Libermann Spiritan School Templeogue

S.P.H.E Policy

Of Libermann
Spiritan School,
Templeogue (LSST)
Templeville Road, Dublin 6 W
D6WNW94
Roll number: 20563J

Libermann Spiritan School

Introductory Statement:

This policy outlines the approach to wellbeing at Libermann Spiritan School. It has been developed in line with the Department of Education's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019), Looking at Our School (2022), and The National Wellbeing Goals. Crucially, it also incorporates the principles of Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2024). Its purpose is to provide clear guidance for the promotion and support of student and staff wellbeing within our community.

As a school, we recognise inclusivity, equality, community, empathy, honesty, respect, and nurturance as core values which we wish to instil in our pupils. Wellbeing is at the forefront of all pupil and broader school relationships; therefore, we facilitate a bottom-up approach in providing a holistic education for our pupils. In line with this, we have adopted the NCSE Relate Framework. We utilise a 'Regulation First' approach, recognising that safe, co-regulated relationships are the essential foundation for all learning and development in our special school context.

Libermann Spiritan School is currently developing a Wellbeing Promotion Process within the school as part of our School Self-Evaluation (SSE) 2022–2026 cycle. This process is supported by the Department of Education, the Health Service Executive (HSE), and the "Health Promoting Schools" Model.

"The promotion of wellbeing is central to the Department's mission to enable children and young people to achieve their full potential and contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development. As a society, we face a wide range of challenges that impact on our wellbeing. Promoting the wellbeing of our children and young people is a shared community responsibility and is everybody's business. Our school plays a key role in developing and enhancing young people's wellbeing. Consequently, [we] have placed a high priority on wellbeing promotion." (D.E.S., 2018)

Libermann Spiritan School aims to provide a three-tiered support to pupil well-being:

- Whole School Approach (Support for All)
- Allocation of Support (School Support)
- School Support Team (School Support Plus)

Rationale:

- To establish a comprehensive framework for wellbeing in line with ongoing guidance from the Department of Education, Looking at Our School (2022), and the National Wellbeing Goals.
- To ensure progressive, evidence-based approaches to the promotion of whole-school wellbeing are utilised within our school from its inception.
- To effectively implement our Wellbeing Policy in line with the current School Self-Evaluation (SSE) cycle (2022–2026).
- To embed the NCSE Relate framework into our daily practice, adopting a 'Regulation First' approach that prioritises safe relationships as the foundation for all learning.
- To foster a culture of kindness, inclusion, and safety consistent with the principles of Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2024).
- To best utilise our school's resources to promote mental health and wellbeing within our school community.
- To ensure that children are available for learning by prioritising their wellbeing as a primary objective.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school: (AS PER CODE OF BEHAVIOUR)

Libermann Spiritan School provides a caring environment where the uniqueness of each child is valued within a setting where holistic development is cultivated. It exists to educate and nurture its members, preparing them for their future in society. To this end, the school looks to provide an environment which fosters an ethos of inclusion, respect, and mutual understanding through a partnership of staff, pupils, parents, and the Board of Management.

All organisations require procedures to ensure smooth running, safety, and fairness, looking to the greater good of all. Social interaction is an integral part of everyday life where individuals are supported to belong, work in teams, and be aware of group dynamics.

The school, therefore, strives to provide safe boundaries and expectations, which are not repressive but foster respect for others, co-operation, and a celebration of the differences between individuals. This approach aligns with our Spiritan core values and the relational approach that underpins our school culture.

Whole School Approach:

Libermann Spiritan School recognises that wellbeing promotion is a pivotal aspect of school life and has identified all stakeholders as key components in wellbeing promotion. A collaborative process of identifying wellbeing as a focus, analysing data, sharing and reporting findings, and developing improvement plans which are to be monitored and evaluated, is crucial in maintaining a positive, holistic, and realistic approach to wellbeing promotion on an ongoing basis.

