

WELLBEING POLICY

Definition of Wellbeing



The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state of wellbeing in which an individual realizes his/her own abilities and potentials, is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of life, takes care of their physical wellbeing and has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community. (WHO 2021)

Mental health is broader than the absence of mental disorders. *Poor mental health affects our ability to cope with and manage our lives, particularly during personal change and through key life events, decreasing our ability to participate fully in life. Mental health is an essential component of general health on which it underpins. (Vision for change 2006)*

The promotion of wellbeing in general, is a major public health concern at present. Ireland has the fourth highest rate of youth suicide in Europe (Headstrong 2021). The National Registry of Deliberate self-harm reported that 1 in every 138 under the age of 17 presented at emergency departments with deliberate self-harm, (NSRF 2019). 1 in ten students experience mental health disorders mental health difficulties.

As stated in article 29 of the UN Convention of the rights of the child; *the aim of education should be to develop the child's personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.*

Introductory Statement and Rationale

Sandymount School is a special school which caters for pupils aged 4-18 years old with physical disabilities and complex needs. We endeavor to cater for the holistic needs of each pupil through Individual Education Planning. Wellbeing is interwoven in all aspects of life in Sandymount School. We have written this school plan to ensure an approach which supports transition from class to class throughout the school. Our school advocates a whole school approach to the planning process and all relevant parties were part of the development of our school plan for Wellbeing. As a staff we are aware that our pupils have alternative needs and we adapt the curricula, content and methodologies according to the specific needs of our pupils

Therefore, central to and at the core of our ethos and wellbeing programme and policy, is the holistic development of each child and the promotion of wellbeing. Our aim is to provide a caring, happy and safe atmosphere where the moral, spiritual, social intellectual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. Education Act (1998).



School Vision

Enable Ireland Sandymount School endeavours to nourish the educational, social, emotional, spiritual, creative and physical development of each student to reach his/her potential. Enable Ireland Sandymount School endeavors to promote the wellbeing of students by:

- Being child-centred
- Being sensitive to the reality of our pupil's lives in a changing world
- Providing and maintaining a safe and caring environment
- Promoting positive health behavior
- Promoting self-esteem and self-awareness of students
- Working in partnership with the parents and pupils
- Maintaining caring and compassionate relationships with students, staff, parents and the wider school community
- Ensuring students and staff feel valued and respected
- Establishing tolerance and fairness for all members of our community
- Recognizing effort and provide opportunities for success, celebrating all moments however small
- Developing a sense of belonging, connectedness and inclusiveness
- Handling conflict constructively
- Building positive teacher-student, student-student and staff-staff relationships
- Strengthening individual skills and abilities
- Facilitating access to CPD for school staff on the promotion of wellbeing of young people with additional support needs

Overall aims of this policy

Our Wellbeing programme aims to foster happy, confident and, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to Enable Ireland Sandymount School and his/her community. We have embraced a whole-school approach and aligned the design and planning of our Wellbeing programme with School Self-Evaluation.

Our Wellbeing programme is anchored to the following subject areas: Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme PLUs Personal Care and Wellbeing (SPHE), Being Part of a Community (CSPE), PE, and other Units of Learning. Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme PLUs Personal Care (SPHE), Living in the Community (CSPE), PE and other Units of Learning. Other Units of Learning will cover topics related to SPHE, Craft, Music, Home Economics and IT.

The emphasis of this policy is on the role of the whole school community in the wellbeing programme. This is a whole school policy and the following school policies will be informed by it:



- Code of Behaviour
- SPHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- IT and Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy



Scope of the Wellbeing Policy

- Explore current and future avenues for fostering happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to Enable Ireland Sandymount School.
- Reflect on how we are currently addressing the area of Wellbeing in our school through curricular and extra-curricular provision.
- Comply with DES Circular Letter 0055/2019 which mandates 400 hours of Wellbeing to be included in the timetable over the 3-year cycle from September 2020.
- Consider the voices of key stakeholders, namely staff, parents, students and Board of Management. Engage in an extensive process of consultation to ensure that the voices and input of the whole school community are valued.
- Demonstrate an awareness of our unique school context, our characteristic spirit and the values underpinning our mission statement.
- Adopt an open, transparent and consultative approach to the implementation of a Wellbeing Programme. We are cognisant of the necessity to constantly plan, review and reflect, three premises also inherent in School Self Evaluation (SSE).

