



Togher BNS Wellbeing Policy

Introductory Statement

At Togher Boys' National School we strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. Central to our ethos and to the holistic development of each pupil, is the promotion of wellbeing.

The World Health Organisation (2001) defines wellbeing as follows; "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."

Togher Boys' National School has already developed innovative approaches to wellbeing promotion supported by strong leadership and quality teaching and learning. We aim to further support children by optimising opportunities to learn about wellbeing. As well as being a place of academic learning, our school provides opportunities to develop friendships and social networks, to respectfully encounter diversity and access support structures. This policy displays existing and developing work in wellbeing promotion in Togher Boys' National School. Its implementation is an ongoing, reflective and self-evaluative process that aims to focus on supporting children in having a sense of purpose and fulfilment, and the skills necessary to deal with life's challenges. It also aims to be responsive to the changing needs of the school and the children in our care.

Whole School Approach

A multi-component, preventative, whole school approach to the promotion of well-being, with interventions at both universal and targeted levels, is the priority for Togher Boys' National School. This whole school approach involves all members of the school community engaging in a collaborative process of change to improve specific areas of school life that impact on well-being. By adopting a whole school approach Togher Boys' National School aims to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for our pupils, including improved behaviour, increased inclusion, improved learning, greater social cohesion, increased social capital and improvements to mental health. This whole school approach supports the integration of systems within the school community. This creates capacity to be reflective and responsive to the needs of our school and the individuals who are part of the school community. Central to this is the role of Togher Boys' National School and the importance of building professional capacity to engage in a reflective process to implement and sustain well-being policy and strategies from within.

Togher Boys' National School aims to promote well-being, and social and emotional learning, and ensures a whole school approach to well-being promotion and early intervention, especially when considering appropriate use of external supports and services. 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.

Benefits of promoting pupil well-being in Togher Boys' National School

By implementing a whole school approach to well-being, the benefits include:

- Better learning results for pupils
- More proactive in promotion of staff wellbeing
- 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

In Togher Boys' National School we focus on promoting pupil wellbeing by:

- Increasing and prioritising positive emotions
- Teaching emotional regulation skills
- Encouraging children to utilise their skills
- Providing challenging activities to facilitate growth
- Identifying and using character strengths
- Promoting and supporting inclusion
- Communicating high expectations
- Fostering positive relationships
- Providing support
- Teaching life skills
- Facilitating connection to the school community
- Improving self-efficacy
- Celebrating success

Wellbeing Protective and Risk Factors

Risk and protective factors relating to wellbeing promotion that are specific to our school setting have been identified. Protective factors have been found to promote positive outcomes for children and young people, even when they have been exposed to risk factors (Cooper, Jacobs, 2011). In Togher Boys' National School, we implement a preventative wellbeing promotion process that has a focus on strengthening school-based protective factors and minimising school-based risk factors.

Togher Boys' National School well-being protective factors include:



- 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

Togher Boys' National School well-being risk factors include:

- absenteeism
- bullying and relationship difficulties
- low achievement/learning difficulties/special educational needs including social, emotional and behavioural needs
- school transitions
- poor connection between family and school

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

This policy will now illustrate the well-being promotion in Togher Boys' National School within each of these areas.



(Department of Education, 2018)

Culture and Environment

Togher Boys' National School aims to foster an environment that enhances competence and wellbeing; one that consciously fosters warm relationships, encourages participation, develops pupil and teacher autonomy and cultivates clarity about boundaries, rules and positive expectations. Togher Boys' National School provides a safe, secure and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff and members of the whole school community, both in and out of school. We encourage and promote self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute to school life. The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their own health. Togher Boys' National School continues to provide a climate in which good relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

The teaching and learning in Togher Boys' National School aims to be democratic, inclusive, engaging, differentiated, fostering expectations of high achievement and providing opportunity for success. The SPHE curriculum in Togher Boys' National School strongly supports the social and emotional well-being of our pupils, by placing and emphasis on children's social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and therefore learning



performance. In line with best practice, the Continuum of Support model delivered within our school offers a flexible framework within which we can address all educational needs, including well-being needs of our pupils. Togher Boys' National School adheres to statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils. We provide challenges for pupils and staff through a wide range of physical, academic, social and community activities. Policy and Whole School Plans are written documents which support the everyday running of the school through active implementation on a day-to-day basis. They form the background script by which the school navigates its way. They are developed and implemented by the whole school community. Togher Boys' National School regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

Relationships and Partnerships

Togher Boys' National School 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. The following stakeholders collaborate regularly:

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

Policies and Planning

It is essential that all staff continue to develop their competence and confidence in the promotion of wellbeing. The qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and she/he can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education. This can be achieved through accessing continuing professional development (CPD) which includes the sharing of expertise and learning, and having opportunities to model and engage in collaborative working.

School Based Initiatives that Promote Well-being;

Togher Boys' National School implements a number of programmes and initiatives throughout daily school life that support the well-being of our pupils; this list is not exhaustive;



- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009) which encompasses four themes, Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communication, Exploring and Thinking.
- Project based learning from 3rd class to 6th class
- SPHE Curriculum (RSE, Stay Safe, Internet Safety, Friendship and Anti-Bullying)
- Continuum of Support Model
- Student Committees: Amber Flag Committee, Green School Committee, Active School Committee.
- Outdoor Learning
- Internet Safety Workshop
- External teachers for different strands of PE to promote active living e.g. GAA, rugby, soccer
- Healthy Eating
- Amber Flag (Promoting Positive Mental Health)
- Active School Flag
- Themed Weeks (e.g. Wellbeing Week, Maths Week, Science Week, Scoot to School Week, etc.)
- Communicating with National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Links with HSE personnel e.g. Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team

Link with other policies in the school:

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Critical Incident Policy.
- Enrolment Policy.

Ratified by the Board of Management Chairperson:

Date: 26th May 2021