

Whole School Wellbeing Plan 2026

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1. Rationale

The promotion of wellbeing is central to the Department's mission to enable children and young people to achieve their full potential and contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development. Schools play a vital role in the promotion of wellbeing through a range of activities and approaches to support the academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development of all children and young people. Our education system is key to equipping children and young people with the knowledge, skills and competencies to deal with challenges that impact on their wellbeing (Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018 - 2023).

In the school environment, social and emotional skills do not exist in isolation but interact with cognitive skills development. The role of the school is now understood as a place which develops the 'whole child', who should leave school with a balanced set of cognitive, social and emotional skills to face the challenges of the 21st century. Schools play a key role in developing and enhancing young people's wellbeing as they spend a large proportion of their time in school during their formative years. Children and young people learn more effectively and have better academic outcomes if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves and feel acknowledged and supported in their schools. National and international research highlights that the wellbeing of our children and young people is critical to their success in education and in life (Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, 2018 - 2023).

Mallow Community National School (CNS) has already developed innovative approaches to wellbeing promotion supported by strong leadership and quality teaching and learning. We aim to further support children by optimising opportunities to learn about wellbeing. As well as being a place of academic learning, our school provides opportunities to develop friendships and social networks, to respectfully encounter diversity and access support structures. The ethos of Education and Training Boards Ireland underpins our approach to wellbeing, promoting equality, respect, inclusion and care for all members of the school community (ETBI, 2019)

This policy displays existing and developing work in wellbeing promotion in Mallow CNS. Its implementation is an ongoing, reflective and self-evaluative process that aims to focus on supporting children in having a sense of purpose and fulfilment, and the skills necessary to deal

with life's challenges. It also aims to be responsive to the changing needs of the school and the children in our care.

2. Introduction

This policy sets out the vision and ambition of Mallow CNS to ensure that the experience of our children from the early years throughout their primary education will be one that enhances, promotes, values and nurtures their wellbeing. Key to this ambition is building on the good practice already in place and the capacity of our school to assess, understand, evaluate and promote the key factors that will lead to optimal promotion of student wellbeing in our school setting.

We adopt a preventative, multi-component, continuum of support approach to the promotion of wellbeing with the provision of both whole school and targeted interventions that promote school-based protective factors and reduce school-based risk factors. We are committed to the ongoing review and development of the four key areas and indicators of successful wellbeing promotion - school culture and environment, teaching and learning, policy and planning, and relationships and partnerships. This 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.

Our wellbeing policy is:

- **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 young people and foster their belonging and connectedness to our school community.
- **Fair and inclusive:** All children receive fair and inclusive opportunities to develop their wellbeing in ways that are responsive and suitable to their particular needs and contexts. Practices are tailored and relevant, building on the existing strengths of children, school staff, families and school communities.
- **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.
- **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.

- Partnership/Collaboration: The wellbeing of our children is a shared responsibility. Working in partnership with parents, guardians, school staff and external agencies is key to ensuring this policy is implemented.

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Documents which have informed our Wellbeing Policy planning:

- Relate: A Regulation First Approach to Reframing Behavior and Supporting Student Engagement and Participation - National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCSE, 2025)
- Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice - Department of Education and Skills (DES, 2018 - 2023)
- Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools and Special Schools (DES, Inspectorate, 2022)
- Education and Training Boards Ireland (2019). *ETBI Patron's Framework on Ethos*. Dublin: ETBI.
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES, 2017; revised 2023)
- Continuum of Support Guidelines – National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS, 2007)
- Primary Curriculum Framework (National Council of Curriculum A, 2023)
- SPHE Curriculum – National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2018; updated 2023)
- Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES, 2013)
- Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (DES, 2022)
- Guidelines for Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (NCCA, 2024)
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (National Educational Welfare Board, 2008)
- Healthy Ireland Framework (Department of Health, 2013)
- Stay Safe Programme (DES, 2017)
- RSE Policy Guidelines (Department of Education, 2026)
- Well-Being in Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH & HSE, 2015)
- Wellbeing information for school staff – primary (DES, 2023)
- Normalising Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviours (DES, NEPS, 2019)

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

3. Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

The Department's *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice* assists schools in ensuring that wellbeing 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 wellbeing promotion.

