

Coolderry Central School



Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

Wellbeing Policy & Framework for Practice

1. Introduction:

Coolderry Central School is a rural co-educational primary school, located in south Offaly. There are 87 pupils in the school. There are four mainstream classes in the school. On staff, there are four mainstream class teachers, one special Education teachers, two Special Needs Assistants, a secretary, caretaker and a cleaner.

1.1 The focus of this evaluation:

At our October staff meeting we discussed the strength and weaknesses of our school . Through professional conversations and a SCOT analysis carried out there was a strong feeling about the area of wellbeing and the notable rise in anxiety amongst pupils which had become obvious to the school staff .

At our next meeting, we opened a discussion about our current wellbeing promotion practices in the school. We noted what we considered good practice in wellbeing promotion under the following:

- a) Culture and Environment;**
- b) Curriculum;**
- c) Policy and Planning;**
- d) Relationships and Partnerships.**

As a staff, we are very interested in further developing wellbeing in our school and it was agreed that it is an important area for continuous development. It became apparent that evidence needed to be collected across each of the four key areas in order to identify the area of need or the focus. After reading through the framework, we realised that the wellbeing promotion process involves a whole school approach, so there was a need to garner the perspectives from all stakeholders in the school community, including staff, parents/guardians, and the pupils themselves.

We have gathered evidence through meetings, questionnaires, and informal discussions. Using various sources from the PDST, NEPS & the Department of Education website, questionnaires for all stakeholders were devised and shared via Google forms in November/December 2023. Once all the data was collected, the staff met to analyse and make judgments on what information had been gathered.

2. Findings of this evaluation:

Parental Questionnaires Noteworthy Points

Finding 1:	<p>On the question: My child get support in the school for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 82.1 % said yes- 10.7 % said sometimes- 7.2 % said No
Finding 2:	<p>On the question: The school looks for and listens to my child`s opinion when developing school policies and plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 71.4 % said yes- 17.9. % said sometimes- 10.7 % said No
Finding 3:	<p>On the question: The school communicates with me when things are going well for my child?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 77.8 % said yes- 22.2. % said sometimes
Finding 4:	<p>On the question: Has my child felt anxious or have worries over the last 12 months ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 37.9 % said yes- 13.8. % said sometimes- 48.3 % said No
Finding 5:	<p>On the question: Do you feel your child has the coping skills to deal with worries or concerns they have inside/outside school ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 41.4 % said yes- 55.29 % said sometimes- 3.3 % said No

Student Questionnaires Noteworthy Points

<p>Finding 1 :</p>	<p>On the question: Do you feel the school is tidy and bright ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70.5 % said yes - 29.5 % said sometimes
<p>Finding 2:</p>	<p>On the question do you feel safe in school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75 % said yes - 22.7% said sometimes - 2.3 % said No
<p>Finding 3:</p>	<p>On the question do you feel adults in our school help us to eat healthy food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75 % said yes - 22.7% said sometimes - 2.3 % said No
<p>Finding 4:</p>	<p>On the question: Do you feel adults in the school help children who find it hard to make friends?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 64.3 % said yes - 28.6% said sometimes - 7.3 % said No
<p>Finding 5:</p>	<p>On the question: Do you feel adults in the school help children who feel sad and worried?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 56.8 % said yes - 11.4% said sometimes - 31.83 % said No
<p>Finding 6:</p>	<p>On the question: Do you feel you are asked for their ideas when deciding school policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 59.5 % said yes - 26.2% said sometimes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14.3 % said No
Finding 7 :	<p>On the question: Do you know who you can speak to when you are sad and worried?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70.5 % said yes - 15.9. % said sometimes - 13.6 % said No
Finding 8 :	<p>On the question: I would speak to an adult when I or my friend is sad and worried?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 56.8 % said yes - 22.7. % said sometimes - 20.5% said No

Staff Questionnaires Noteworthy Points

Finding 1 :	37.5% of staff felt the physical environment of the school is well maintained only sometimes
Finding 2:	On the question Staff consider and Prioritise their own health and Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 57.1 % said sometimes - 28.6 % said yes
Finding 3:	25% of staff are not aware of the Employee Assistance service.
Finding 4:	42.9 % of staff felt pupils interact with staff in a calm and respectful manner only sometimes.
Finding 5:	50% of staff felt parents only sometimes interact with staff in a calm and respectful manner.
Finding 6:	71.4 % of staff felt the organisation of school supports for pupils with additional needs is known to all staff and parents.
Finding 7 :	On the question of a broad and balance PE curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -25% of staff felt that only sometimes a broad and balanced PE is delivered by class teacher - 75% of staff felt it was
Finding 8 :	On the question if structures are in place to allow pupils` voice on issues relating to development of school policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37.5% said yes - 50 % said sometimes - 12.5 % said no
Staff Questionnaire – Noteworthy Points	

Focus Group Senior Pupils - Noteworthy Points

Student Council 6 th class Focus Group

When asked about what we could do about making the school friendly and welcoming and tidy and bright the students suggested the following:

