

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

The implementation and monitoring of the Department of Education's 'Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice' has been guided by key principles, as follows:

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 foster their belonging and connectedness to the school community. This ensures a sound developmental base for present and future wellbeing, as well as academic achievement.

Equitable, fair and inclusive: All children need access to equitable, fair and inclusive opportunities to develop their wellbeing in ways that are responsive and suitable to their particular needs and contexts. Practices need to be tailored, responsive and relevant, building on the existing strengths of children, school staff, families and school communities. This means that practices will vary from child to child.

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. It acknowledges that what works in one context may not be appropriate or feasible in another.

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. This policy and framework for practice will ensure the use of a self-reflection process for the identification, monitoring and review of outcomes.

Partnership/Collaboration: The wellbeing of our children is a shared responsibility. Working in partnership with other departments and agencies is key to ensuring this policy is implemented.

The Department of Education's 'Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice' outlines:

What do we mean by wellbeing?

The role of schools in promoting wellbeing

What is already happening in the system and in schools?

What needs to happen next?

The following definition of Wellbeing aims to take account of its multi-dimensional nature (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2001).

'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'

Research indicates that a multi-component, preventative, whole school approach to the promotion of wellbeing, with interventions at both universal and targeted levels, is the most beneficial and evidence-informed approach for schools.

2. TO IMPLEMENT DEY WELLBEING POLICY SCHOOLS UTILISE THE WELLBEING FRAMEWORK FOR PRACTICE AND WELLBEING RESOURCES.

1. Schools firstly select wellbeing promotion as a topic for SSE (School Self Evaluation).
2. At an information-gathering stage, schools will consult with and collect information from key stakeholders (including pupils, staff and parents) relating to current practice in the key areas of wellbeing promotion. This information is essential in order to highlight positive aspects and strengths in their practice and identify areas for development – an analysis and judgement stage.
3. This analysis will inform actions for wellbeing in one selected area. At an intervention stage, appropriate school interventions and strategies will be generated and agreed.
4. Schools will incorporate these actions into their School Improvement Plan (SIP).
5. Steps will be put in place to implement the agreed actions.
6. At the monitoring stage actions will be reviewed on an ongoing basis which will assist schools in evaluating impact and tracking their progress in this process of continuous improvement.

In Wicklow Educate Together NS, we are in the early stages of planning a school evaluation of Wellbeing in the four areas of:

1. Culture and Environment
2. Curriculum (teaching and learning)
3. Policy and Planning, and
4. Relationships and Partnerships.

Using the WELLBEING STATEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE FOR ALL, we will evaluate current practice with the following indicators of success:

- ✓ Children and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
- ✓ Systems are in place so that the voices of the child, staff member and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and procedures
- ✓ Children experience positive and high-quality teaching, learning and assessment which provides opportunities for success for all.
- ✓ Children access curricular activities to promote their physical, social and emotional competence to enhance their overall wellbeing.
- ✓ Schools use a Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process to develop, implement and review wellbeing promotion.
- ✓ Schools incorporate wellbeing promotion into whole school policies and practices.
- ✓ Children, staff members and other external partners are actively involved in wellbeing promotion within the school community.
- ✓ All adults in the school have an increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to pupils and signposting them to internal or external pathways for support when needed.

In the early part of 2026/27, feedback and input will be gathered from children, staff and parents in order to determine areas of strength and to identify areas for improvement. The Statements of

Effective Practice (from DEY Wellbeing in Education Framework for Practice) will be utilised throughout this information gathering exercise

3. CURRENT PRACTICE AND POLICY

Currently, Wellbeing in our school is operating on a continuum with

Wellbeing Whole School Approaches

Wellbeing Approaches for Some

Wellbeing Approaches for a Few

Wellbeing Whole School Approaches a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching, early identification and intervention for children who are showing mild or transient signs of difficulty. School support for ALL is embedded within every classroom and part of a whole school approach to mental health promotion.

Wicklow Educate Together NS prioritises regular review and development of policies relating to wellbeing such as child safeguarding, anti-bullying and critical incidents.

The voices of children, parents and staff inform the development, review and updating of many school policies.

Our ethos statement is

‘To promote a philosophy of education in which no child is considered an outsider, which promotes the fullest development of ability and participation irrespective of gender, class or stereotype; and which encapsulates this ethos in a democratic partnership uniquely combining the involvement of parents with the professional role of teachers. Respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, caring and citizenship are core pillars of the Wicklow Educate Together Ethos. Those pillars underline all expectations around behaviour within our school’

Our Vision Statement is

‘Learn Together to Live Together’

The school building, grounds, classrooms, bathrooms and work spaces are well maintained and appropriately furnished, creating a welcoming, safe and warm environment.

