



Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National School
Email: info@htetns.ie Address: 157 Rathmines Road Lower D06 R621

No: (01) 5292970

HTETNS Wellbeing Policy

Mission Statement: Harcourt Terrace ETNS is an Educate Together School, run in accordance with the Rules for Primary Schools of the Department of Education and Science. We at Harcourt Terrace ETNS, seek to provide an environment that is child-centred, co-educational, equality-based, and democratically run. Our mission is to educate our pupils to their fullest potential while enhancing their self-esteem and creativity. All pupils are treated as individuals and their uniqueness is celebrated. All members of our school community are encouraged to respect themselves and others and we aspire to provide our children with the life skills necessary to become the best they can be.

Introduction:

This Wellbeing Policy is drawn up in collaboration with all members of the Harcourt Terrace ETNS whole-school community during the 2024/2025 academic year. This policy sets out the vision and ambition of HTETNS 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.

Rationale for this policy:

It is intended that this policy will provide a framework that promotes the wellbeing of our children. Schools play an important role in promoting children's academic, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual development. Therefore, it is vital that we as educators and parent/guardians equip children with the knowledge, skills and competencies to deal with various challenges that may impact their wellbeing.

What is Wellbeing?

Wellbeing is comprised of many interrelated aspects including being active, responsible, connected, resilient, appreciated, respected and aware (DES & NCCA, 2017). The following definition of Wellbeing takes into account its multi-dimensional nature: *"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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Importance of Wellbeing in Children's Lives

Wellbeing is a fundamental aspect of children's overall development. It influences their ability to engage with learning, develop meaningful relationships, and navigate the complexities of life. High levels of wellbeing are associated with better academic outcomes, improved social skills, and a greater capacity to cope with stress and adversity. Schools play a pivotal role in promoting and supporting the wellbeing of their students, making it imperative to integrate wellbeing into the core of educational practice.

According to the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice from Ireland, wellbeing is defined as "encompassing students' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development" (p. 8). The policy emphasizes that wellbeing is not only about preventing mental health issues but also about creating a positive school climate where all students can thrive.

The Role of the School in Promoting Wellbeing

At Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National School, the promotion of student wellbeing is a fundamental priority. We are committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment where every student feels valued, respected, and empowered. Our approach to wellbeing is holistic, encompassing emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development.

Through a range of initiatives and programs, we foster resilience, encourage positive relationships, and support the mental and physical health of our students. Our dedicated staff receive ongoing professional development to effectively support student wellbeing, and we actively involve students in decision-making processes to ensure their voices are heard. We also collaborate closely with parents and the wider community to build a strong network of support.

By prioritizing wellbeing, Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National School aims to nurture happy, healthy, and well-rounded individuals who are equipped to thrive both academically and personally



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Key areas of wellbeing:

Figure 3: Whole School Approach: Four Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion





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a. Culture & Environment:

Our school is actively addressing the key area of wellbeing through a focused emphasis on 'Culture and Environment.' Recognising that a positive and inclusive culture is fundamental to student and staff wellbeing, we have implemented various initiatives aimed at fostering a supportive and respectful atmosphere in our school. These include:

- regular workshops on cultural competence
- promoting diversity through school events
- establishing inclusive policies that celebrate different backgrounds and perspectives
- Our Learn Together ethical education curriculum heavily supports inclusion in our whole-school community within its monthly core values.
- Children, young people, and staff experience a strong sense of belonging as we prioritise creating an environment where everyone feels safe, connected, and supported
- To ensure the voices of children, young people, teachers, and parents are heard, we have established several systems such as: weekly morning meetings in every class, a whole-school assembly once a month, and the Principal's Award every Friday to recognize outstanding achievements.
- Our Wellbeing Wednesday homework choice board also allows students and their families to engage in activities promoting their mental health and wellness in the comfort of their homes.
- Our school has an active and engaging Student Council which provides a platform for students to express their ideas and concerns.
- Effective teacher-parent communication is facilitated and welcomed at the school gates each day as the teachers meet and greet their students before and after school.
- The Aladdin online platform for schools ensures that parents are kept informed and involved in their children's education.
- We have a nurture room available in our school for students who need both a regular or once-off space for regulation and check-ins with any of our trained nurture teachers and staff. This space consists of cooking equipment and utensils, comfortable chairs, bean bags and cushions for children to feel comfortable and at ease. Time in the nurture room allows for children to engage in a full body



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sensory experience as they enjoy a variety of food and beverages, while having a conversation with the nurture teacher and ANA about various topics of the student's interest.