Wellbeing Junior Cycle Curriculum Plan

Class Subject	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Hours
PE	2 class periods	2 class periods	2 class periods	135 hrs
Personal Care (SPHE)	2 class periods	2 class periods	2 class periods	135 hrs
Living in the Community (CSPE)	1 class period	1 class period	1 class period	70 hrs
Other Units of learning (relating to CSPE, SPHE, IT, Home Ec, Art)	1 class period	1 class period	1 class period	70 hrs
Whole-school activities over the three years				35 hrs
Short courses on Around the World in 80 Days (L1LP), Caring for Animals (L2LP) and Enterprise Animation (L2LP) relate to CSPE, SPHE, IT				445 hrs

Wellbeing in the Context of the Framework for Junior Cycle

The Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2017, p.44) state that when planning a programme, the starting point must be the shared vision and values of the school alongside consideration of the principles and statements of learning set out in the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015).

A Junior Cycle programme that builds the foundations for Wellbeing:

- is broad and balanced
- provides choice
- has meaning and relevance
- is enjoyable and engaging
- provides opportunities to experience challenge and success
- equips students with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to develop as learners and build positive relationships.



The vision for Junior Cycle places students at the centre of all endeavours, *“Junior cycle places **students** at the **centre** of the educational experience, **enabling** them to **actively participate** in their communities and in society and to be **resourceful** and **confident** learners in all aspects and stages of their lives”,* (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.6).

Wellbeing is one of the eight principles underpinning the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)



24 Statements of Learning

“The learning at the core of junior cycle is described in twenty-four statements of learning They are central to planning for, the students’ experience of, and the evaluation of the school’s junior cycle programme” (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.).

The purpose of learning statements

- To ensure a rich educational experience for students.
- Learning that has both breadth and depth and is varied.
- To enable development of the key skills.
- To give access to a varied curriculum of knowledge

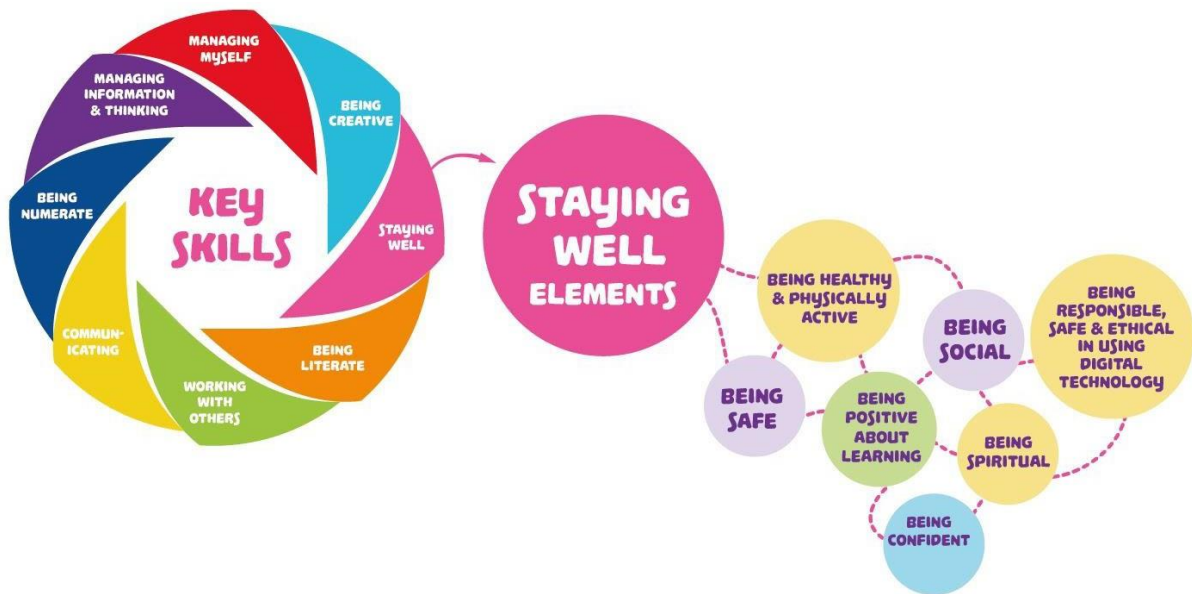
The following Statements of Learning are particularly applicable to Wellbeing:

- The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making (SoL 5)
- The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts (SoL 7)
- The student has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably (SoL 10)
- The student takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (SoL 11)

- The student is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active (SoL 12)
- The student understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices (SoL 13).