- o Put bins outside at break time or have some children assigned to encourage others to bring their rubbish home
- o Plant more flowers around the school, maybe put window boxes on the windowsills with colourful flowers – each class could look after a window box
- o Repaint basketball court and replace basketball hoops and get new nets

When asked about how children could feel safe in school, how adults could help children who find it hard to make friends and how adults could help children who feel sad or worried the students suggested the following

- o Place an anonymous worry box in every classroom so that children can let their teacher know about any worries
- o Have a fresh air break in the afternoon – a few minutes walking around outside
- o Teachers could have a chat group on a Friday – pick a couple of children from the class and talk about plans for the weekend, sports, interest, etc.
- o Have the sensory room available to all children

When asked about how adults can make learning interesting and fun in our school the students suggested the following:

- o More opportunities for play and games in every subject
- o Use of outdoor learning in the warmer months
- o More use of technology
- o Bringing in experts from outside to do talks/learning experiences
- o More opportunity for educational day trips

Using the data collected & summarised above, our school teaching staff referred to the indicators of Success and Statements of Effective Practice for All to identify one area of need, even though multiple potential areas of need emerged from the evidence gathered. Furthermore, the staff has also selected one area of need from the Statements of Effective Practice for Some and a Few.

Based on the above findings, it has been agreed that the focus of our Improvement Plan will be on the Key area of the Culture & Environment in our school. We have closely reviewed & discussed the Wellbeing Statements of:

(i) Effective Practice for all & (ii) Effective Practice for Some & Few. An area of need from these statements will form the basis of our target setting in the plan below.

A draft school improvement plan was completed by the end March 2024. The whole staff agreed on a plan of action and set practical, SMART targets together.

3. Our improvement plan

On the next page we have recorded:

- ❖ The **targets** for improvement we have set
- ❖ The **actions** we will implement to achieve these
- ❖ **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan
- ❖ How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes** (criteria for success)

As we implement our improvement plan, we will record:

- ❖ The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- ❖ **Achievement of targets** (original and modified), and **when**.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

April 2024 to June 2026



ACTION PLAN CO ORDINATOR: Mr. Mc Carthy

TARGETS

- The focus of this Improvement Plan is on the key area of **Culture & Environment** in Well-Being: We have looked at the statements of Effective Practice for all & the Statements for Some and Few. The following Statements will be the focus of our improvement plan, so that all members of our school have a “sense of belonging, feel safe, connected & 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”
 - ❖ *It is recognised by school leaders and management and all members of staff that the entire school community has a role to play in supporting learning for and learning about wellbeing. (Effective Practice for all)*
 - *The school demonstrates commitment to identifying, including and providing targeted supports for children and young people experiencing barriers and challenges to wellbeing and learning. (Effective Practice for Some & Few)*

**The following actions and strategies will be put in place by our School Community March 2024-
June 2024 :**

Objective 1: School Management will provide the opportunity for a school Students` Council to be set up and encourage a culture of pupil voice in the school .

Actions:

a) Initially this will only involve pupils from 6th class with plans for it to be developed throughout the school commencing September 2024

People responsible: Mr. Mc Carthy and Ms. Mc Evoy

Objective 2: School Management required to inform all staff of the teacher Employee Assistance Service, to support personal and professional wellbeing.

Actions:

a) A staff member (Mrs O` Brien) will assume responsibility of a position which will bring the benefits of this service to the attention of all staff. This staff member will also organise a staff get together each term, this could be as simple as meeting for a coffee/tea after work.

b) Provide professional development opportunities that focus on stress management, resilience, and work-life balance for staff.

c) Establish mentoring or coaching programs to support new and experienced staff members. The school will apply to access the Droichead Programme for NQT's if needed.

d) Encourage regular self-care practices among staff through wellness programs, access to mental health resources, and flexible work arrangements.

People responsible : Mr. Mc Carthy and Mrs. O` Brien

Objective 3: Cultivating a Positive School Climate in particular the need to create more opportunities to complement pupils positively on their work/behaviour and the School will endeavour to communicate with pupils` parents in relation to when things are going well for their child

Actions:

- a) Each class will have merit cards that a teacher can give out to pupils who exhibit great efforts in behaviour, kindness, work ethic etc.
- b) Pupils will bring these card home to create link between school and home.

People responsible: Mr. Mc Carthy and Martina Kennedy

Objective 4: Celebrate 'Well-being Week' in Term-3 each year with focus on promotion of well-being

Actions:

- a) Mrs. O`Brien and Mr. Ryan will devise a week of activities for Well- Being week.
- b) The Students Council will help develop and implement the activities for the week .

