

School-based Initiatives to Promote Wellbeing

Over the past decade, there has been growing interest in students' well-being, not only in relation to how it may impact on their learning, but also at policy level, examining whether and how education systems that prioritize student well-being foster positive and fulfilling life experience.

Wellbeing is comprised of many interrelated aspects including being active, responsible, connected, resilient, appreciated, respected and aware (DES & NCCA, 2017)

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) defines well-being as the quality of students' life, focusing on their psychological, cognitive, social, and physical capabilities. It also distinguishes between various dimensions of well-being, including life as a whole, self-related well-being, school-related well-being, and well-being out of school ([OECD, 2019](#)). This definition also emphasizes students' well-being as an active inner process to achieve their personal and social goals ([Borgonovi and Pál, 2016](#)). Student well-being covers four discrete aspects that are nonetheless strictly correlated. The first is **cognitive well-being**, namely, successful participation in society in a variety of roles—as lifelong learners, as productive workers, as active citizens—thanks in part to their possessing the knowledge and competences required to fulfil those roles effectively. The second aspect is **psychological well-being**, namely, students' opinion and feelings about their own lives, their educational activity, and the personal objectives they have set themselves. The third is **physical well-being**, in other words, their health level and capacity to lead a healthy lifestyle. The last facet is **social well-being**, covering relations with the family, other learners, and educators, as well as perception of the school social environment. In particular, relations with peers and educators often prove to be very strong indicators of other well-being aspects ([Suldo et al., 2009](#); [Moore et al., 2017](#); [Littlecott et al., 2018](#)).

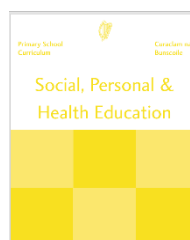
Investigations that [Govorova et al. \(2020\)](#) conducted in 35 countries within the OECD examined the range and impact on learner well-being of different factors present in learning settings; specifically, they examined measures educational institutions can take to improve learners' perceived sense of well-being. They found that actually such measures had little substantial impact when viewed within the overall sample. Nevertheless, the authors stress the need for schools to adopt a more holistic approach and to ensure that daily educational activities take adequate account of student well-being, especially regarding the social, psychological, and emotional dimensions of the student experience.

Sacred Heart SNS implements a number of programmes and initiatives throughout daily school life that support the well-being of our pupils - this list is not exhaustive:

1. **SPHE Curriculum**

Social, personal and health education (SPHE)

provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the individual child, to help him/her



to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Through an SPHE programme that is planned and consistent throughout the school, children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their decisions and actions both now and in the future. Since SPHE has a moral and a spiritual

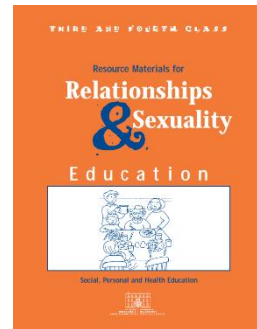
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dimension, its development and implementation are influenced significantly by the ethos or characteristic spirit of the school.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Since the late 1990s, [RSE](#) has been a compulsory part of the primary and post-primary curriculum and is an aspect of a subject called Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of relationships and sexuality.

It aims to equip children and young people, in an age-appropriate manner, with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to develop self-awareness and self-esteem; realise their health, wellbeing and dignity; develop positive and respectful, social and intimate relationships; consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others; and understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to themselves and others.



RSE is concerned with helping children and young people learn how they can create and maintain healthy, positive relationships—with self, family, friends and other relationships (including as they mature, romantic relationships).

Stay Safe – Child Abuse Prevention Programme

The [Stay Safe programme](#) is a personal safety skills programme for primary schools. The aim of the programme is to reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying through the provision of personal safety education for children and training for teachers, school management boards and parents. It is developmentally structured to enable primary school teachers to deliver an abuse prevention education that addresses personal safety issues such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as bullying and stranger danger.