The school identifies that through implementing a preventative approach, whereby we resource pupils with the tools to tolerate life's stress, we can alleviate distress caused by

expected life stressors and teach strategies which support positive wellbeing for all stakeholders.

A 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 wellbeing. By adopting a whole school approach, Libermann Spiritan School aims to produce a wide range of holistic benefits for our pupils. These benefits will include but not be limited to:

- A child-centred approach to learning.
- Positive Behaviour Support incorporating the NCSE Relate Framework and the principles of Cineáltas.
- Positive conflict management strategies.
- Positive methodologies to support social cohesion and emotional literacy.
- Positive methodologies to support diversity and inclusion.
- A neurologically informed, 'Regulation First' approach to promoting optimal states for learning and development.
- Positive physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Intrinsic motivation and positive self-esteem.
- Resilience and coping skills.

Our approach incorporates child protection and safeguarding, both of which are considered integral to child and staff wellbeing. Teachers are aware of a bioecological model of human development, child development, and the systemic and environmental factors which may impact pupil and staff wellbeing. We have identified that within the parameters of the school community, the experience of a person's lived world in a broader context is to be considered. Therefore, supporting all stakeholders, in consultation with external bodies, is of utmost importance, in line with statutory obligations. We recognise

that supporting children in a systemic manner will be of most benefit and, therefore, communicate readily with parents and guardians regarding pupil wellbeing.

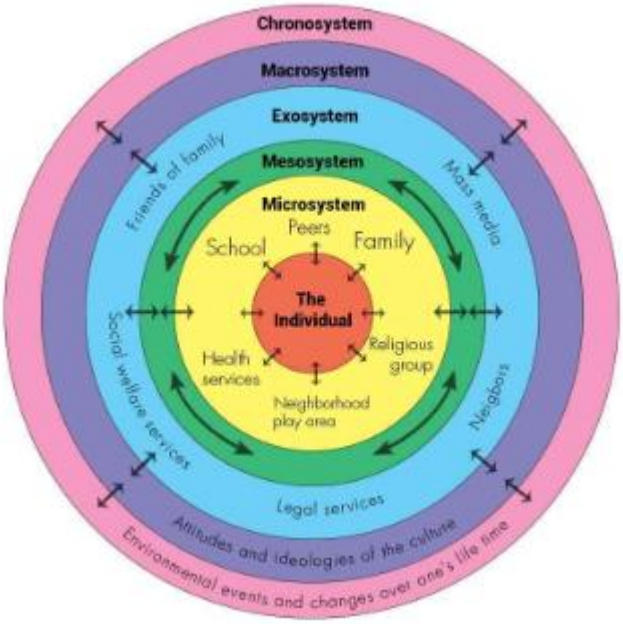
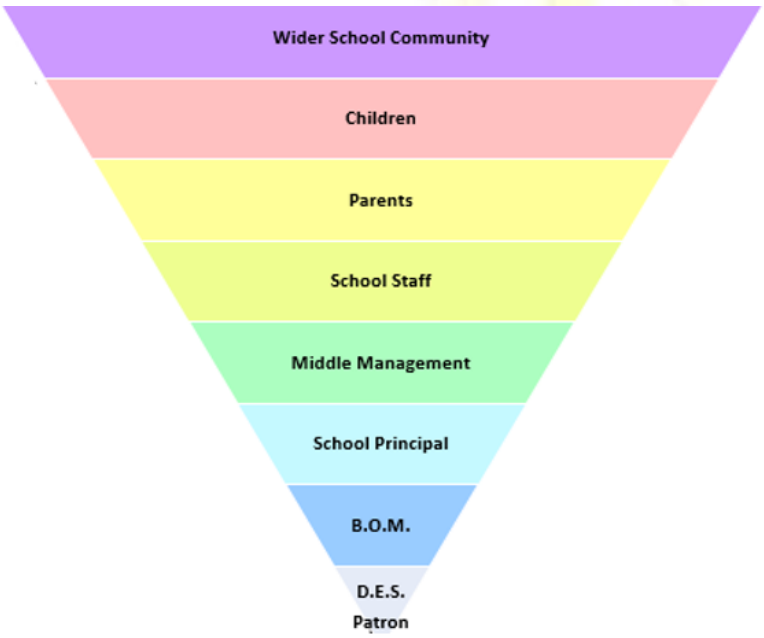
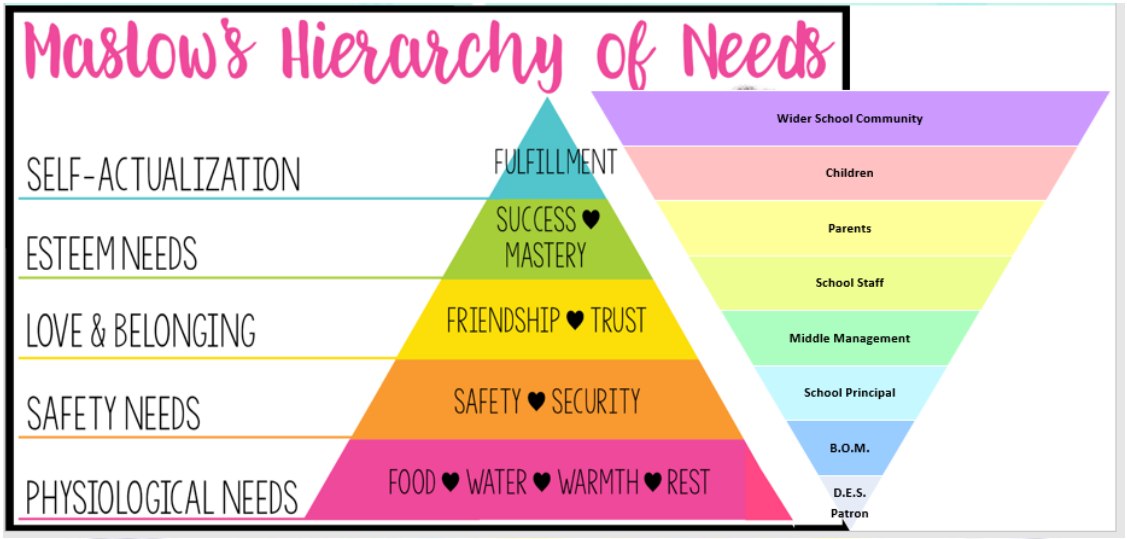