Key Skills

Staying Well is one of the 8 key skills for Junior Cycle.



Elements of the Key Skill Staying Well are:

- Being healthy and physically active
- Being social
- Being safe
- Being spiritual
- Being confident
- Being positive about learning
- Being responsible, safe and ethical in using digital technology

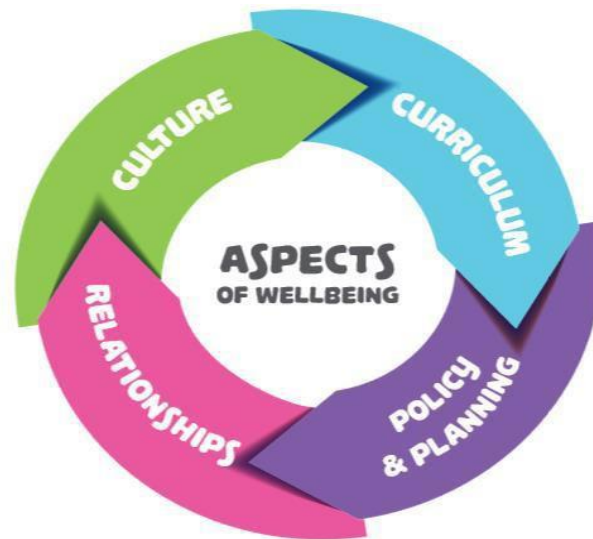
Elements of other Key Skills that also relate to Wellbeing:

- Developing good relationships and dealing with conflict
- Respecting difference
- Contributing to making the world a better place
- Knowing myself
- Making considered decisions
- Setting and achieving personal goals.

“Key skills will be embedded in the learning outcomes of every junior cycle subject and short course” (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.15). Key skills help learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to face the many challenges in today’s world. They also support students in learning how to

learn and take responsibility for their own learning.

Our School Context and the Four Aspects of Wellbeing



Enable Ireland Sandymount School is a school which caters for pupils with physical disabilities and complex needs. We endeavour to cater for the holistic needs of each pupil through Individual Education Planning. Caring and compassionate inter-personal relationships are fostered with students, staff, parents, and the wider school community. We value the importance of a holistic education and nurturing our students to reach their full potential, celebrating moments of success and encouraging all students to grow and develop as individuals with unique talents and a strong sense of self-worth. Respectful and caring relationships between staff and students are evident in daily interactions and in the classroom.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School endeavours to nourish the educational, social, emotional and physical development of each student to his/her potential with the future expectation of active participation in his/her community. We promote the wellbeing of students by:

- Being child-centred
- Being sensitive to the reality of our student's lives in a changing world
- Promoting a safe and healthy environment
- Promoting self-esteem and self-awareness of students
- Increasing knowledge of Health, Relationships and Sexuality
- Working in partnership with parents and students

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum, at both primary and secondary level, to afford students' opportunities to achieve success in accordance with their talents, abilities and interests. For older students we offer Junior Cycle Learning Programme Level 1 & 2 and a school designed Leavers' Programme based on the Junior Cycle programmes.

The following are some of the structures and programmes we have in place designed to support the wellbeing of our students.



Multidisciplinary Team

Each student has a class teacher and support from class SNAs. This team are crucial and integral to the daily communication links between home and school. The class teacher is the first point of contact for both student and parent/guardian should a difficulty arise. Each student has an IEP and PPP. Students are assigned an speech and language therapist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and key worker who liaise with class teacher as appropriate.

Nursing Team

The nursing team provide daily nursing care for students and liaise with parents, teaching staff and management. Many of our students have a PEG tube and need medication throughout the day.

PE

The NCCA Guidelines for teachers of students with mild, moderate and severe and profound learning disabilities are followed as appropriate. At Junior Cycle pupils engage in the Level 1 Learning Programme PE Unit of Learning. Students have the opportunity to swim every second week in the Enable Ireland swimming pool.