The Stay Safe programme is developmentally tailored and contains four sets of lessons suitable for Infants, First and Second classes, Third and Fourth classes, and Fifth and Sixth classes. This approach is compatible with the structure of the SPHE curriculum. The lessons plans are divided into the five Stay Safe Topics:

- Feeling Safe and Unsafe
- Friendship and Bullying
- Touches
- Secrets and Telling
- Strangers

The lessons of the Stay Safe programme are spiral in nature, where similar content is revisited at each level but the processes, approaches and information adopted are designed to reflect the needs of children at a particular time and at their various stages of readiness.

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[Webwise - Internet Safety](#)

Webwise provides a number of free, internet safety teaching resources. They can be used to help young people learn all they need to know about using new media in a safe, secure and positive way. Additional resources are available such as Guides for Parents and resources for school policy-making.

[‘All Aboard for Digitown’](#)

A learning path for 9 – 12 year olds to become smart digital citizens. Pupils explore the concepts of digital citizenship across 10 themes: consumer awareness, rights, wellbeing, media and information literacy, ethics and empathy, privacy and more!

[‘MySelfie and the Wider World’](#)

This Primary Anti-Cyber Bullying Teachers’ Handbook is an SPHE resource developed to engage 5th and 6th class primary school students on the topic of cyber bullying. A series of short animations are the centre piece of the resource. These help students develop the skills and understanding to be responsible, socially conscious and effective internet users.

2. *Weaving Wellbeing Programme*

Weaving Well-Being is the first Irish designed positive mental health programme of its kind which aims to enhance well-being in children aged from 8-12 years. This affordable Positive Education programme consists of 10 lessons for each class level and is grounded in evidence-based interventions from the rapidly expanding field of Positive Psychology. Positive Psychology is the science of well-being. It is underpinned by the concept that a state of well-being is not simply the absence of the negative, but the presence of the positive.



Weaving Well-Being gives children the opportunity to weave positivity into their daily lives through a range of activities in a variety of areas. These areas include identifying and using their authentic character strengths, boosting positive emotions, developing and nurturing positive relationships and connections, building practical resilience skills (including mindfulness) and developing self-efficacy through empowering beliefs.

The lessons are designed to be implemented within the framework of the S.P.H.E curriculum. Each lesson plan includes the relevant strands and strand units for ease of planning.

Sacred Heart SNS piloted the use of the Weaving Wellbeing programme with 3rd Class in 2018 and it has now currently been taught to all classes as part of our School Plan 2022-2026.

3. [Roots of Empathy](#)



Roots of Empathy

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Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based programme delivered in some primary school classrooms which has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children by raising social-emotional competence and increasing empathy.

At the heart of the programme is a baby and parent who visit the classroom every three weeks during the school year. A trained Roots of Empathy instructor coaches the children to observe the baby's development and to label the baby's feelings. The baby is the 'teacher' in this experiential learning, while the instructor helps the children identify and reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others.

The Roots of Empathy instructor also visits before and after each family visit to prepare and reinforce teachings using a specialised lesson plan for each visit.

Research results from national and international evaluations of Roots of Empathy indicate significant reductions in aggression and increases in prosocial behaviours.

4. Continuum of Support Model

The Department of Education has set out the [Continuum of Support framework](#) to assist schools in identifying and responding to students' needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs. Using this framework helps our school to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables schools to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual students.

Using the Continuum of Support framework, Sacred Heart SNS can identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. The framework emphasises the importance of looking at a student's needs in context, and provides useful resources to support this (for example, Learning Environment Checklist, Teacher Checklist for Whole-Class Structures and Supports).

The Continuum of Support enables our school to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way. This means that needs can be responded to as early as possible. The principle that *pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support is of primary importance*. This approach is also supported by information and engagement with external professionals, as required.

5. Sacred Heart SNS' Code of Behaviour

The [Code of Behaviour](#) helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable

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behaviour. The Code of Behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

Positive Behaviour Promotion

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of the code. School management and staff actively foster a school ethos, policies, and practices that help to promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The day-to-day excellence of school management and classroom teaching will enable most students to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. Teachers and other school staff have a range of strategies for promoting good behaviour at class and school level. We strive for consistency across the teaching team as to how best to promote good behaviour.

Rewards

Reward systems are part of the overall school or class strategy, and may form part of a planned intervention to help an individual student to manage their own behaviour. The school community should consider and agree any use of reward systems.