Figure 1Bronfenbrenner:Bioecological Model of Human Development

Libermann Spiritan School's whole school approach to wellbeing encourages the integration of systems within the school community and fosters a reflective and responsive approach to the needs of our school and the individuals who are part of it. We have identified the key stakeholders to support wellbeing in the school and recognise that positive wellbeing and relationships are the essential precursor to pupil wellbeing.



Subsequently, we facilitate a bottom-up approach, recognising the importance of meeting the needs of all stakeholders (including staff and parents) in order to best support our pupils. This aligns with the NCSE Relate principle that staff wellbeing and regulation are necessary to support student regulation.



This approach relates specifically to the Continuum of Support model for the allocation of support for children with special educational needs. When a child is presenting with a need regarding social or emotional development, we follow the protocol of this staged approach. We refer to and use Basic Needs Checklists, Classroom Support Checklists, and Support Plans to plan for intervention.

While all children are supported within the school context, children will be referred for external support if their needs are beyond staff levels of training and qualification. Under the guidance of the Department of Education, Libermann Spiritan School strives to promote and support wellbeing; however, we also recognise our limitations and capacity to support acute mental health difficulties.

Libermann Spiritan School's staff is in a unique position to promote wellbeing and social and emotional learning. We strive to achieve our whole school approach to wellbeing promotion and early intervention, especially when considering the appropriate use of external supports and services. Students flourish where there is a collective approach to supporting their growth and where there is a shared belief in their potential for development, learning, and wellbeing. We take responsibility for providing an environment that nurtures and supports students.