The Wellbeing Framework for Practice outlines:

1. Key areas of wellbeing in education
2. Indicators of success in each of these areas
3. Statements of effective practice to guide schools
4. Suite of online wellbeing resources

4. Looking at Our School: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools

Looking at Our Schools articulates the Department's holistic view of learning in schools (DES, 2016). The framework sees wellbeing as both an enabler of learning and an outcome of learning. It emphasises the need for children and young people to develop a broad range of skills, competencies and values that enable active citizenship, lifelong learning and personal wellbeing. The framework asserts that in providing good quality learning experiences, teachers need to also consider children and young people's wellbeing and that effective school leadership and management involves creating and maintaining a positive, secure and healthy culture where the holistic development of all children and young people is enabled. Looking at Our Schools also provides a coherent approach to improving outcomes and experiences for all children and young people. It is used to assist schools in embedding self-evaluation processes and reflective practices and it provides a structure for implementing new initiatives. The domains and standards of Looking at Our Schools can therefore support schools in promoting and enhancing the wellbeing of all members of the school community.

5. What is Wellbeing?

Holistic, whole child development underpins the aim of wellbeing in recent policy, with the aspiration of enabling children to reach their full potential (NCCA 2009; NCCA 2017; DES 2019; NCCA 2020). Wellbeing policy in Ireland, advocates for educating in a way which enables holistic development.

Mallow CNS acknowledges that defining wellbeing is difficult and often varies from source to source. For the purposes of our primary school environment we find that the following is appropriate.

“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.

Equally, wellbeing encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose ... A society’s wellbeing can be determined by the extent to which it is resilient, builds capacity for action, and is prepared to transcend challenges” (World Health Organisation, 2024).

Wellbeing is multidimensional:

1. Physical
2. Social
3. Mental
4. Emotional
5. Spiritual

To take one of these facets and expand upon it, The Mental Health Foundation (2021) suggests that children who are mentally healthy possess the ability to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, spiritually
- initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships
- use and enjoy solitude
- become aware of others and empathise with them
- play and learn

- develop a sense of right and wrong

Taking another aspect, children's emotional wellbeing is just as important as their physical health. Good mental health helps children develop the resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults (Mental Health Organisation, 2023).

Things that can help keep children and young people mentally well include:

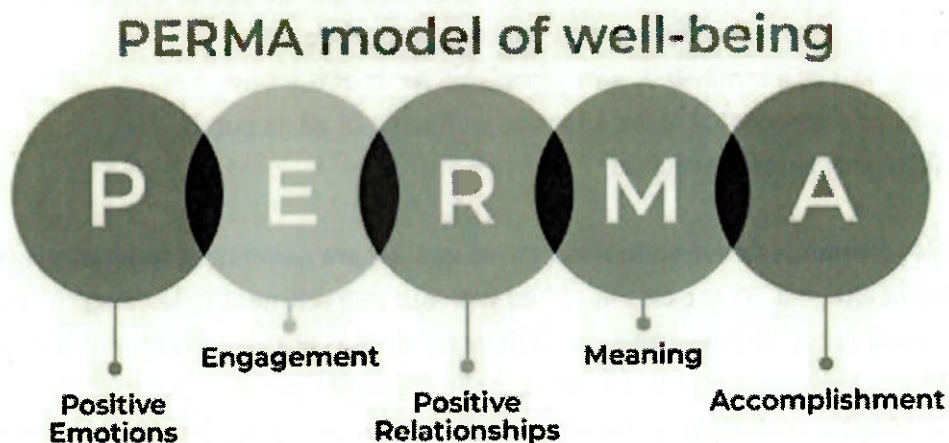
- being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
- having time and freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
- being part of a family that gets along well most of the time
- going to a school that looks after the wellbeing of all its pupils
- taking part in local activities

Mallow CNS promotes Active School initiatives and we are committed to physical activity and developing healthy habits are closely linked with our commitment to keeping children mentally well. Our Healthy Eating Policy and our SPHE programmes are also strongly linked in this regard. Other factors are also important, including feeling loved, trusted, understood and safe. Children who are optimistic, and resilient, have some control over their lives and feel like they belong are more likely to have good mental well-being. (Mental Health Foundation, 2021). Our Wellbeing Committee celebrates specific awareness days, such as Compliment Day and Wacky Wednesday, which promote a sense of belonging and celebrate individuality, thereby fostering positive mental health and contributing to a supportive school culture.

The science of wellbeing is studied as Positive Psychology. Positive psychology is underpinned by Professor Martin Seligman's PERMA Theory of Wellbeing (2011). PERMA Theory outlines five key elements that contribute to wellbeing. Positive Emotion is fostered in the school through initiatives that celebrate kindness, individuality and achievement, such as Compliment Day, Wacky Wednesday and the celebration of pupil successes. Engagement is promoted through active and inclusive teaching and learning approaches, wellbeing lessons, and opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of activities including sport, creative arts and whole-school events. Relationships are strengthened through a strong emphasis on respectful communication, restorative practice and the promotion of positive interactions between pupils, staff and the wider school community. Meaning is supported by developing a strong sense of belonging and shared values within the school, encouraging pupils to feel part of their class, school and wider community through participation in school and community initiatives.