Rewards for students with special needs should take account of their particular learning style. In the case of students with a sensory disability, the reward should be communicated in ways that take account of that. For all students, and especially those with learning difficulties, reward will have an impact when it is closely linked in time to the behaviour that is being rewarded.

Restorative Practices

Sacred Heart SNS incorporates [Restorative Practices](#) into its problem-solving approach to inappropriate behaviour.

Restorative Practices is based primarily on a set of core values and the explicit promotion and enhancement of particular skills such as the ability to empathise and to find solutions to specific problems. This practice allows for building trust between and with people. It provides a structured approach in the form of a scaffold, which helps build and sustain relationships, and provides a focus which allows for the potential growth of positive relationships to become established between people. The development of each relationship is based on a set of core values. These values include respect, and being respectful of everyone, including towards people someone maybe doesn't always see eye to eye with or even like.



Through the development of empathy, and promoting understanding of perspective taking, people can learn to respect each other and where someone is coming from in terms of their own expression of thought and feelings. In our efforts to show empathy, as human beings we are able to harness the notion of fairness into our relationships, and therefore can also account for our own actions and hold others to account for theirs.

6. Digital School of Europe

The Digital Schools of Europe Award has recently been conferred upon Sacred Heart SNS along with 12 other primary and post-primary schools in Ireland. We received the Digital Schools of

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Europe status in recognition of the strides we made during the recent school lockdowns to ensure the continuous provision of quality remote teaching and learning; and for achieving a set of rigorous criteria focusing on teachers' individual digital educational practice.



Our school consistently demonstrates excellence in collective digital educational practice that includes collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication between all school partners including, Board of Management, school leaders, teachers, students, and parents/guardians.

Sacred Heart SNS recognises that digital technologies provide significant potential for improving education and fostering students' well-being and inclusion at school. To bring this to fruition, systemic and coordinated actions involving the whole school community are needed and the DSOE programme offers the ideal platform to allow this to happen.

7. Project based learning

Project-Based Learning (PBL) empowers students to investigate, analyse, solve problems and interact effectively with others. Teaching with PBL puts students on a quest to actively discover new knowledge. When completing their PBL project tasks, students gain a sense of ownership over their learning and experience a sense of achievement. This leads to a great enjoyment of learning unparalleled to other teaching approaches. School staff strive to integrate this methodology into their lessons and school curriculum. PBL can be applied across any type of subject and curriculum, including Numeracy and Literacy, Wellbeing or STEM.

8. Student Committees

Student Council

Democracy and democratic values are a core part of what an Educate Together school is all about. Educate Together schools are run as participatory democracies, with respectful partnership between students, parents and school staff. This means that all members of a school community are supported and encouraged to make meaningful contributions to decision-making. A key part of a democratic school community is its Student Council.

A Student Council is a representative structure for students, through which they can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents for the benefit of the school and the students.

The aim of the Student Council at primary level is to provide students with greater involvement in the decision making procedures of their school and to help them learn about how democracy works. Generally two children from each class are elected by secret ballot and are appointed as representatives for their class to the council for the duration of the school year. Infant classes tend to be represented by two elected pupils from 6th Class. Children in the senior classes can run campaigns asking their fellow students to vote for them ahead of the election.

Student Councils generally meet several times each term. These meetings are facilitated by a teacher with council representatives collecting ideas and suggestions for the agenda from each class ahead of each meeting. Suggestions are then discussed, prioritised and are brought to the

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attention of the school's principal and to staff meetings. In Educate Together Primary Schools Student Councils have been responsible for a number of positive changes in their respective schools, such a 6th Class-Junior Infant Buddy System, fundraising for new sports equipment and a campaign to install a zebra crossing outside the school

Green School Committee



[Green-Schools](#) programme gives pupils an opportunity to take ownership of an environmental issue and create a positive change in our school and local community. Taking an active role in achieving an international environmental award is a prestigious achievement for our pupils.