Role of the D.E.S. and Patron

Libermann Spiritan School recognises the importance of the guidance provided by the Department of Education, in addition to the school's Patron (The Spiritan Education Trust), as a precursor to developing policies and procedures to promote wellbeing. The school pays due diligence to departmental publications, circulars, and guidance documents to ensure that a progressive approach is maintained at all times.

We recognise that departmental guidelines are based on current best practice and we strive to adapt current procedures to ensure that we meet the needs of our school in relation to wellbeing. We maintain close relationships with our local Spiritan community and endeavour to seek out the support of the Patron if required.

In addition, as a Special School, we have identified the support of our local Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT), Progressive Disability Services, and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) as crucial bodies to guide our practice in relation to pupil wellbeing across a spectrum of needs.

Role of The Board of Management

In line with statutory obligations, the Board of Management is comprised of community, staff, and parental nominees and plays a vital role in our school's wellbeing. The Board's responsibilities include:

- Policy Approval: Ratifying the Wellbeing Policy and ensuring it aligns with the school's Spiritan ethos and current Department guidelines (including Cineáltas and Looking at Our School 2022).
- Support: ensuring that the Principal and staff have the necessary resources and CPD opportunities to implement the Wellbeing Framework effectively.
- Oversight: Monitoring the progress of the Wellbeing Promotion Process as part of the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) cycle.
- Child Protection: Promoting a safe and inclusive environment by overseeing the implementation of Child Protection and Anti-Bullying procedures, which are fundamental to student wellbeing.

Role of the Staff

Libermann Spiritan School identifies that wellbeing is best promoted through a relational and environmental approach. As a staff, we endeavour to communicate positive wellbeing through our environment, interactions, and attitudes. We recognise that consistent, positive relationships within the school community are the key protective factor that enables children to feel safe, connected, and supported.

We aim to develop our competence and confidence in the promotion of wellbeing. The qualified classroom teacher, in addition to support staff and SNAs who are working with individual children, have a powerful impact on influencing values, attitudes, and behaviour. In

line with the NCSE Relate Framework, staff recognise their role in 'co-regulation'—supporting students to regulate their emotions through calm, consistent, and safe relationships. This will continue to be achieved through accessing CPD, sharing expertise, and engaging in collaborative working.

Staff Wellbeing

We identify a pivotal component in whole school wellbeing as staff well-being and capacity to engage in reflective practice in a non-judgemental and positive manner. The school principal provides annual reviews to staff which provides a platform for discussion. As a school, we promote staff wellbeing to ensure that teachers, and SNAs have the ability to support the development of pupil wellbeing, with the support of the wider school community. The school ensures that an annual team building activity is encompassed which enables each staff member to positively engage with staff they do not have immediate contact with during the calendar year.

In line with Department guidelines, we communicate to staff on an annual basis, and display documentation outlining the Services available through the *Employee Assistance Service for Staff in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools,* and make discretionary and in discretionary referrals to Medmark as necessary. This legislative obligation is in an effort to safeguard both employees and pupils in the establishment.

Benefits of promoting pupil wellbeing:

- Positive learning outcomes for pupils
- Positive self-esteem development
- A holistic approach to leaning, which utilises a strengths-based and child centred approach
- A coordinated approach to physical, social, emotional and academic wellbeing
- Development of intrinsic motivation and a love of learning
- Increased self-awareness skills through recognition of behaviour as communication
- Lowered incidence of bullying
- Improved relationships within the school community
- Improved use of outside agencies
- Better quality education

The Department's Wellbeing Statement and Policy Framework

The Department of Education's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice assists schools in ensuring that wellbeing promotion is embedded within the school's existing practice. The school's review and development process using the Framework provides guidance and practical resources to assist in the further enhancement of whole school approaches to wellbeing promotion in the four key areas.