Accomplishment is encouraged by recognising effort, celebrating achievements and supporting pupils to set and work towards personal and learning goals, helping to build confidence and self-efficacy. Effort and achievements are celebrated during assembly, and are not solely academic based.

Table 1: The PERMA Theory of Wellbeing



Through our every-day teaching, through our role-modelling of good behaviours, through our daily teacher-to-child and teacher-to-teacher interactions within the Mallow CNS environment, we focus on building these 5 elements of wellbeing by:

- Increasing and prioritising positive emotions (wellbeing initiatives, assembly awards)
- Teaching emotional regulation skills (SPHE lessons, lessons from our NEPs Wellbeing co-ordinator for some class groups)
- Encouraging children to utilise their skills (joining a pupil committee, project work)
- Providing challenging activities to facilitate growth
- Promoting and supporting inclusion (reverse integration, integration)
- Communicating high expectations (Fostering positive relationships, class contracts at the start of the year, assembly awards)
- Providing support (conversations with students, having a nurture teacher)
- Teaching life skills (building relationships, emotional regulation, empathy, resilience, expressing emotions appropriately, listening to others)

- Facilitating connection to the school community (getting in external teachers, intercultural day, visiting the local library and playground)
- Improving self-efficacy (collaborative activities, paired reading, teachers modeling positive behaviour, setting achievable goals)
- Celebrating success (acknowledgment in the school newsletter/ assembly)

6. Wellbeing Protective and Risk Factors

Risk and protective factors relating to wellbeing promotion that are specific to our school setting have been identified. Protective factors have been found to promote positive outcomes for children and young people, even when they have been exposed to risk factors (Cooper, Jacobs, 2011). In Mallow CNS, we implement a preventative wellbeing promotion process that has a focus on strengthening school-based protective factors and minimising school based risk factors.

In Mallow CNS, Wellbeing Protective Factors include:

- positive relationships with peers and teachers, as mentioned above and implementing *Relate* strategies (NCCA, 2025). We implement positive teacher classroom management strategies.
- Restorative practice acts as a protective factor for wellbeing by promoting positive relationships, emotional safety and a sense of belonging within the school community. When conflicts arise, pupils are supported to reflect on what happened, understand the impact of their actions and work towards repairing relationships. This approach focuses on empathy, respectful communication and problem-solving rather than blame, helping pupils develop social and emotional skills and contributing to a supportive and inclusive school environment.
- a sense of belonging, security and connectedness to our school through the creation of 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, emotional regulation, relationships, responsible decision making and problem solving 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 - protocols and support systems that proactively support children and their families should difficulties arise

In our school setting, Wellbeing Risk Factors include:

- disengagement, absenteeism and isolation
- violence/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
- lack of opportunity to develop social and emotional learning, including problem solving and coping skills

7. The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher has been found to be paramount to children's wellbeing and reaches beyond teaching and learning. The relationship that teachers develop with the child has a key influence on wellbeing development. Access to 'one good adult' who can guide and support a young person at a vulnerable time is an identified protective factor. The presence of one supportive adult is critically important to the child's wellbeing, sense of connectedness, self-confidence and ability to cope with difficulties. As mentioned in *Relate* (NCCA, 2025), teachers are sometimes that 'one good adult' acting as a protective force in a child's life. The classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and he/she/they can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education. It is essential that all staff continue to develop their competence and confidence in the promotion of wellbeing. 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 wellbeing promotion may be delivered by staff who have completed relevant CPD training, such as *Zippy's Friends* and *Relate*. A number of Croke Park hours are allocated annually to continuing professional development in the area of wellbeing promotion. These sessions may be facilitated by Oide or delivered internally by school staff.