People responsible: Mrs. O`Brien, Ms. Mc Evoy and Mr. Ryan

The following actions and strategies will be put in place by our School Community September 2024- June 2026 :

Objective 1: Rising anxiety levels in pupils found across all analysis carried out (implement a programme to help nurture wellbeing skills/strategies and develop coping skills)

Pupils will engage with the Weaving Well Being Programme

Actions:

- a) Teachers will teach the Weaving Wellbeing & Welcome to Well-being programmes in term 1 of each year
- b) Staff will complete training on the Weaving Well-being & Welcome to Well-being programmes to increase competency in teaching resilience and coping strategies to pupils.
- c) Parents' webinar to be facilitated to outline the content of the Weaving Well-being & Welcome to Well-being programmes in September 2024.

Person/People responsible: All teachers

Monitoring : Staff feedback, Pupil feedback and Teacher Planning

Criteria for success: Pupils engage with the programmes building resilience and ability to cope with worry or anxiety. Pupils are observed participating in activities and become more open in discussing feelings.

Objective 2: School Management will provide the opportunity for a school Students` Council to be set up and encourage a culture of pupil voice in the school .

Actions:

- a) A committee will be set up involving pupils from 3rd to 6th in term 1 of each term.
- b) Student Council to create a 'Well-being' board which will be updated throughout the year

Criteria for success:

All members of the school community are aware of the boards and show some understanding of the materials posted. Clear communication for all in the school community of the focus on well-being in our school.

People responsible : Mr. Mc Carthy and Ms. Mc Evoy

Objective 3 : To develop a new whole school healthy eating Plan

Key statement : only 50 % of staff felt the school promotes healthy eating sufficiently

Actions:

- a) 5th and 6th class will complete projects on healthy eating in the classroom.
- b) 5th and 6th will complete a draft healthy eating policy for the school.
- c) The staff will be asked for their input to the draft plan.
- d) The draft plan will be circulated to the parent body to canvas opinion.
- e) The final draft will be ratified by Easter 2025

Criteria for success:

We will know the policy is effective by:

- a) Observing what children have for lunch and noticing an improvement in consumption of fruit, vegetables and other healthy foods.
- b) The feedback from parents/guardians and other school staff.
- c) The level of concentration and performance of children in the classroom

People responsible

- 5th and 6th class teacher (Mr. Kenehan)
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to provide lunches which do not include any of the prohibited foods and, if possible, to include variety.
- Children have a responsibility to eat their own lunch, and not to share or trade food or drink with others
- Teachers have a responsibility to provide a good example through their own healthy eating habits
- The whole school community- staff, parents/guardians, children –will work together to promote the progress of this policy.
- All are encouraged to discuss and provide feedback on its performance which will be reported back as appropriate to the Principal and staff.
- The overall performance of the policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated by the BoM

Objective 5. Pupils feel they have someone to approach if they are feeling sad and lonely .

Key statement : On the question: Do you know who you can speak to when you are sad and worried? 30% of pupils answered no or sometimes

Actions:

- a) In September of each year each pupil will be assigned to a Friendship group, it will consist of one pupil from each class, each group will have between 8-10 pupils.
- b) Older members of the group will be encouraged to look after younger members of the group especially on yard.
- c) Friendship groups will work together at various times of the year e.g. Maths week, Well-Being week, Sports week etc.
- d) All junior Infants will be assigned a buddy from 6th class who will help them transition to primary school.
- e) Place an anonymous worry box in every classroom so that children can let their teacher know about any worries
- f) Have a fresh air break in the afternoon – a few minutes walking around outside
- g) Teachers will have a chat group on a Friday – pick a couple of children from the class and talk about plans for the weekend, sports, interest, etc.
- h) Have the sensory room available to all children

Criteria for success:

Pupils will be surveyed on the question: Do you know who you can speak to when you are sad and worried in May 2025 and the results will be analysed

People responsible:

- All staff Members will devise the groups at the start of each school year
- Mr. Kenehan will ensure the senior class pupils are engaged in the Friendship groups and he will help coach the senior pupils to look out for the younger pupils.

MONITORING STRATEGIES/APPROACHES

- The Staff will meet once a month to discuss the plans in place.
- Time will be set aside at the beginning of assembly on the first Friday of every month to allow our Students Council to report to the school on any plans which may exist to promote good Well-Being.
- Well-Being is an item on the agenda of all staff meetings. The areas of improvement identified above will be discussed at these meetings.

EVALUATION / CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

(Are we making progress? / How do we know?)

- Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.
- In May 2025, all will be re surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues which we believed required addressing.

NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS THROUGHOUT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

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TARGETS:	ACHIEVED ✓			
<p>1. Pupils – that the answers to the questions in the categories where they responded no or sometimes to, in 2023 will see at least a 10 percent increase in the yes category in May 2025, when they are resurveyed.</p>	Yes		No	
<p>2. Staff – that the answers to the questions in the categories where they responded no or sometimes to, in 2023 will see a at least a 10 percent increase in the yes category in May 2025, when they are resurveyed.</p>	Yes		No	
<p>3. Parents – that the answers to the questions in the categories where they responded no or sometimes to, in 2023 will see at least a 10 percent increase in the yes category in May 2025, when they are resurveyed.</p>	Yes		No	