By prioritising all these aspects, we are committed to creating an environment where every member of our school community feels valued, supported, and able to thrive.

b. Curriculum:

Our school is actively addressing the key area of wellbeing through an integrated approach within our Curriculum. We understand that wellbeing is essential for effective learning, and thus, we have woven wellbeing principles throughout our curriculum.

- In our Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, wellbeing is a core focus within several key programs such as: 'Welcome to Wellbeing', 'A Lust for Life', 'Stay Safe', 'Walk Tall' and 'Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)'. These programs provide students with essential skills and knowledge to manage their mental and emotional health, stay safe, and build healthy relationships.
- Wellbeing is also emphasised in our Physical Education (PE) curriculum, where students engage in activities that promote physical fitness, teamwork, and resilience.
- The promotion of wellbeing extends across our music, art, and drama curriculums in a program, affectionately known as "Dabble Doo." This innovative initiative integrates wellbeing principles into creative expression, allowing students to explore emotions, build confidence, and foster connections through artistic endeavors. In Dabble Doo, students engage in music, art, and drama activities that not only develop their creative skills but also promote mental and emotional wellness. Whether it's through rhythmic exercises in music class, therapeutic art projects, or immersive drama experiences that encourage empathy and self-expression, Dabble Doo provides a nurturing space for students to explore and nurture their holistic wellbeing. By weaving wellbeing into our arts curriculum, we aim to empower students to express themselves authentically, cultivate resilience, and discover joy in their creative pursuits.
- Our 'Learn Together' ethical education curriculum further integrates wellbeing by encouraging collaborative learning, empathy, and social responsibility.



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- Additionally, we incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) into daily lessons, helping students develop self-awareness, manage their emotions, and build healthy relationships.
- Teachers receive professional development to support a positive classroom environment and address the wellbeing needs of students.
- Aistear Early childhood marks the beginning of a lifelong journey of development and lays the foundations for positive healthy learning and well-being. Aistear (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2010) is the curriculum framework for children from birth to six years in Ireland. The Framework also provides guidelines on supporting children's learning through partnerships with parents, interactions, play, and assessment. Important themes within this curriculum include well-being, identity and belonging. The foundations of well-being which are developed through the Aistear Programme are further enhanced throughout the child's school years. While all aspects of school life have the potential to promote personal and social development, the full implementation of SPHE provides a framework for educating young people about their health and well-being in a planned and structured way.

By embedding all of these elements into our curriculum, we aim to create a holistic educational experience that supports the academic, emotional, and social growth of every student.

c. Relationships and partnerships (extracurriculars, wider community) (MOC)

HTETNS continues to develop strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community, which is a central part of the wellbeing process. We efficiently engage with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and wellbeing, teaching and learning.

After School Clubs:

HTETNS aims to facilitate where possible after-school clubs that contribute to both the mental and physical wellbeing of our students. These may include sports clubs, STEAM clubs, games clubs, music clubs and art clubs.



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Parent Involvement:

HTETNS encourages and supports the involvement of parents in developing wellbeing in our school community. HTETNS strives to support parental relationships by facilitating coffee mornings, fundraisers and informational talks for parents to make connections. HTETNS also aims to involve parents where possible in school life, for example initiatives like Mystery Reader.

Outside Agencies:

HTETNS welcomes and invites outside agencies and supports that can benefit the wellbeing of our student population. This may include but is not limited

- Parents/Guardians
- Board of Management
- Patronage
- Parents Teacher Association
- Student Committees
- Local schools
- Voluntary/sports/arts groups
- State agencies
- Community groups
- Support services

d. Policy and Planning

Harcourt Terrace regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school's aims, philosophy, vision and ethos. All aspects of the school planning and self-evaluation process in our school incorporate a health and wellbeing dimension. Wellbeing promotion is addressed in school policies and plans including but not limited to:

- Aistear
- Wellbeing (PE and SPHE)
- Learn Together
- Science
- Code of Good Behaviour