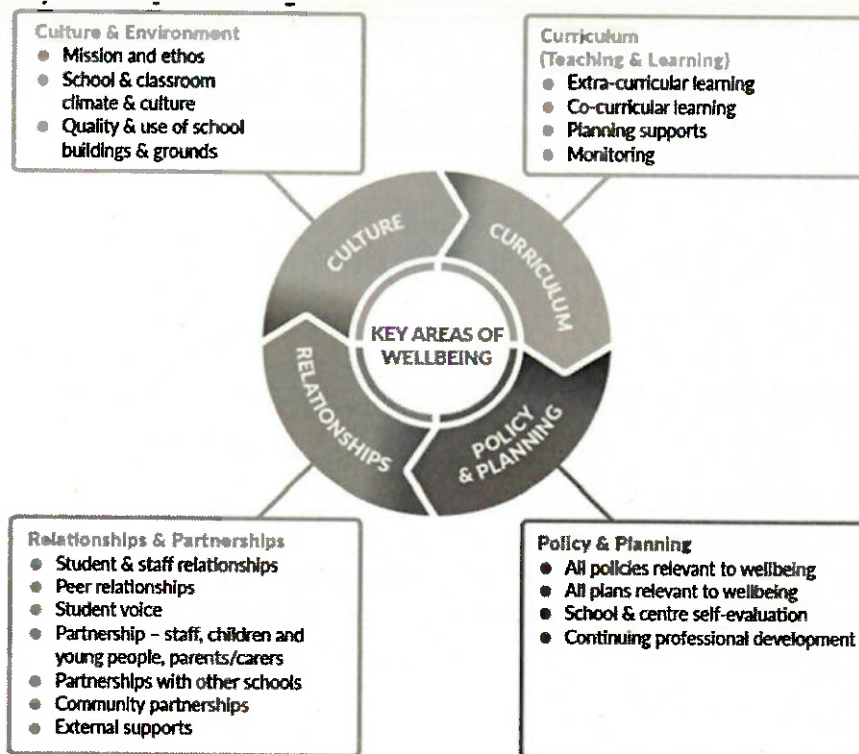
Professional learning has included training in the Relate programme and the implementation and review of agreed whole-school strategies arising from this work, such as *Drop Everything and Regulate* and the *2x10 strategy*.

8. Multi-component Approach to Wellbeing Promotion

The Department advocates a multi-component approach to wellbeing promotion to ensure that all of the key areas that contribute to wellbeing promotion in schools are given a focus. The Department considers the following four areas as key areas for action in wellbeing promotion:

- Culture and Environment
- Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- Policy and Planning
- Relationships and Partnerships

Table 2: Four Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion



8.1 School Culture and Environment

Mallow CNS aims to cultivate an environment that enhances wellbeing for all who learn, work and visit. Our school environment is one that consciously fosters warm relationships, encourages participation, develops pupil and teacher autonomy and provides clarity of boundaries, rules and positive expectations. Mallow CNS 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 provide a climate in which positive relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities. Our school leaders actively promote wellbeing in Mallow CNS. Our Leadership Team strives to create a culture and climate which is accepting and supportive for staff, parents and students. Through nurturing quality relationships within the school, we facilitate the wellbeing of staff members and students as well as fostering a shared responsibility for promoting positive wellbeing.

8.2 Curriculum

Wellbeing promotion is central to all areas of teaching and learning in Mallow CNS. The teaching and learning is democratic, inclusive, engaging and differentiated. We deliver an integrated curriculum that recognises the richness and uniqueness of the individual and the importance of the quality of teaching and learning experiences.

Wellbeing promotion is addressed across the curriculum through:

- Aistear
- SPHE
- Physical Education (with a focus on Fundamental Movement Skills)
- GMGY
- Science

Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009) encompasses four themes - Wellbeing, Identity and Belonging, Communication, Exploring and Thinking.

Social, Personal and Health Education is central to pupil development in its broadest sense and is an essential part of school curriculum. The SPHE curriculum in Mallow CNS strongly supports the social and emotional wellbeing of our pupils, by placing an emphasis on children's social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and therefore learning performance. SPHE encompasses the development of emotional literacy which is the ability to understand emotions, listen to others and empathise. This includes provision of safe, secure and comfortable environments that enable children to share their concerns. Communication boxes are available in each classroom to provide pupils with a safe and private way to share concerns or worries with their teacher. These boxes support open communication and ensure that children who may find it difficult to speak about an issue aloud have an alternative means of seeking support.

Key characteristics of the SPHE programme delivered in our school:

- a lifelong process
- a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community
- based on the needs of the child
- spiral in nature
- effective and consistent in delivery
- developed in a combination of contexts
- engages children in activity based learning (NCCA 1999)

8.3 Policy and Planning

Mallow CNS regularly reviews school policies for staff and pupils that are in keeping with the school's aims, philosophy, vision and ethos. All aspects of the school planning and school self-evaluation process incorporate a health and wellbeing dimension, reflecting our commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive and positive school environment.

This is our school's first standalone Wellbeing Policy. As such, it represents an important step in formally recognising and documenting the work already taking place to support wellbeing. The policy will be reviewed regularly, taking account of the evolving needs of the school community, feedback from staff and pupils, and the introduction of new initiatives or national guidance in the area of wellbeing.

Wellbeing promotion has been previously addressed in school policies and plans including but not limited to:

- Aistear
- Physical Education
- GMGY
- SPHE
- Science
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding
- Critical Incidents
- Health and Safety
- Anti-bullying
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Special Educational Need

8.4 Relationships and Partnerships

Mallow CNS continues to develop strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community, recognising that collaboration is central to the wellbeing process. The school engages effectively with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and wellbeing, teaching and learning.