9. Outdoor Learning

When talking about the practice of outdoor learning in Sacred Heart SNS, it is difficult to pin the term to an individual meaning. The broad nature of this concept, in fact, includes a wide range of actions such as: outside play-time, school grounds projects, environmental education, recreational and adventure activities, personal and social development programs, educational expeditions, team building, leadership training, management development, education for sustainability, adventure therapy and more. The main unifying element of all these different forms of so-called outdoor learning is therefore their location, as they are not predominantly classroom-based but are performed outside, in nature.

We believe that there is no better place for learning about the environment than in nature itself. No need to go very far: a schoolyard, a garden or the local park can be the perfect location to keep working on your theme in a fun and safe way. Outdoor education is also proven to be of vital importance in the promotion of health and well-being – both mental and physical. An open environment and fresh air have countless positive effects on a student's mind and often enhances their attention and concentration levels. The extensive studies carried out throughout the years identify several positive effects that derive from this educational practice.

Heritage in Schools

Sacred Heart SNS participates in the [Heritage in Schools](#) Scheme provides a panel of Heritage Specialists who visit primary schools (in-person or virtually) to help children and their teachers learn about and appreciate their local heritage. The Scheme supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum and provides an additional educational tool and resource for teachers.

Our School Forest

In the Spring of 2022, Sacred Heart SNS pupils planted our very own school forest - [a Stepping Stone Forest](#) is a small, urban, densely planted woodland using native species of trees and shrubs. Due to the dense nature of the planting the trees and shrubs grow very rapidly. Stepping Stone Forests are inspired by a planting method first pioneered by world renowned botanist Prof. Akira Miyawaki.

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10. Internet Safety Workshops

Through interactive talks in our school – held every two years – [Cybersafekids](#) teach 3rd-6th class pupils how to navigate the online world in a stronger, smarter and safer way. Sessions are tailored to individual classes and delivered in person. Topics that are covered include:

- Protecting privacy
- Personal information
- Managing digital footprint
- Social Media and gaming
- Misinformation
- Cyberbullying



They also deliver online safety sessions for our parent body.

11. Athletics ([MarathonKids](#))

South Dublin County Council along with Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council have organised this 8-week programme targeting 5th & 6th Class students in schools in Fingal and Dublin City. Students will perform four running sessions each week inching them closer to completing their first marathon as well as learning about the benefits of physical activity. The finale will see the students running their last mile and completing the marathon at the National Cross Country Course located at the National Sports Campus in Dublin 15.

Benefits of participating in the Marathon Kids programme include: physical benefits, mental benefits, social benefits and community benefits.

12. School Completion Programme Supports

The [School Completion Programme \(SCP\)](#) is a targeted programme of support for primary and post primary children and young people who have been identified as potentially at risk of early school leaving or who are out of school and have not successfully transferred to an alternative learning site. SCP

- Breakfast Club,
- Afterschool Activities e.g homework club, dance, variety group, chess club, table tennis, coding etc.,
- Mentoring,
- 'Check & Connect',
- 'Rise-Up' programme,
- Health & Hygiene programme

13. Swimming

As part of our Physical Education programme, Sacred Heart SNS highlights and promotes the health and wellbeing benefits of swimming. The school, in partnership with [Tallaght Leisure Centre](#), provides swimming lessons for our pupils: 4-8 week block for all pupils in 4th Class and 5th Class.

Learning to swim can open a world of opportunity for our pupils and has numerous benefits: teaches children aqua-safety, promotes muscle development, helps develop healthier heart, can

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instils a lifelong love of exercise, promotes better sleep, can help relax pupils and enhance mental health, can help increase confidence, improve coordination and balance, promote social skills.

14. **Healthy Eating**

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme and Wellbeing promotion, at Sacred Heart SNS we encourage our children to become more aware of the need and opportunities to eat healthy food in school. The aim is to promote the personal development and well-being of the child and promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

Hot Lunches

Sacred Heart SNS is fortunate to be one of the schools included in the Hot School Meals Scheme which provides funding to schools and organisations towards the provision of healthy food for school children. [Fresh Today](#) is our school lunch provider.

