

# Well-Being Policy

## School Ethos

St. Lassara's N. S. is a Roman Catholic School which aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Catholic school provides Religious Education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.

## Mission Statement

St. Lassara's National School is a co-educational Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Achonry. We strive to provide a secure and happy teaching and learning environment where the pupils' intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs are identified and nurtured. We aim to develop the self-esteem of pupils and staff by creating an environment where we celebrate difference in an atmosphere of mutual respect and inclusivity.

Ní neart go cur le chéile

## Rationale:

Our priority is the wellbeing of our students and staff. We seek to promote a caring and committed school community where everyone is valued as unique. We are committed to promoting the emotional and social *wellbeing of all*, creating a respectful atmosphere between all individuals: management, teachers, staff members, students, parents, and visitors.

## Policy aims:

- To provide for the wellbeing of all students in the school in the light of the school Mission statement.
- Outline the policies, procedures, culture, ethos and the activities which serve to assist the wellbeing of students at St Lassara's National School.
- To detail the support structures for students and staff that is embedded in the school and the curriculum.
- That all staff contributes to promoting a caring and inclusive environment within the school that is supportive of school wellbeing.
- To create a shared vision and understanding of what wellbeing means for all.

## What is Well-being?

**Well-being** can be described as the state of being comfortable, healthy, resilient and happy. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2001) acknowledges the multi-dimensional nature of **well-being** through its definition:

*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.*

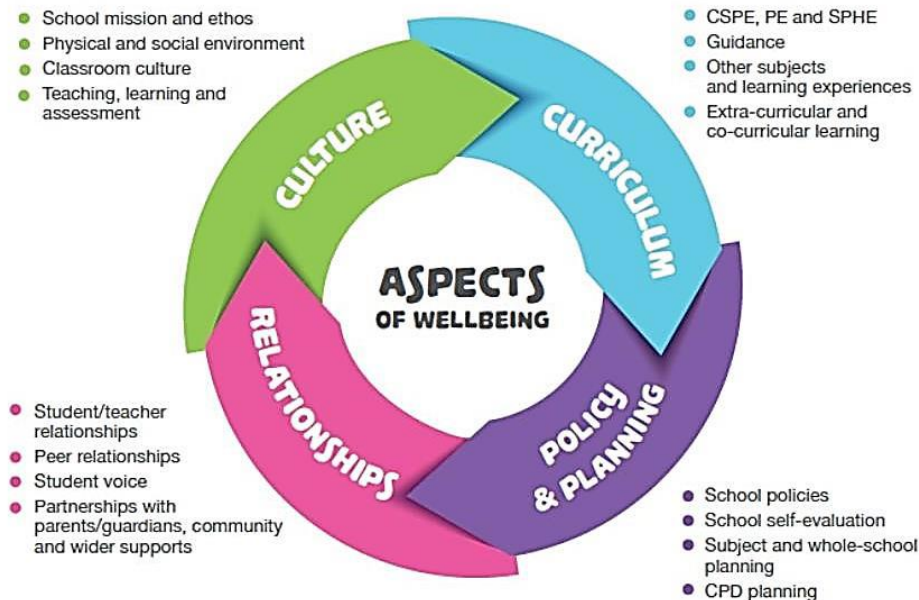
In St Lassara’s National School we also believe that wellbeing is;

- being able to cope with all the ups and downs of life.
- enjoying life and doing your best.
- feeling good in your body and mind.
- having energy and fun.
- getting on well with others.
- using your strengths to help others and feel proud of yourself.

### **Whole School Approach:**

We are adopting a whole school approach which involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life that impact on wellbeing.

The 4 Areas of Well-Being promotion:



### **Promoting wellbeing skills in our students:**

Wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of place and belonging to a wider community.



**The main skills St Lassara’s N.S. focus on instilling in our students are:**

- Being able to act, to protect and promote their wellbeing and that of others
- Being physically active
- Making healthy eating choices in accordance with our Healthy Eating Policy
- Knowing when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices
- Feeling connected to their school, friends, community and the wider world
- Understanding how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts
- Feeling confident in themselves and having the skills needed to deal with life’s challenges
- Knowing where they can go for help – class teacher/principal/SEN teachers
- Showing care and respect for others
- Having positive relationships with friends, peers, and staff members
- Feeling listened to and valued
- Being able to think through their decisions
- Being aware of themselves as learners, and knowing how they can improve

## **1. Culture and Environment of Wellbeing in our School**

We promote an encouraging and positive school culture in the following ways:

- The physical environment conveys a message of warmth, welcome and inclusion
- The school is a safe place for all students
- The school building is accessible for all students
- Students and staff take pride and care in maintaining the physical environment
- The school environment is conducive to promoting physical activity
- Teachers have high expectations for all students
- There are open, positive, supportive relationships between teachers and students in class and outside
- A culture of collaboration and cooperation is promoted through day to day teaching, learning and assessment practices
- Students feel safe, secure and respected in their classrooms
- Students are encouraged to actively engage in their learning so that they may enjoy being at school