The school also actively participates in a range of community events which strengthen pupils' sense of belonging and connection. These include involvement in the St. Patrick's Day Parade, participation in the local Park Run, and welcoming parents into the school for talks and events such as Intercultural Day. External sports coaches regularly visit the school to deliver sessions, further promoting physical wellbeing and encouraging active involvement in community activities.

The following stakeholders collaborate regularly:

- Parents/Guardians
- School Staff
- Ancillary Staff
- Board of Management
- Parents Association
- Student Committees
- Local schools
- Voluntary/sports/arts groups

- State agencies
- Community groups
- Support services

Restorative practice is used within the school as a positive approach to managing and resolving conflict. Restorative questions are used to support pupils in reflecting on situations and understanding the impact of their actions on others. These questions are displayed in the yard and are used by staff to guide conversations when difficulties arise.

The focus of restorative practice is on resolving conflict, repairing relationships and supporting pupils to move forward in a positive way, rather than attributing blame. This approach encourages empathy, accountability and respectful communication, and helps to strengthen relationships within the school community.

These approaches are closely aligned with our core school values of **Care, Respect, Equality, Community and Excellence in Education**. Through our strong partnerships and inclusive practices, we promote a culture of care and respect where all members of the school community feel valued and supported. Our engagement with families and the wider community reflects our commitment to community and collaboration, while our inclusive ethos ensures equality of opportunity and participation for all pupils. Restorative practice further reinforces these values by promoting respectful relationships, empathy and accountability, supporting pupils to learn from experiences and contribute positively to the school environment.

9. Two-tiered Approach to Wellbeing Promotion

In Mallow CNS, we adopt a preventative, two-tiered approach to wellbeing promotion, with interventions at both universal whole school and individual targeted levels.

9.1 Whole School Approach

Our whole school approach involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life which impact on wellbeing. By adopting a whole school approach, we aim 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 and wellbeing. In Mallow CNS, we embrace School Support for All as a whole

school approach that focuses on promoting wellbeing for all members of the school community. School Support for All is a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching, early identification and intervention for children who are showing mild or transient signs of difficulty. Students flourish where there is a whole school approach to supporting their growth and wellbeing.

The ethos of Education and Training Boards Ireland, which emphasises respect for diversity, equality and inclusion, and student voice and participation, is actively fostered through our whole-school approach to wellbeing in Mallow CNS. These values are reflected in the creation of an inclusive and welcoming school environment where all pupils feel respected, valued and supported regardless of their background.

Our Whole School Approach involves:

- raising awareness of wellbeing promotion
- engaging in whole school wellbeing initiatives e.g. Friendship Week, Wellbeing Week, Compliment Day, Wacky Wednesday
- regular review and development of policies relating to wellbeing such as critical incidents, bullying, child protection etc.
- Hanging posters/ children's work around the school which promote wellbeing
- professional development for school staff in wellbeing promotion e.g. Oide support, Relate training
- implementing the SPHE curriculum which includes a focus on whole school approaches to wellbeing and health promotion
- implementing universal evidence based programmes and interventions e.g. strategies promoted in Relate, Zippy's Friend
- establishing pupil committees such as a student councils to ensure that the voices of children are heard
- planning, collaborating and appropriate sharing of information between schools when children are making the transition into primary school or moving into post-primary school e.g. use of Education Passports
- Lessons on managing emotions from our NEPs Wellbeing co-ordinator (six week block)
- liaising with appropriate external agencies and services e.g. NEPS psychologists, NCSE etc.

9.1.1 Benefits of a Whole School Approach

Adopting a whole school approach has been found internationally to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for individual children including:

- Better learning results for pupils
- Increased pupil self-esteem
- Improved behaviour
- Lowered incidence of bullying
- Increased inclusion
- Improved attendance
- Enhanced emotional regulation
- School environment is safer and more secure
- Improved relationships within the school
- More involvement of parents/guardians
- Better use of outside agencies

Grounded in the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), this approach recognises that strategies designed to support some pupils will, in practice, benefit all pupils. By proactively creating inclusive, flexible and supportive learning environments, the school ensures that wellbeing promotion is embedded in everyday practice and accessible to every child.