The objective of the scheme is to provide regular, nutritious food to children to enable them to take full advantage of the education provided to them. The programme is an important component of policies to encourage healthy eating, promote school attendance and enhance extra educational achievement

15. **'Cookery Fundays' Programme**



Taking part in cookery activities is an important part of school life in Sacred Heart SNS. In 2021/22, Ms. G. Gleeson led the development of our very own Cookery Programme – originally called 'Cookery Mondays.' Children experimented with simple to follow and easy to make recipes, using fresh, locally sourced ingredients which require only minimum kitchen equipment. They published their own cookbook which was launched in school by chef Rachel Allen in May 2022. Benefits for our pupils include:

- promotes the lifetime skill of healthy cooking and children have been trying new and healthy food.
- our pupils have reported cooking more at home; indicating a "sense of accomplishment," self-confidence, and a simple joy of preparing food for their families.
- children have been practicing basic math skills such as counting, weighing, measuring, tracking time; they also gain social skills by working together and communicating in the kitchen.
- teaching cooking has provided an opportunity to teach nutrition education such as planning meals and make smarter food choices.

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- cooking has helped our pupils in acceptance of responsibility; each child has a task to complete to contribute the meal preparation and clean-up etc.
- we have seen significant increase in knowledge around food safety behaviours, and cooking self-efficacy.
- cooking in school will hopefully build positive memories that promote future healthy, enjoyable cooking elsewhere.

16. Monthly Assembly – grade level

Assemblies are held on a monthly basis, by the Principal and Deputy Principal have one thing in common – they are a place and time where students and school management come together for a shared purpose. That purpose is usually to provide an opportunity for people of all ages to consider spiritual and moral issues, to develop school community spirit, to celebrate and reinforce positive attitudes to school life in Sacred Heart SNS.

17. Developing strong home-school relationships – HSCL

Under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) the [Home School Community Liaison Scheme \(HSCL\)](#) seeks to promote partnership between parents, teachers and community family support services. Sacred Heart SNS has a full-time HSCL Coordinator - a teacher from our school who is released from teaching duties, for a maximum of five years, in order to work intensively with and support parents/guardians.

The overarching goal of the HSCL Coordinator is to improve educational outcomes for children through their work with the key adults in the child's life.

The HSCL coordinator also works in an integrated way with the other two strands of TESS; School Completion Programme (SCP) and Educational Welfare Service Statutory (EWS), in order to provide appropriate initiatives and interventions for families.

Home Visits are the primary point of contact for HSCL Coordinators, as this is where strong relationships are built with parents/guardians. In addition, HSCL Coordinators organise parent classes in the relevant school/s and provide information and guidance to parents/guardians with regard to accessing community based programmes and supports.



The scheme also supports families as their children transition from early education to primary school, from primary school to post-primary school and finally from post-primary school to further and higher education, training or employment

18. School-based Counselling/Assistant Psychologist Support

The School Counsellor provides ongoing support for pupils who are experiencing difficulties. These difficulties are wide-ranging and multifaceted and may include: bereavement; family dynamics/changes; self-esteem; bullying; anger management; anxiety; mood shifts; socialising etc.

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This work is done on a one-to-one basis with occasional support provided through groups. It involves counselling, but also requires groupwork, key working, care planning, and interagency work. The School Counsellor is based in Sacred Heart Senior National School. Very occasionally, there may a requirement to work offsite.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities of School Counsellor/Assistant Psychologist.

- To provide ongoing support for pupils (and families) experiencing specific difficulties.
- To be available for 1-1 counselling and intervention strategies in various settings.
- To facilitate groupwork.
- To facilitate the development and implementation of integrated Care Plans for individuals.
- To inform and facilitate individuals in accessing other appropriate health care and support services.
- To provide Crisis Interventions for those requiring such a service.
- To support/attend Case Conferences, Meitheal case co-ordination processes or similar interventions convened in support of individuals and families.
- To keep records of the number of children and sessions in relation to the children receiving counselling.
- To provide general feedback to senior management on an on-going basis, and also to parents, concerning the progress of children accessing counselling support.
- To ensure counselling accreditation and insurance are kept up to date.
- To complete (and fund) required supervision as per the guidelines of their accredited body
- To report any Child Protection concerns to the Designated Liaison Person/Principal
- To maintain a high standard of professionalism at all times, to adhere to the policies and procedures of Sacred Heart SNS
- The duties and responsibilities of the position are not definitive nor restrictive and can be modified to ensure successful delivery of supports.