The indoor space displays the work, talents and accomplishments of children

School leaders and management understand the link between physical activity and wellbeing and facilitate physical activity within the school environment.

Our school has an SPHE plan which ensures all strands and strand units are covered and we also have a Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy.

We have a Student Council to ensure that the voices of children are heard and we encourage teachers to seek pupil’s opinions on their learning throughout our classrooms. We also have a very active Green Schools Committee

School leaders and management acknowledge the importance of staff wellbeing and promote this in a variety of ways including recognition of the value of staff contribution and their work.

School leaders and management ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are put in place for staff wellbeing and details of the Employee Assistance Service and other relevant supports are made available to staff.

School leaders and Management encourages and supports staff CPD at all levels

Our school uses the Education Passport (NCCA) for pupils transitioning to post primary school and we have a transition programme for our 6th class children moving to secondary school.

We operate a new pupil induction & have built good relationships with the local pre-schools to plan for successful transitions of our incoming Junior Infants.

We prioritise fostering effective partnerships with parents and we have developed relationships with the wider school community including sporting organisations. We also liaise with appropriate external agencies and services e.g. NEPS psychologists, NCSE special education needs organisers, HSE health promotion, primary care teams, and Tusla child and family services.

Members of staff received training in the Friends for Life Programme to help develop resilience in our children.

We have a Healthy Eating policy and, if parents wish, they can order healthy hot school meals

We have an indoor Lunchtime Club for 5th & 6th Class children and we have a homework club for 1st to 6th class pupils. After care is available to all children through an on site provider.

We have made progressive improvements on our yard, affording play opportunities for all children

There is a positive approach to behaviour where issues are resolved with care, respect and consistency.

Our recent engagement with the Bi Cinealta Process has resulted in a school wide Anti Bullying Policy

Weekly assemblies take place for our children in senior classes, with a junior assembly taking place once monthly

Class Buddy Systems are in place in some classes

Wellbeing Approaches for Some: embedded in a whole school approach and focuses on identifying the small number of children who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour or those who are already showing early behavioural signs of mental health difficulties

Staff and pupils are welcoming and inclusive of those from different cultural backgrounds and those with special education needs.

Teachers design and prepare for differentiated teaching methods and assessment of learning outcomes for pupils at risk or with additional and/or complex needs so that they experience a sense of achievement.

The school deploys resources based on individual learning, behavioural, social and emotional needs under the Special Education Teaching Allocation model.

School-based information is used, in conjunction with reports from external professionals, to set guidelines and recommendations for individualised supports for children and young people with additional needs.

A student support file is used to plan, record and review progress.

Individual behaviour plans will be drawn up for children who display behaviours of concern. These plans will be drawn up in collaboration with parents, class teachers, Special Education Teachers (SETs) and the Principal and discussed/reviewed regularly, at least termly.

We use the NEPs Continuum of Support model for children which enables us to identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. The Continuum of Support enables us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way. This means that needs can be responded to as early as possible and pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support. SETs provide supports in Language, Literacy and Maths but also look after other needs also

Our team of SNAs work in collaboration with teachers and parents to support children with special education needs. Personal Pupil Profiles (incl care plans) are drawn up for these children which identify the challenges, establish targets and put in place strategies to achieve the targets.

We encourage children and families to be punctual arriving to school and we have an attendance strategy

The school demonstrates commitment to identifying, including and providing targeted supports for children and young people experiencing barriers and challenges to wellbeing and learning.

Wellbeing Approaches for a Few: a particular focus on putting interventions in place for children with more complex and enduring needs.

A Summer Programme is available to children with complex additional needs and those at risk of educational disadvantage.

A small number of children require intensive individualised programmes. These children are usually identified when interventions at School Support for Some stage have been insufficient to meet their needs.

We have sensory spaces in our school which are available to children as identified and as needed.

Specialist technology is acquired as necessary.

We have access to advice and support from a NEPS psychologist, and all decisions in relation to pupils requiring significant supports are made in consultation with staff and parents.

We have 8.8 SETs and *13 SNAs who are highly committed to looking after the welfare of the pupils in their care and who regularly show great flexibility as required.

4. COMMUNICATION, IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

This policy and planning document has been made available to all school personnel and is readily accessible to parents on request. Implementation of the policy will be monitored by the principal of the school. In general, the policy/planning document and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year, or sooner if requested by any party. It is important to note here that early next year (as part of School Self Evaluation and School Improvement Planning) the procedures and plans will be thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines, legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, pupils, staff and others.

This policy/planning document was ratified and adopted by the Board of Management at a meeting held on Thursday 7th May 2026.

Signed: Daniel Vickers (Chairperson BOM)

Signed: Sinead Watson (Principal)