9.1.2 Whole School Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing

Mallow CNS implements a number of programmes and initiatives that support the wellbeing of our pupils, including but not limited to:

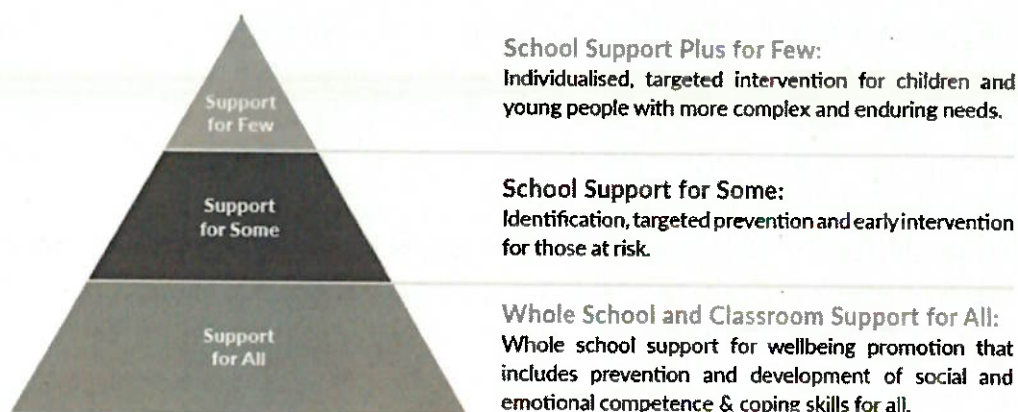
- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework
- SPHE Curriculum (RSE Month, Stay Safe Month, Friendship Week, Wellbeing Week)
- Zippy's Friends
- Continuum of Support Model
- Student Committees: Student Council, Green School Committee, Active Schools Committee, Wellbeing Committee, STEM Committee
- Project based learning

- adopt a planned implementation process, for example, incorporate needs analysis, use evidence informed programmes and track and evaluate outcomes for students
- are implemented and used in our school in a sustained way over a number of years in order to bring about lasting effects and benefits

9.2 Individual and Targeted Support

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 the wellbeing needs of our pupils.

Table 3: Continuum of Support



The Continuum of Support recognises that individual children and young people can have different needs at different times. Those at greater risk and with greater needs may require more specific and targeted support, in addition to the support provided to all children and young people in their class-based groups.

Children and young people with additional needs and vulnerable groups are particularly at risk in the area of wellbeing (NCSE, 2014). The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) supports schools to promote the wellbeing and mental health of all children and young people.

While supporting all, NEPS prioritises support for those at risk of educational disadvantage and those with special educational needs.

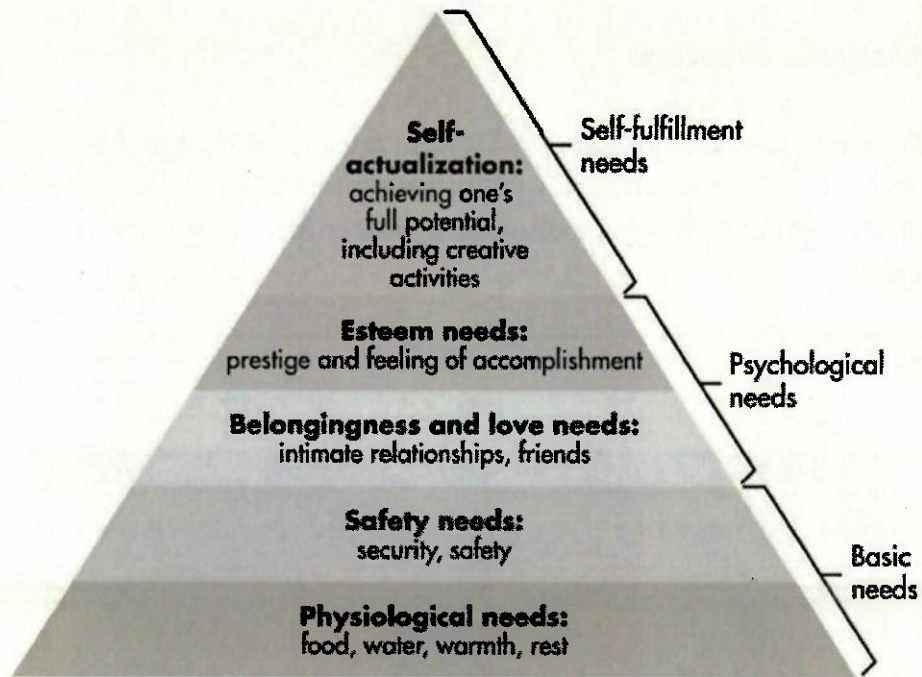
9.2.1 The Student Support Team

All staff in the school community share responsibility for observing and responding to the wellbeing needs of our students, actively implementing whole-school initiatives to foster a supportive environment.

The Student Support Team (SST) is composed of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals, the SET Co-ordinator, the Nurture Teacher, and the Special Education Team. Wellbeing needs are regularly reviewed at In-Leadership Management Team meetings, allowing for timely responses to changing pupil requirements. Our Nurture and Special Education teams provide targeted one-to-one and group support for students with identified needs, including those requiring higher levels of intervention. The ISM and SET teams meet frequently to discuss student needs across the continuum of support model, identifying children who may benefit from additional assistance within the school, at home, or through collaboration with external agencies. This collaborative approach ensures that all students receive appropriate, responsive, and coordinated support to promote their wellbeing and learning.

