opportunities for success
- well-being of school personnel
- protocols and support systems that proactively support children and their families

should difficulties arise

- opportunities to develop the necessary skills to cope with using online technology in a safe and appropriate way
- opportunities to develop skills to manage stress that may be linked to school work

Well-being risk factors

In our school setting, well-being risk factors include:

- absenteeism
- bullying and relationship difficulties
- low achievement/learning difficulties/special educational needs including social, emotional and behavioural needs
- school transitions
- poor connection between family and school

Link with other policies in the school:

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Critical Incident Policy.
- Enrolment Policy.
- Continuum of Support Policy.
- SPHE Policy.
- Staff Induction. All new teaching staff members are guided and supported in the method of referral, etc.

The BOM and Teaching Staff of our school are very aware of the need to carefully and concisely review Wellbeing across all aspects of our school so that we can work together to create a secure and happy space that will allow us to make everyone the best they can be understanding that the Wellbeing of all is a critical component of a happy ,positive ,energetic and successful school.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Chairperson:

Mary Mst Casey.

Date: 30.03.2023