- Students receive regular formative feedback about their learning and how they can improve
- Students have regular opportunities to talk about their learning and what helps them to learn
- Teaching and learning is differentiated and provides an appropriate challenge to enable all students to engage and experience success

## **2. Relationships and Wellbeing in our School:**

St Lassara's N.S. recognises that true wellbeing can only be assured through the promotion and development of positive, nurturing and respectful relationships. We strive to achieve this in the following ways:

- Ensuring that student-teacher relationships are friendly, caring and respectful
- Making sure that staff are fully aware that they may be the one adult that a student turns to for support and help during a difficult time
- Resolving behaviour issues with care, respect and consistency (Restorative Practise)
- Ensuring that there is a shared vision and understanding of what student wellbeing means which emphasises strengths and capacities
- Encouraging students to show respect, care and concern for each other so that they feel safe and supported amongst their peers
- Recognising that staff are entitled to feel supported and cared for amongst their colleagues
- Ensuring that parents feel welcome, respected, and listened to as partners in the education of their children
- Sharing information with parents as to how they can support their child's wellbeing
- Maintaining strong links with the local community

## **3. Wellbeing and the Curriculum in our school**

Wellbeing is reflected strongly in our curricular provision through the following ways:

- There is a coherent and co-ordinated approach to the provision of curricular subjects (SPHE, PE) as part of the wellbeing programme
- Staff are afforded opportunities to work collaboratively in planning for these subjects and CPD is actively supported
- Staff are continuously engaging with new educational programmes and extra-curricular initiatives to support the teaching and promotion of wellbeing skills in students. (e.g. Restorative practise, Stay Safe programme, Weaving wellbeing)

### **Wellbeing initiatives**

- **Friendship week:** This takes place annually to coincide with Amnesty International's human rights education and fundraising initiative (March/.April) A variety of

activities/events are organised for the week- lunchtime with friends, friendship bingo, poster competition, playground games, co-operative tasks and challenges, Friendly Fridays.

- **Friendship squad and buddy bench:** From 3<sup>rd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> class students are invited to take part in the Friendship squad initiative. This system provides support for younger children on the playground through the use of a buddy system. If they feel lonely, upset or have no one to play with they sit on the buddy bench until a friendship squad member is available to help. This promotes a communal sense of responsibility and helps the students develop skills of problem solving and empathy.
  - **Music:** Dedicated music classes from 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. Our annual Christmas Concert and St Patrick's Day parade participation gives students the opportunity to display their talents.
  - **Subject weeks:** Our school prides itself in our involvement in ongoing subject weeks throughout the academic year. (e.g. Maths week, Science week, Engineers Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Active Schools week). These help to build positive relationships. They improve self-esteem and develop transferable skills. They contribute to the wellbeing of the students by giving them the opportunity to learn in many ways. They have the opportunity to interact with classmates and teachers and to take part in activities inside and outside the classroom. Each student is challenged to problem solve outside of their comfort zone promoting positive supportive relationships within the school.
  - **School Library:** We provide a comfortable and welcoming environment. There are weekly visits timetabled for all classes.
- \*\* Student Council: Enhances student voice and promotes a sense of involvement in the development of the school and a sense of partnership between students and teachers (maybe set up one for this year 2020/21?)*
- **Parents Association:** Fundraises, organises events in order to sustain and enhance wellbeing in the school community
  - **Wide variety of extra-curricular activities:** Craft-Ed, GAA coaching scheme, Sligo Sport and Recreation partnership, Green Schools Initiative, Health Promoting Schools project, Discovery Primary Science Award.
  - **Mindfulness:** Teachers engage and promote the use of mindfulness in the classroom through a variety of daily activities e.g. mindfulness colouring, guided meditations, mindful minutes, guided meditation, yoga.
  - **School Tours/Outings:** We use these outings and tours as an opportunity for our students to enhance cultural awareness and interests.
  - **Wellbeing and social media:** Students engage with internet safety lessons every second year. Information evenings provided for parents.

## **Student Support – NEPS & Wellbeing**

In line with best practise the Continuum of Support provides a flexible framework within which schools can address all educational needs, including wellbeing. We follow this framework in St Lassara's N.S.

### **School Support Plus for Few:**

Individualised, targeted intervention for children and young people with more complex and enduring needs.

### **School Support for Some:**

Identification, targeted prevention and early intervention for those at risk.

### **Whole School and Classroom Support for All:**

Whole school support for wellbeing promotion that includes prevention and development of social and emotional competence and coping skills for all.