When developing a Student Support Plan, we consider the 'whole child' keeping in mind Maslow's hierarchy of Needs (see Table 4 below). Basic Needs, My Thoughts about School and School Environment checklists are completed.

Table 4: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



9.2.2 External Agencies and Specialist Support Services

Some children and young people will require additional support from specialist support services external to the school. In the event of a child presenting with mental health concerns, which are above and beyond the capacity and ability of the school to provide adequate support, the school may decide upon either of the following courses of action:

- Follow existing policies which enable staff to access and refer directly to an external service. In Mallow CNS, we have established essential relationships with local agencies and have names and contact details readily available for onward referrals.
- When deemed necessary, the school team, with the consent and collaboration of parents/ guardians, may recommend a referral to the local General Practitioner (GP) or

other appropriate professionals who can advise on referral pathways. For children with mental health difficulties, the referral will likely be made to the local HSE Psychology Service/Primary Care Team or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

10. Indicators of Success

The Wellbeing Indicators of Success, outlined in Table 5, are the broad outcomes to which the Department aspires and wants schools and centres for education to accomplish. In Mallow CNS, we will refer to the Wellbeing Indicators of Success to identify our strengths and targets for improvement.

Table 5: Wellbeing Promotion Indicators of Success

Key Areas	Indicators of Success
Culture & Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. • Systems are in place so that the voice of the child/young person, teacher and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and ethos.
Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people experience positive, high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, which provides opportunities for success for all. • Children and young people access curricular activities to promote their physical, social and emotional competence to enhance their overall wellbeing.
Policy & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and centres for education use a Self-Evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process to develop, implement and review wellbeing promotion. • Schools and centres for education incorporate wellbeing promotion into whole school policies and practices.
Relationships & Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people, their parents and other external partners are actively involved in wellbeing promotion within the school community. • All adults in schools and centres for education have an increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to children and young people, and signposting them to internal or external pathways for support when needed.

In addition, Mallow CNS uses the Solution-Focused Goal Setting Tool developed by the National Council for Special Education (2025) to support the implementation of selected wellbeing

strategies recommended in the *Relate* document. This approach supports staff in identifying specific wellbeing goals and selecting practical strategies to support pupils at a whole-class, group or individual level.

Following the implementation of these strategies, the Solution-Focused Review and Reflection process is used to evaluate their effectiveness. Staff reflect on how the strategies are supporting pupils' wellbeing and consider whether they should be continued, adapted or replaced. During this process, positive, strengths-based language is used, with statements such as "*We are pleased to notice...*" helping to highlight progress, recognise improvements and reinforce a supportive and solution-focused approach to wellbeing.

11. School Self-Evaluation (SSE) Wellbeing Promotion Process

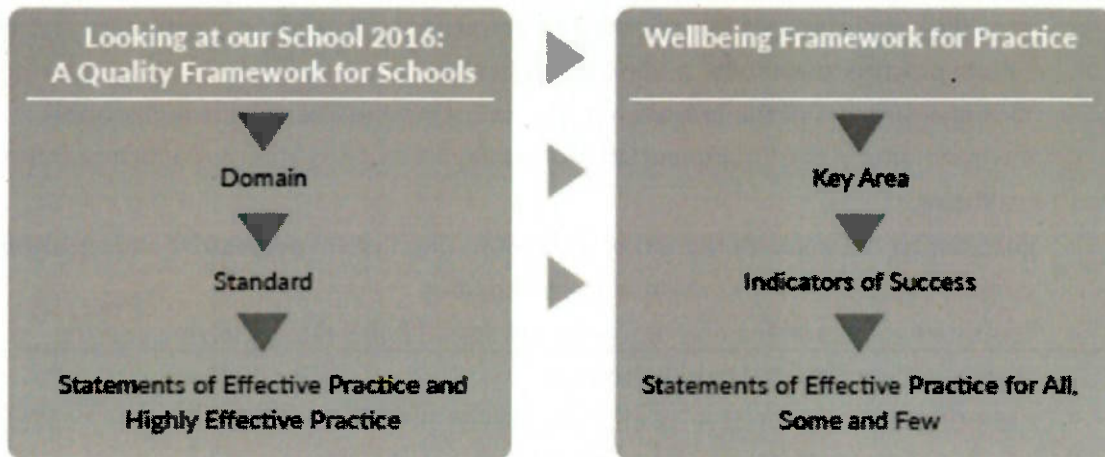
In relation to SSE, Mallow CNS has been focused on embedding our school values of Care, Excellence in Education, Respect, Equality and Community, with a specific focus on Community. These principles are closely linked to the Key Areas of 'Culture & Environment' and 'Relationships & Partnerships' under the Wellbeing Promotion Indicators of Success (Table 5). To implement this focus our school was required to use the six-step School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process with the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, to initiate a Wellbeing Promotion review and development cycle. We devised and implemented a plan for improvement in one key area, as appropriate for our school. In devising and implementing the improvement plan, we referred to the Statements of Effective Practice in key areas relevant to the specific focus we have chosen. We firstly gathered information by consulting with and collecting information from key stakeholders, including staff, pupils and parents/guardians, relating to current practice in the key areas of wellbeing promotion. This information is essential in order to highlight positive aspects and strengths in our practice and identify areas for development – the analysis and judgement stage. This analysis informed actions for wellbeing in a selected area. At an intervention stage, appropriate school interventions and strategies were generated and agreed. These actions were incorporated into our School Improvement Plan (SIP). Steps will be put in place to implement the agreed actions. At the monitoring stage, actions will be reviewed on an ongoing basis which will assist us in evaluating impact and tracking our progress in this process of continuous improvement.