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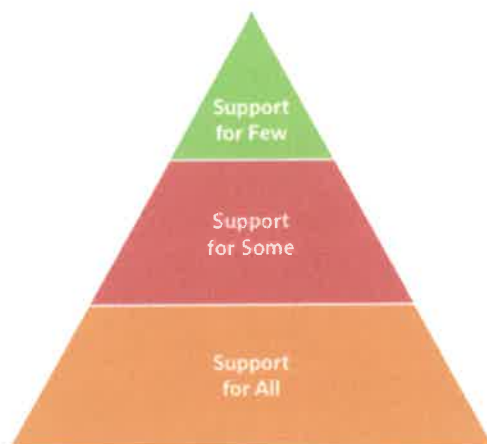
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- Child Safeguarding
- Critical Incidents
- Healthy Promotion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Additional Educational Needs Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Positive Communications Policy
- Droichead and Induction Policy

(See section B for more curricular detail)

Continuum of Support:

Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties-A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Primary Schools (NEPS 2010) These guidelines provide a whole-school framework and overview of the classroom supports and structures which promote social and emotional competence along with a graduated solution based approach to intervention with pupils exhibiting social, emotional and or behavioural difficulties



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 & coping skills for all.



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2. Wellbeing indicators of success

Table 2: 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.

3. SSE Wellbeing Promotion Process



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To implement this policy our school employed the six-step School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process with the Wellbeing in Education Framework for Practice in 2022. HTETNS set out to consider our existing provision for wellbeing under each of the four key areas (culture and environment, curriculum, policy and planning, and relationships and partnerships), and to devise and implement a plan for improvement in one key area, as appropriate for the school. In devising and implementing this improvement plan, we referred to the statements of effective practice in key areas relevant to the specific focus chosen.

The SSE process provides a framework for schools when gathering and analysing evidence, identifying needs and setting targets for achievable outcomes. It is a collaborative, reflective process of internal school review, focused on school improvement. The six-step process enables schools to gather and use evidence to identify meaningful and specific targets and actions for improvement. It enables them to create and implement improvement plans, to measure their progress, and to identify their achievements.

Figure 6: Using the SSE process with the Wellbeing Framework for Practice





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4. Staff Wellbeing

Our school is deeply committed to promoting staff wellbeing through a range of initiatives designed to support our educators in both their professional and personal lives.

- Firstly, our monthly staff meetings serve as a platform for check-ins and reflections, providing staff with opportunities to share updates, discuss challenges, and celebrate successes. These meetings create a supportive environment where staff can openly communicate and receive the support they need.
- Additionally, we ensure that staff take their necessary breaks on time. By establishing clear guidelines and policies and providing practical support, such as reminders and designated break areas, we help staff prioritize their wellbeing and recharge throughout the day.
- We also acknowledge and celebrate staff birthdays as a way to show appreciation for each individual's contribution to our school community. By recognizing these milestones, we foster a culture of recognition and appreciation that helps staff feel valued and supported.
- Furthermore, we host a weekly after-school yoga session to provide staff with an opportunity to unwind, relax, and rejuvenate. These sessions promote physical health, reduce stress levels, and foster a sense of community among staff members.
- Finally, we keep staff informed of upcoming wellness webinars and practices available both online and in the surrounding areas. By providing access to a variety of resources and opportunities for self-care and personal development, we empower staff to prioritize their health and wellbeing.

Overall, through these initiatives and others, we demonstrate our commitment to supporting the holistic wellbeing of our staff and creating a positive and thriving work environment.



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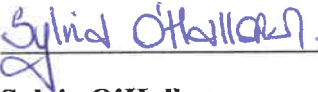
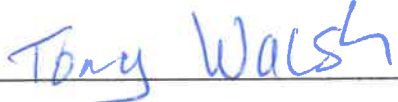
Ratification and Communication:

This policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management of Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National school at its meeting held on _____

The policy is next due for review and ratification in September 2026

A copy of the policy is available on our website and in hardcopy by contacting our principal via email at principal@htetns.ie

Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson:	 _____ Sylvia O'Halloran
Date:	_____ 26. Sept 2024
Principal:	 _____ Tony Walsh
Date:	_____ 26th Sept 2024



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