



## **Scoil Áine Naofa, Lough Cutra**

### **Wellbeing Policy**

#### **Introductory Statement:**

Scoil Áine Naofa, is a co-educational, Catholic primary school which endeavours to give every child the opportunity to achieve his or her potential. We strive to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed. We endeavour to stimulate learning by offering a diverse range of activities both curricular and extra-curricular. Our aim is to create a friendly, inviting atmosphere with happy, well-adjusted pupils and highly-dedicated, motivated staff. Central to our ethos and to the development of each child, is the promotion of Wellbeing.

Scoil Aine Naofa 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).

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This policy was formed by the staff of Scoil Áine Naofa in consultation with parents, pupils and the Board of Management. Questionnaires devised by school personnel were completed by pupils and staff members to help with the formation of this policy. It highlighted concerns of children and staff alike which also helped focus on key objectives of wellbeing.

#### **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.

### **Whole School Approach**

Scoil Aine Naofa takes guidance from the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019) to inform a whole school approach to the promotion of Wellbeing.

We know that the mental health and well-being of our children and staff is critical to success in school and life. Education about mental health and well-being is an integral part of the school curriculum. Schools play a vital role in the promotion of positive mental health in children. Schools can also provide a safe and supportive environment for building life skills and resilience and a strong sense of connectedness to school. Listening to the voice of the child and fostering healthy relationships with peers, teachers and school staff are essential to children's positive experience of school and their cognitive and emotional development. The needs and well-being of school staff are also of paramount importance.

Here at Scoil Scoil Aine Naofa we aim to provide a full continuum of mental health promotion programmes and services. These include enhancing environments, promoting social and emotional learning and life skills, preventing emotional and behavioural problems, identifying and intervening in these problems early, and providing intervention for established problems (Wellbeing in Primary Schools, 2015). 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.

### **Scoil Aine Naofa Wellbeing protective factors**

- 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

### **School Based Initiatives that Promote Wellbeing**

The following are school based initiatives that promote well-being in our school.

- The formal instruction of the Physical Education Curriculum is taught across every class level in Scoil AINE Naofa . External coaches provide for different strands of PE to promote active living e.g. GAA, rugby, soccer, yoga, cycling.
- The formal instruction of the Social, Political and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum is taught across every class level in Scoil Aine Naofa – this includes the Relationships and Sexuality programme (RSE), Walk Tall and Stay Safe programme.
- Facilitation of an RSE programme/talk to assist 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils .
- Small group wellbeing classes targeted at key groups.
- Regular whole school integration with children who attend the Special Class.
- Annual accommodation of July Provision Programme.
- Irish Dancing lessons.
- Internet Safety Workshop
- Cycling- 6 week programme for 5th and 6th class pupils
- School subsidised swimming lessons – 6 week block for 1<sup>st</sup> to 6th class pupils.
- Healthy Eating- Food Dudes Programme.
- Star of the week and random acknowledgements of children’s acts of kindness.
- Class DOJO points for positive commitment of students.
- Regular home/school communication with parents through homework journals, Class DOJO, school email, monthly school newsletter.
- Themed Weeks (e.g. Maths Week, Science Week, Book Week, etc.)

- Promoting the Arts – whole-school Christmas performance.
- Annual Sports Day.
- Annual School tours.
- Music lessons- tin whistle
- Cumann na mbunscoil camogie/hurling competitions.
- Futsal soccer competitions.
- Spike Ball competitions.
- Support Plans for pupils with additional needs
- Communicating with National Council for Special Education (NCSE)/School SENO to gain SNA access for pupils
- Communication with the NEPs psychologist.
- Links with HSE personnel e.g. Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team

**This Wellbeing Policy is Linked with the following policies in our school:**

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Enrolment Policy.
- Child Safeguarding Policy and Risk assessment
- Homework Policy
- SPHE Policy.

By implementing a whole school approach, the following are the benefits we hope to achieve when promoting pupil and staff well-being in Scoil Aine Naofa:

- Better learning results for pupils
- A positive awareness to promote staff health and an environment that encourages mutual respect among all staff.
- A co-ordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs
- Increased pupil self-esteem
- Lowered incidence of bullying
- School environment is safer and more secure
- Better understanding of schools' health aims
- Improved relationships within the school
- More involvement of parents/guardians

- Better use of outside agencies
- Pupils receive better quality education.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every second year

### **Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: *David Greene*

Chairperson BoM

*Lorraine Power*

Principal

Date: 16/02/2022