SPHE

The NCCA Guidelines for teachers of students with mild, moderate and severe and profound learning disabilities are followed as appropriate. Pupils following Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme engage in Personal Care and Wellbeing, Being Part of a Community. Pupils following Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme engage in Personal Care and Living in the Community.

Music Programme

Each class has two sessions per week with a music therapist. Classes also use TacPac, Soundabout and the Holistic Music for Children programme.

Stay Safe

The Stay Safe programme is taught annually in all classes and adapted to suit each class level.

Student Council

Our Student Council, established in 2019, promotes pupil voice across the school. It is made up of two elected representatives from each senior group. Regular meetings are held with them and their ideas and opinions included in school planning.

Green Schools

Sandymount School is part of the Green Schools programme and is currently working towards receiving our Green Flag for Litter and Recycling.

Gaisce

Senior students in the school participate Gaisce and work towards the Bronze, Silver and Gold medals by engaging in self-development activities.

Food Dudes

Sandymount School follows the annual 'Food Dudes' program supported by Bord Bia.



Partners of the school

External facilitators and organisations also support our Wellbeing programmes. Below are some examples:

- Dublin City Sport and Wellbeing Partnership
- Boccia Ireland
- Drama Beans
- NCAD

Programmes and Practises Staff

We equally recognise the importance of our staff's wellbeing. We aim to do this through our policies, procedures and practices and by regularly receiving feedback from them.

- We promote a safe comfortable teaching environment
- We have an open door policy whereby staff can discuss issues of concern with the Principal or Deputy Principal in a confidential manner
- Regular staff meetings

Staff Voice

Surveys, group and individual meetings are regularly held with staff to receive their input, feedback and thoughts. We operate an R&R system, reflecting and reviewing all the time.

Staff training

CPD is provided for staff and actively encouraged. Staff are kept up-to-date with training and courses available, with a focus on their needs and strengths taken into consideration.

Induction Training

The SLT support the induction of new staff, NQTs, PME and work experience students. This ensures they have appropriate training, feel supported and connected and understand the ethos of the school.

Support for Parents

Parents Association

The school has an active PTA which provides a forum to represent the views of parents and to actively seek their opinions and ideas. It encourages parent participation in school activities, fundraisers and social events. The committee meets monthly to discuss initiatives, parent ideas and contributions.

IEP Meeting

This is an opportunity to meet and set shared targets for the students at the beginning of the year. It is also an opportunity to discuss any issues of concern. A pre-IEP questionnaire is completed by parents each year and provides helpful wellbeing information on each student.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a digital portfolio tool which helps us to share what is happening in the classroom with our parents.



Website

Our website provides parents with a range of educational resources, school policies and up-to-date relevant school information.

Newsletter

A monthly school newsletter is sent to parents to share news and achievements.

OUR SCHOOL THE FOUR ASPECTS OF WELLBEING	
<p>CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Student Council Parents Association Staff Meetings Awards/Certificates/ Star of the Week Inclusive atmosphere Outdoor spaces Friendship/wellbeing week Well maintained physical environment Promote healthy eating Technology- eye gazes/ switches/laptops Fun days and celebrations School website Monthly newsletter</p>	<p>CURRICULUM (Teaching & Learning)</p> <p>Staff training SPHE curriculum RSE Linkage and integration with music, Art, Drama CAT Tools and NCSE GLD guidelines Celebrate all achievements, WOW wall, students display boards Assemblies, Movement breaks Food Dudes Initiatives Green Schools Teaching methodologies and differentiated strategies Parent Involvement Circle Time L1LP L2LP</p>
<p>RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS</p> <p>Community and learning partnerships Assemblies Student Council Staff and student relationships P/T meetings IEP meetings Mentoring system NQT and new staff Inspector, PA, NEPS, HSE, Enable Ireland Board of Management Diversity- languages and celebration Multidisciplinary approach with input from SLT, OT, Physio</p>	<p>POLICY & PLANNING</p> <p>Please see list of policies above Student Council IEPs, fortnightly plans, termly plans CPD Aladdin Circulars Planning supports and advisory visits</p>



Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed:



Sé Goulding, Chairperson of Board of Management



Jennifer Doyle, Principal

Date: 17 July 2024

