An Integrated Approach to Leading Whole-School Wellbeing in Primary Schools

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Fáilte

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Our School Context

- DEIS Urban Band 1
- 267 Pupils
- 22 Nationalities
- 3 EAL Teachers
- HSCL and SCP
- Welcoming and Innovative Staff
- Since 2018
  - Emergency Reception Orientation Centre (EROC)
  - Families who have endured unimaginable loss and suffering
  - Syria and Afghanistan
  - 6 children currently enrolled
- Since 2022
  - REÁLT Direct Provision
  - Ukrainian pupils have enrolled
Link to Resource Padlet
Session Objectives

• Identify ways to sustain yourself in your leadership capacity
• Explore strategies to enhance wellbeing across the school community
• Consider ways to incorporate and plan for enhanced Wellbeing practices in our schools
What challenges and difficulties are school leaders currently facing?
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Reference: Primary School Leadership: The Case for Urgent Action - A Roadmap to Sustainability (IPPN, 2022)
What are you doing in your school to overcome these challenges?

- Can you think of practical ways to deal with the following challenges in your school?
- Use the chat function.
Our School’s Solution Focused Approach to Current Challenges

• **Increased Workload**
  - School Padlet and Aladdin Notice Board – Whole-School Approaches
  - Distributed Approach to Leadership (Succession Planning)
  - Providing opportunities for teachers to lead, e.g., Digital Learning Team, Accelerated Reading, Wellbeing, Active Flag, etc.
  - Whole-School Approaches to teaching and learning
  - In-School Management Team, Teacher Leaders, Pupil Voice and Parents Association

• **Staff and Pupil Wellbeing**
  - School Padlet – Whole-School Approaches
  - Staff Newsletter and Pupil Newsletter
  - Integration of Wellbeing Committee and Active Schools Committee
  - Wellbeing School Improvement Plan (link with Framework)
  - Wellbeing Action Plan (Monthly Schedule)
  - Linked to DEIS Plan/ SIP, Anti-Bullying Policy, Code of Behaviour Policy, SPHE and PE Plans

• **Curriculum and Initiative Overload**
  - School Padlet, Google G-Suite and Aladdin
  - Whole-School Planning Calendar (Integrated Approach)
  - School Planning and Differentiation Template (DES Preparation for Teaching and Learning)
  - PIEW Planning (IPPN Model)
  - Structured Croke Park Meetings – Distributed Leadership
How do we collectively overcome these challenges?

Sustainable Leadership is Key!

As school leaders, how do we achieve and maintain sustainable leadership in our schools?

- Collaboration, communication and consistency (new staff)
- Mutual commitment to school improvement (DEIS/ SSE)
- Shared vision and goals amongst all school stakeholders
- A school culture that supports ‘slow knowing’ and slow growing – Embedded change takes time! (PIEW Model)
- Resourceful principals (instructional and distributed leadership)
- Increased teaching/ non-teaching staff empowerment and involvement
- AI support with workload
- Whole-school approach to pupil and staff wellbeing is key!
Any Questions? – Chat Function
What is Wellbeing?

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.

(World Health Organisation (WHO), 2001)
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Wellbeing Risk Factors in the School Setting

In the school setting, wellbeing risk factors include:

• Disengagement, absenteeism, isolation and alienation
• 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
• Harsh and inconsistent discipline
• Lack of opportunity to develop social and emotional learning, including problem solving and coping skills

How do we prevent these risks from happening in our school?

• Complete and analyse pupil wellbeing questionnaires
• Collaboratively implementing our Wellbeing Action Plan and DEIS Plan
• Identify target pupils (Continuum of Support)
• Imperative that teachers implement the steps outlined in key policies (ISMT and Padlet)
• Communicate key policies and strategies regularly (Padlet, Aladdin, G-Suite and Croke Park)

Exploring the Wellbeing Promotion Process

Where do we begin?

- **Whole School Shared Vision** (staff, parents/guardians, pupils, BOM and community)
- Multi-Component Approach (4 Key Areas on pg. 16)
- Preventative Measures (Proactive Approach using Indicators of Success)
- **Wellbeing Statements of Effective Practice** (pgs. 42-49)
- Regular Communication, Collaboration and Policy Implementation

- How are you embedding and leading wellbeing promotion in your school?
Exploring the Wellbeing Promotion Process

How do we embed and lead whole-school wellbeing promotion in our school?

Example 1: Culture and Environment – School and Classroom Climate and Culture
✓ Whole-School Approach underpinned by collaborative practice - Distributed Leadership, ISM Team, Pupil Voice Committee, Structured Croke Park Meetings, Whole-School Planning Calendar, etc.
✓ Examples on Padlet: DEIS Plan, Annual Wellbeing Questionnaire, Wellbeing SIP and Integrated Wellbeing Action Plan

Example 2: Policy and Planning – All Policies Relevant to Wellbeing
✓ Anti-Bullying Policy (inclusive of Inspectorate’s recommendations)
✓ Physical Education and SPHE 2 Year Plan
✓ Wellbeing School Improvement Plan
✓ DEIS Plan - Retention and Wellbeing (Questionnaire Comparison)
✓ Wellbeing Action Plan – Our Implementation Tool

Example 3: Relationships and Partnerships – Student Voice
✓ Pupil Voice Committee – Monthly Meetings and Agreed Actions
✓ Voice Topics of Importance - Healthy Eating, Homework, Wellbeing, Green Schools, Uniforms, Numeracy, Literacy, Fundraisers, School Events, etc.
✓ Pupil Leadership during School Assemblies
✓ What’s Up @ Attracta’s Half-Term School Magazine
Leading Change in Wellbeing Education

Using the practices outlined in this session, can you identify **three new opportunities** of best practice that you could utilise in promoting Wellbeing in your school. Discuss.

**How will you lead change in current school practices?**
- Engage in change using the 6 step process of school self-evaluation.
- Use Croke Park and Staff Meetings to establish staff focus groups to promote change in wellbeing practices, e.g., staff discussions, action planning, collaborative planning using SMART(F) targets, etc.
- Implementation of change, e.g., embedding targets set out in your working document, utilising a whole-school evaluation tool and regular reflective practice/discussions.
Any Questions? – Chat Function
Link to Resource Padlet
References


• St. Attracta’s NS, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon (Website and Resources)