Table 6: School Self-Evaluation Process



The *Wellbeing in Education Framework for Practice* is closely aligned to the standards set out in *Looking at Our Schools*. In order to assist schools in their use of the SSE process to engage with wellbeing, Table 7 shows how the language in the Wellbeing in Education Framework for Practice maps to the language of Looking at Our School.

Table 7: Linking Looking at our Schools and the Wellbeing Framework for Practice



12. Supporting the Implementation of the Wellbeing Promotion Process

The Department has made available a selection of Wellbeing Resources to provide practical tools and information to support the Wellbeing Promotion Process. These Wellbeing Resources include:

- Evaluation Tools: Parent/Carer, Child/Young Person and Staff Questionnaires
- Focus Group Guidelines to facilitate access to the voice of key stakeholders
- Revised Circular for schools to provide strengthened guidance on the use of programmes/external facilitators in school wellbeing promotion.

13. Continuous Professional Development

In Mallow CNS, the school management team prioritises professional development for school staff in wellbeing promotion for staff and students. Whole-staff professional development for our school includes a focus on the following:

- identifying and building upon existing good practice in the whole-school implementation of SPHE

- providing a shared understanding of the wellbeing of children
- developing an understanding of child development
- exploring the factors that impact both positively and negatively on wellbeing
- providing opportunities for reflection on the school environment, classroom and whole school practice to establish and maintain healthy patterns of relationships
- raising awareness of the importance of consistency between home and school environments in the implementation of strategies and programmes which promote wellbeing
- considering the implementation of supportive practices in addressing and resolving conflict and other issues arising between children
- raising awareness of the links between risk taking behaviours, bullying and the development of mental health problems
- exploring strategies to develop children's skills, attitudes and behaviours in dealing with peer pressure, bullying situations or situations involving risk
- equipping teachers to develop their own and children's resilience, self-control and coping skills in a variety of social situations.

14. Staff Wellbeing

Support for the wellbeing of staff is an essential element in wellbeing promotion, and crucial to sustaining teacher/staff engagement, enthusiasm and the ability to model resilience. It builds staff capacity to cope with challenges and adapt to change, and creates conditions to support and motivate staff to be effective.

Mallow CNS is a safe and supportive environment for staff members. All staff members are supported in maintaining their personal health and wellbeing. Our staff benefit from reflecting on our own wellbeing and general attitudes to mental health. All staff are made aware of supports for teacher wellbeing and that individual teachers requiring additional support at a particular time may access the Employee Assistance Service (EAS). The EAS provides advice to employees on a range of issues including wellbeing, legal, financial, bereavement, conflict and mediation. It also provides advice and support to school leaders and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace. Where appropriate, short-term counselling is available to employees and their family members. A family member includes a spouse, civil partner or dependent, where the family member can be described as a



person over the age of 18 and residing at the family home. Posters highlighting how to access their services are on display in staff bathrooms.

Spectrum.Life also provides a series of webinars and presentations to promote wellbeing in schools. Employee Assistance Service: Free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 or text 'Hi' to 0873690010 - available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In Mallow CNS we have a Staff noticeboard in the staffroom with the helpline numbers mentioned above, as well as some general wellbeing advice. In Mallow Community National School, a Staff Social Committee plays an important role in supporting staff wellbeing. The committee helps to organise opportunities for staff to connect and celebrate together. Staff birthdays and special occasions are acknowledged and celebrated, which contributes positively to staff morale and overall wellbeing within the school community.

Implementation

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28.4.26 and circulated to all staff and parents. It will be implemented from May 2026.

Signed: Lia Allen
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: June O Connor
(Principal)

Date: 28.4.26