19. Support Room



Our Seomra Croí is one of many ways in which we promote wellbeing in our school. It is based on attachment theory and neuro-scientific approach to wellbeing for children. The concept of nurture in education recognises that students' wellbeing is as important as their academic achievements. Schools applying a nurture approach address the social, emotional and learning needs of individual students by providing help to remove barriers to learning. There is a strong emphasis on emotional literacy, language development, relationships and communication. When the barriers to learning have been addressed and children feel connected to school life, then engagement in learning follows.

20. Brain Calm activities



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[Brain Calm](#) aims to empower school staff to help children become focused, calm, and able to self-regulate their behaviour through a range of courses and programmes; to help children with concentration, attention, behaviour regulation, confidence and self-esteem, socialisation skills. Teachers and SNAs are trained to deliver this support.

21. Creative Schools

Creative Schools is a flagship of the Creative Youth plan – led by the [Arts Council](#) in partnership with the [Departments of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media](#) , [Education & Skills](#) and [Children & Youth Affairs](#) . Since its inception in 2018, 462 schools including primary, post primary schools, DEIS and special schools have joined the initiative.

Sacred Heart SNS is a recognised '*Creative School.*' *Fundamentally*, we strive to give our children and young people the opportunity to experience creativity as an integral part of their education, placing the arts and creativity at the centre of school life. It is well recognised that engagement in the arts can nurture a child's sense of confidence and well-being. Creative activity also enables communication and collaboration, stimulates imaginations and harnesses curiosity; all necessary skills required for successful learning. Other important outcomes

Promoting the Arts – trips to [The ARK](#) Theatre, guitar lessons, drumming activities, bodhrán workshops, Killinarden Percussion Group etc. Participating in extended Arts Education and experiences helps children with the development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, risk-taking, and inventiveness.

Our school is supported by a Creative Associate who supports our Creative School Coordinator and Creative School Committee. They are developing an individual school plan, and creating and strengthening links between the school and arts & cultural organisations. The long-term aim is that our school will be able to fully embrace the arts and creativity, ensuring a positive experience and strong outcomes for children and young people.

Sacred Heart SNS recognises that schools play an important role in providing opportunities for children to participate in arts and culture and doing so also develop socio-emotional wellbeing, cognitive development, and positive attitudes towards school.

22. STEM

Our school community is continuously striving to develop STEM learning and engagement. We have a school STEM Coordinating and Science Foundation Ireland has recognised our school's STEM achievements by awarding us a [Curious Minds Silver Award](#) in 2023.



'It was fantastic to see the breadth of STEM activities conducted in your school. Your students participated in an impressive range of STEM activities, from building bridges, terrariums and constellation torches to investigating the problem of plastic in the environment. Congratulations again on your award.' SFI Curious Minds Team, 15th May 2023

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STEMpathy

STEMpathy is a methodology for delivering STEM projects in the classroom. It is based upon the Design Thinking process adapted for the primary classroom. STEMpathy is a programme that teaches children how to apply the principles of design thinking to create solutions for characters living in Dublin in 2100. We explore the Sustainable Development Goals, create a character who has superpowers and challenges, develop empathy through fun exercises, generate lots of ideas, develop our ideas through positive feedback, build a prototype to help demonstrate our idea and then share our work with the whole school community.