- Culture and Environment
- Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- Policy and Planning
- Relationships and Partnerships

Libermann Spiritain School, Templogue	
Culture and Environment	Libermann Spiritan School aims to foster an environment that enhances pupils' ability to meet their potential while maintaining wellbeing. This environment is one which consciously fosters warm and respectful relationships, encourages participation, and cultivates clarity about boundaries and expectations. In line with the NCSE Relate model, we view our environment as a 'co-regulatory' space. We provide a safe, secure, and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff, and members of the whole school community. We encourage and promote self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members to contribute to school life. The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their physical wellbeing. Crucially, our culture is underpinned by the principles of Cineáltas (Action Plan on Bullying), creating a climate where inclusion is the norm and bullying behavior is prevented through positive relationship building.
Curriculum	The teaching and learning in LSST aims to be democratic, inclusive, engaging, differentiated, while fostering expectations of personal achievement and providing opportunity for success. We place a deliberate focus on the holistic development of each

	child, incorporating a child centred, needs focussed approach. The S.P.H.E. curriculum in LSST 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. We recognise that 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. LSST ensures that curricular and policy requirements are met, and consider our approach to teaching and learning progressive and in line with best practice. Teachers are encouraged to deliver a differentiated curriculum to ensure that individual class group's needs are met on an annual basis, and plans are adapted accordingly.
Policy and Planning	LSST consider our policies and procedures to be the blueprints for our school. Policies 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, and are updated on a regular basis to reflect the changes in our school environment, in addition to the most up to date guidance by the D.E.S., N.C.S.E., and N.C.C.A.. Parents/guardians and community members are encouraged to participate in policy development upon review, following staff input.
Relationships and Partnerships	LSST continues to develop strong partnerships with parents/guardians and the wider community, which is a central part of the well-being process. We efficiently engage with appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning. We have positive links to the local parish and local clubs in addition to the parent body. As a school, we pride ourselves in the inclusive, collaborative environment which is cultivated through parental involvement.

School Based Initiatives that Promote Well-being

LSST implements a number of programmes and initiatives throughout daily school life that support the well-being of our pupils. These initiatives are designed to contribute to a positive school culture, and the following list is not exhaustive:

Wellbeing Initiatives

- Project-based learning and thematic approaches to promote engagement and collaborative skills.
- SPHE Curriculum (Social, Personal, and Health Education).
- R.S.E. (Relationships and Sexuality Education) and Stay Safe programmes for protective education.
- Student Committees: Student Council, Green School Committee (Fostering student voice and responsibility).
- Outdoor Learning activities.
- 'Fun Fridays' / 'Golden Time' (Promoting positive social interaction and enjoyment).
- Active Breaks to ensure physical health and mental alertness.
- External teachers for different strands of PE to promote active living and specialized instruction.
- School swimming lessons – a 6-week block for all pupils (Focusing on safety and physical health).

- Themed Weeks (e.g., Maths Week, Science Week, Engineers Week, Book Week, Heritage Week, etc.) to enhance engagement and school spirit.
- Promoting the Arts (Cultivating creativity and emotional expression).
- Communicating with National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to ensure necessary supports are in place.
- Student Support Team (Providing a formal, integrated structure for addressing student needs).
- Links with HSE personnel e.g., Primary Care Team, School Age Team, Early Intervention Team, Assessment of Need Team (Ensuring access to external professional support).

Physical Education and Physical Wellbeing

At Libermann Spiritan School, we recognise that Physical Education (PE) is not just about sport; it is a fundamental pillar of our "Regulation First" approach. Movement is essential for our students to regulate their sensory systems, manage stress, and maintain the "physical wellbeing" indicator of the *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice*.

