WELLBEING POLICY

Introductory Statement

Rushall National School is currently developing a Wellbeing Promotion Process within the school, which is supported by the Department of Education and Skills (DoE) and the Health Service Executive (HSE). It is strongly supported by the "Health Promoting Schools" Model. "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).

Whole School Approach

A multi-component, preventative, whole school approach to the promotion of well-being, with interventions at both universal and targeted levels, is the priority for Rushall N.S. 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 Rushall N.S. 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 Rushall N.S. staff and the importance of building professional capacity to engage in a reflective process to implement and sustain well-being policy and strategies from within. Rushall N.S. aims to promote well-being, and social and emotional learning, and ensures 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.

Benefits of promoting pupil well-being in Rushall NS

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

- Better learning results for pupils
- More done to promote staff health
- A co-ordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs
- Increased pupil self-esteem

• Lowered incidence of bullying

• School environment is safe and secure

• Better understanding of schools' health aims

• Improved relationships within the school

• More involvement of parents/guardians

• Better use of outside agencies

• Pupils receive an education, incorporating wellbeing into the curriculum

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

Rushall N.S. 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. Rushall N.S. provides 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. Rushall N.S. continues 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 Rushall N.S. aims to be democratic, inclusive, engaging, differentiated, fostering expectations of high achievement and providing opportunity for success. The SPHE curriculum in Rushall N.S. strongly supports the social and emotional well-being of our pupils, by placing and 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. Rushall N.S. 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. Rushall N.S. regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

Partnerships

Rushall N.S. 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 CPD.

School Based Initiatives that Promote Well-being

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

• **PAX Good Behaviour Game – incorporated across the whole school for consistent behaviour and positive reinforcement & Self Regulation.**

• Project based learning from 3rd class to 6th class

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

• Lust for Life (5th and 6th Class)

• Zippy's Friends (1st and 2nd class)

• Continuum of Support Model Sitting Frog Mindfulness

• Student Committees: Green School Committee, Well-being Committee, Active School Committee.

• Outdoor Learning

• Internet Safety Workshop

• Partnership with Laois Sports Partnership: Couch to 2k (23-24)

• External teachers for different strands of PE to promote active living e.g. GAA (weekly), gymnastics.

• School swimming lessons – 6 week block for 3rd class to 6th class pupils

• Healthy Eating – Food Dudes

• School Hot Lunches – Hot food and nutritious – Children choose from a menu.

• Themed Weeks (e.g. Maths Week, Science Week, Engineers Week, Book Week, Climate Action Week etc.)

• Promoting the Arts – whole-school Christmas performance, Seachtain na Gaeilge performances, Grandparents Day performances, Sports Day, Active Schools Week, music with Music Generation

• Creative Arts Programme

• Communicating with National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to gain SNA access for pupils

• Links with HSE personnel e.g. Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team.

Rushall N.S. well-being protective factors

In Rushall N.S. well-being protective factors include:

• positive relationships with peers and teachers - including positive teacher classroom 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

• opportunities for social and emotional learning including the development of attention and planning, self-awareness, self-management, relationship and responsible decision-making skills

• 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

• 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 staff members are trained in the method of referral, etc.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Chairperson: Danny Raddin

Date: 13-12-23