Additional Initiatives that enhance SPHE and Wellbeing in Sacred Heart SNS include:

- 23.** External facilitators come into school to help teach different strands of PE to promote active living e.g. GAA (weekly), rugby, skipping, STEM etc

When engaging external facilitators Sacred Heart SNS considers best practice criteria:

- External facilitators should supplement, complement or support an identified component of the school's Wellbeing Promotion programme and curriculum provision
- External facilitators are approved by the principal and board of management in consultation with the relevant teaching staff. All materials proposed for use by the external facilitator must also be agreed in advance by the principal and the board
- All external facilitators are compliant with the school's child protection policy and other relevant school policies and procedures.
- The school authority satisfies itself, having regard to its own legal advice if required, that it has met any vetting obligations that arise under the Vetting Act and in line with Circular 0031/2016, for such external facilitators.
- Programmes used are delivered by facilitators who are qualified to work within the specific area of content and with the students for whom the programmes are designed.
- Relevant school staff liaise with facilitators in advance of the delivery.
 - External facilitators always work under the guidance and supervision of the relevant classroom teacher who remains in the classroom with the students at all times and retains a central role in the delivery of the subject matter. Absence of the teacher may undermine the integrity of the curriculum, and the credibility and professionalism of the teacher. It may also compromise the safety of the students.
- Relevant school staff are informed of the details of the programme being provided by external facilitators.

- 24.** Themed Weeks (e.g. celebrating Maths Week, Science Week, Engineers Week, World Book Day, Internet Safety Day, Bake Sales) Throughout each academic year we have many special events, such as off-timetable (themed) weeks, special celebration days, sports tournaments, musical events and lots of other activities designed to enrich our children's education beyond the statutory curriculum

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- 25.** The school regularly communicates and liaises with National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to provide sufficient SNA access for pupils and resources for our SEN pupils such as assistive technology.
- 26.** Continuous Professional Development of all school staff is a primary objective for the School's Board of Management. Every term teachers and school staff undertake CPD and training – internal and/or external – with the ultimate focus on enhancing teaching, learning and assessment, and providing the best possible learning opportunities and experiences for our pupils.

27. Partnerships

- The school works very closely with our allocated [NEPS Psychologist \(National Educational Psychological Service\)](#) who supports pupils, parents and staff at whole school, class and individual levels.
- The school, when necessary, arranges NBSS support for staff and pupils – National Behavioural Support Service
- The school community supports and facilitates [Tusla's Meitheal](#) approach for children who need the support of more than one service – a case co-ordination process for families with additional needs who require multi-agency intervention but who do not meet the threshold for referral to the Social Work Department under Children First Act.
- [Barnardos](#) – includes referral from school for support for pupils and families or facilitating additional supports and interventions in school – during or after the school day.
- School staff supports referrals to and liaises with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) – [Lucena Clinic](#).
- Sacred Heart SNS has developed close working relations with our [TESS Education Welfare Officers](#) – support for pupils with concerning attendance.
- Strong links are being continuously being established with HSE personnel e.g. Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team

A **whole-school, collaborative approach** to Wellbeing promotion is taken to help ensure:

- the promotion of wellbeing is at the core of the ethos of Sacred Heart SNS
- our school provides evidence-informed approaches and support, appropriate to need, to enhance the wellbeing of all

A whole school approach focuses on promoting wellbeing for all members of the school community and includes preventative approaches. Embedded in the whole school approach and in line with the Department's Continuum of Support is the recognition that members of the school community 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 members at the universal level.

| Continuum of Support School Support Plus for Few | School Support for Some | Whole School and Classroom Support for All |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| School Counsellor Drama Therapy | Roots of Empathy Marathon Kids | SPHE Curriculum Weaving Wellbeing |

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| <p>Nurture Room SCP Activities and Support HSCL Support Brain Calm Programme NCSE Staff CPD School Partnerships</p> | <p>SCP Supports Swimming HSCL Support Creative Schools NCSE Staff CPD School Partnerships</p> | <p>Code of Behaviour Restorative Practices Digital School of Europe Project Based Learning Outdoor Learning Internet Safety Cookery Mondays Healthy Eating Hot Lunches HSCL Support Assembly Student Council Green School Committee Creative Schools External Coaches Themed Weeks Staff CPD School Partnerships</p> |
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In line with best practice, this Continuum of Support offers a flexible framework within which our school address educational needs, including wellbeing needs (DES & NEPS, 2007, 2010a, 2010b):

- Continuum of Support 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.

This multicomponent approach to wellbeing promotion endeavours to ensure that all of the key areas that contribute to wellbeing promotion in schools are given a focus; the four key areas for action are outlined in our Wellbeing Policy and in accordance with the Department of Education's *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice*.