## **A. Support for ALL**

At this level we adopt a whole school approach. We have a series of policies and procedures that promote wellbeing for all members of the school community. Processes on this level aim at:

- (i) The establishment of a safe environment that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing
- (ii) The promotion of an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing
- (iii) The early identification and intervention in the cases of challenge.

These steps are reflected in various school policies such as Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **B. Support for Some**

There is a more focused approach adopted with students who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour. These structures seek to provide a more targeted support structure to promote and scaffold wellbeing for these identified students (Class teachers open a student support plan for these students).

Supports are available such as collaborative work between the class teacher and SEN teacher, possible attendance to learning support, additional resources for emotional and behavioural support, individual student support plans and reward systems.

## **C. Support for a few**

This support focuses on putting in place interventions for young people with more complex and enduring needs. Work with this group of students is structured under the development of an IEP (Individual Education Plan) or IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan). In some cases collaboration and referral to outside agencies may be required to help assist students with more complex needs (e.g. Advice from NEPS, referral to CAMHS, OT supports).

## **Staff Wellbeing**

The staff of St Lassara's N.S. work in a supported environment. At Board of Management meetings the principal's report keeps the board informed of the work of staff. This is formally

affirmed at staff gatherings. Our staff room is well equipped and provides a communal space for staff. School management work collaboratively with the whole staff. Management respect the professional commitment of each staff member. Management understands the complex pressures which may come to bear on all members of staff from time to time and respond with compassion. Staff members are encouraged and supported to take on new roles, gain further qualifications or attend relevant CPD courses.

St Lassara’s N.S. promotes a culture of collaborative work. This is achieved through regular whole staff meetings, staff planning and an online network of resources on our Aladdin school system. This system ensures all staff are aware of important events and opportunities. The school staff also organise social events periodically throughout the year to enhance personal relationships between members. Employee assistance service (EAS) is available to all teachers and immediate family members to assist in access to counselling. This is a free and confidential service available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Challenges and risk factors of wellbeing in our school**

In the school setting potential wellbeing risk factors we have identified include:

- Disengagement, absenteeism, isolation and alienation
- Aggression, bullying and relationship difficulties
- Low achievement/learning difficulties/special educational needs including social, emotional and behavioural needs
- Cultural differences
- School transitions
- Poor connection between family and school
- Harsh and inconsistent discipline
- Lack of opportunity to develop social and emotional learning, including problem solving and coping skills.

**Wellbeing Curriculum Plan (2year plan)**

<u>Term one</u>	<u>Term one</u>
<p><b>Junior/Senior infants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language of well being</li> </ul> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language of well being</li> </ul> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing Gratitude</li> </ul>	<p><b>Junior/Senior infants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise language of well being</li> </ul> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise language of well being</li> </ul> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspective</li> </ul>

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Respect

**Term two**

**Junior/Senior infants**

- Understanding strengths

1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>

- Understanding Strengths

3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>

- Flow experiences
- Random acts of Kindness

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Empathy
- Looking for win wins

**Term three**

**Junior/Senior infants**

- Using strengths

1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>

- Using Strengths

3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>

- Rainbow moments
- Healthy body, happy mind

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Active listening
- Forgiveness

- Healthy distraction

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Making a difference

**Term two**

**Junior/Senior infants**

- Identifying own strengths

1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>

- Identifying own strengths

3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>

- Problem focused planning
- Cognitive re-framing

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Self-acceptance
- Growth mindsets

**Term three**

**Junior/Senior infants**

- Strength spotting

1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>

- Strength spotting

3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>

- Using character strengths
- Mindfulness

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

- Self talk
- Challenging limiting beliefs

## Reinforcement and Progression of Core Concepts through the Weaving Well-Being Programme



Growth Mindset	Language of Well-Being	Self-Efficacy	Character Strengths	Cognitive Reframing	Emotional Competence	Social Competence	Making a Difference
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: All Lessons	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lessons 1 & 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lesson 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lessons 3 - 10		2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lessons 4, 5 & 10	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lessons 5, 6 & 10	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class: Lesson 10
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: All Lessons	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lesson 1	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lesson 3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lesson 4		3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lessons 2 - 10	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lessons 4 & 6	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class: Lesson 6
4 <sup>th</sup> Class: All Lessons	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 1	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lessons 2 - 10	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 6	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 5	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lessons 7 - 10	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 10	4 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 1
5 <sup>th</sup> Class: All Lessons	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 1	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 10	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 6	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 8	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 3	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lessons 2 - 10	5 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 9
6 <sup>th</sup> Class: All Lessons	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 1	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lessons 1-10	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 5	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lessons 1, 2 & 4	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 7	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 7	6 <sup>th</sup> Class: Lesson 8

Reference: (Weisberg, R.R., Goren, P., Domitrovich, C., & Dusenbury, L. (2013). CASEL guide-Effective social and emotional learning programs: Preschool and elementary school edition. Chicago, IL: CASEL.)