1. Curriculum Integration and Timetabling: PE is a core curriculum subject that supports our Wellbeing programme across all stages:
    - Primary Level: We deliver a broad PE curriculum (incorporating Aquatics, Games, Athletics, and Gymnastics) differentiated to the physical and sensory needs of each class group.
    - Junior Cycle (L1LP & L2LP): PE is a mandatory component of Wellbeing at Junior Cycle. It contributes 135 hours towards the required 400 hours of Wellbeing time.
    - Priority Learning Units (PLUs): Our PE programme directly supports the *Physical Education* PLU (L1LP) and the *Personal Care* PLU (L2LP), focusing on movement competence and health-promoting physical activity.

2. Approaches to PE for Wellbeing: We employ a non-competitive, inclusive approach that prioritises participation and regulation over performance:
    - Regulation via Movement: Aligning with the NCSE Relate Framework, we use PE and movement breaks (heavy work, stretching, walking) as co-regulation strategies to help students return to a calm state ready for learning.
    - Aquatics: As listed in our initiatives, our swimming programme (6-week block) is critical not just for physical safety, but for the sensory benefits of water-based activity, which promotes relaxation and body awareness.
    - Community Integration: We utilise external teachers and community amenities to ensure our students feel a sense of belonging in their local area through sport and recreation.

Protective and Risk Factors

Libermann Spiritan School is acutely aware of the complex factors that influence a child's development and wellbeing. In planning for student support, we aim to maximise protective factors and mitigate risk factors. We identify key protective factors as the presence of a supportive school culture, safe and consistent relationships with staff, clear boundaries, and a strong sense of belonging within the school community. We recognise that for our specific cohort, the ability to self-regulate and communicate needs effectively are vital protective skills we must teach. Conversely, we acknowledge risk factors such as social isolation, difficulties with transitions, sensory dysregulation, and communication frustration. By identifying these risks early, the school aims to implement preventative strategies to support students before difficulties escalate.

Code of Behaviour

Our Code of Behaviour is inextricably linked to this Wellbeing Policy and is underpinned by the NCSE Relate Framework. The school recognises that behaviour is a form of communication. Therefore, we move away from a punitive model of discipline toward a 'Regulation First' approach. We prioritise understanding the function of a behaviour—whether it is sensory, communicative, or emotional—and responding with co-regulation strategies. This approach ensures that the dignity of the student is maintained and that relationships remain intact, even during moments of distress.

Anti-Bullying Strategy

This policy operates in conjunction with our Anti-Bullying Policy, which has been updated to align with Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2024). We recognise that a positive school culture is the most effective deterrent against bullying. We foster an environment of kindness, inclusion, and respect, consistent with our Spiritan ethos. Our approach focuses on prevention through education and the promotion of a 'telling' atmosphere, where students feel safe to report concerns. All reports of bullying are dealt with according to the four principles of Cineáltas: Prevention, Support, Oversight, and Community.

Programmes and Curricular Support

To support the holistic development of our students, Libermann Spiritan School implements a range of evidence-based programmes adapted to the needs of a Special School context. These include:

- Curriculum: The Primary Curriculum Framework (2023) and Junior Cycle Level 1 (L1LP) and Level 2 (L2LP) Learning Programmes.
- Personal Safety: The *Stay Safe* Programme
- RSE: Relationships and Sexuality Education tailored for special educational needs.
- Regulation: The *Zones of Regulation* and *The Level Up Program* to support sensory awareness.
- Digital Wellbeing: *Webwise* resources to promote internet safety.

Links with Other Policies

This Wellbeing Policy is not a standalone document but forms part of a suite of policies that support the welfare of our students. It should be read in conjunction with the:

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Resources

This policy has been developed with reference to the following key documents:

- *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice* (Department of Education, 2019).
- *Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework*.
- *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* (Department of Education, 2024).
- *Circular 0056/2022* (School Self-Evaluation).
- NCSE *Relate Framework* Guidelines.

Ratification and Review This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 19/06/2024. It will be reviewed annually as part of the School Self-Evaluation process.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: 19/06/2024 Date: 19/06/2024

Due for Review: June 2026