

**ST DAVID'S HOLY FAITH SECONDARY SCHOOL,  
GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW**

## **Whole School Wellbeing Policy**

This Whole School Wellbeing Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup> 2022

## **Mission Statement**

The St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School community including school management, the Board of Management and all staff are committed to the academic, creative, emotional, spiritual and physical development of each student, in a caring and safe environment. We also work in collaboration with parents and guardians to achieve these goals. The wellbeing of the whole school community is at the heart of our school's mission, and is in accordance with the aspirations of Le Chéile Catholic Schools Trust.

## **Definition of Wellbeing**

The central focus of the wellbeing programme, both at junior and senior level is for students to get to know themselves better. The programme provides students with a unique opportunity to build on and develop a skill set which will enable them to make informed decisions about themselves and others, their mental health, personal decisions, and social/emotional development. 'Wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community' (Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, NCCA, 2021). Success in Education and Wellbeing are inextricably linked. ESRI research has found that "children with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social and school wellbeing had higher levels of academic achievement subsequently" (Smith, E. 2015).

## **Rationale for the Policy**

This policy has been introduced in order to allow the school to adequately respond to the changing and diverse needs of our pupils. St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School is committed to the nurturing of the whole person so that he/she/they may be guided with care and respect to respond to the demands of modern life with resilience, optimism and a feeling of ownership. The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new era of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing, alongside the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018-2023). Wellbeing will cross the three years of junior cycle and build on substantial work already taking place in our school supporting students' wellbeing. It is recognised that in the school setting wellbeing risk factors include:

- Disengagement, absenteeism, isolation and alienation
- Violence/ aggression, bullying and relationship difficulties
- Low achievement/ learning difficulties/ special educational needs including social, emotional and behavioural needs
- Cultural differences
- Sexual Identity
- School transitions
- Poor connection between family and school

- Harsh and inconsistent discipline
- Lack of opportunity to develop social and emotional learning, including problem solving and coping skills

This area of learning will make the school's culture and ethos and commitment to wellbeing visible to students. It will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It will enable students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and their community.

### **The Scope of the policy**

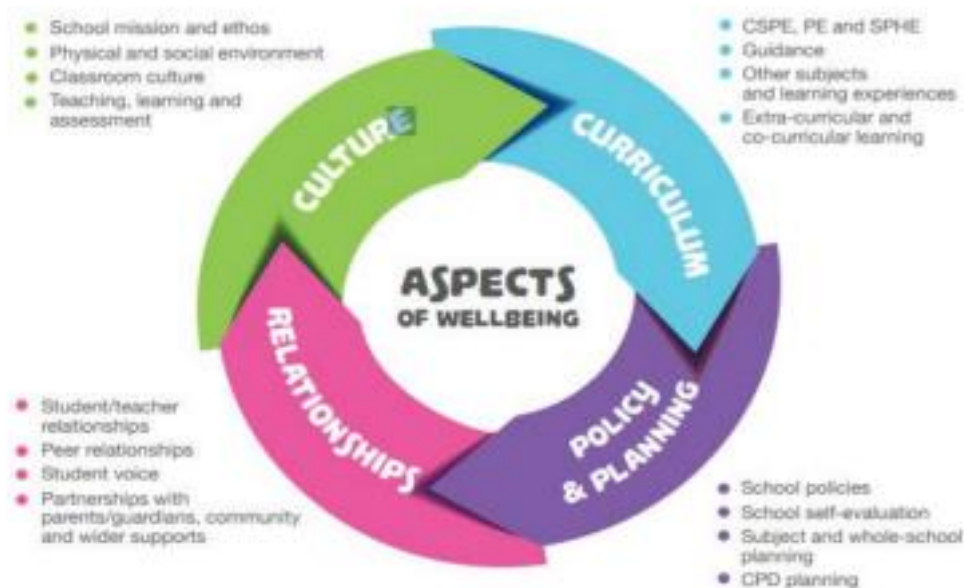
This policy will impact on the whole school community. Therefore, it has been approved by the Board of Management, in consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal, A.P. 2 post-holder for Wellbeing, school staff, parents and students. This commitment to wellbeing is implicit in the school's admission policy and in our commitment to promoting the spiritual and human development of each individual. In the light of these core values, the school is clear that wellbeing must include a mental, physical, social and spiritual dimension. We thrive as individuals within a community and very often it is this community that sustains us through challenges. Hence, the emphasis of this policy on the role of the whole school community in the programme of wellbeing.

Wellbeing is a multi-faceted concept and efforts to promote student wellbeing require a whole-school approach.

Planning for wellbeing involves consideration of four main aspects of our school:

1. Culture
2. Relationships
3. Policy and Planning
4. Curriculum

The whole school community will therefore contribute to supporting student wellbeing through our culture, our relationships, our policies and in the curriculum.



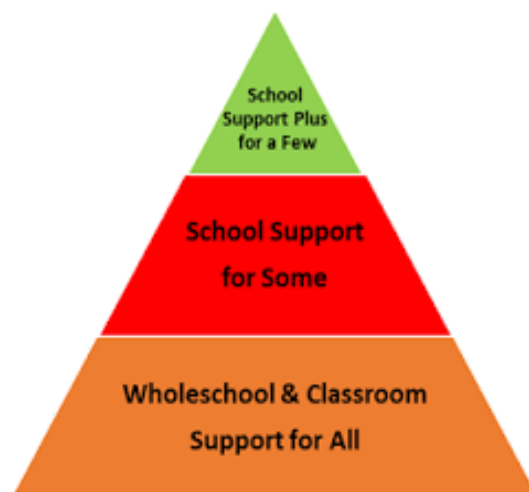
## Goals of the policy

- To provide for the wellbeing of all students in the school in the light of the school Mission Statement.
- To outline clearly the school's approach to the provision of wellbeing for all members of community
- To set out the structure and supports that are in place both within the curriculum and the wider school community.
- To outline our belief that everybody in the school community is valued and has an opportunity to flourish.
- To outline the policies, procedures, culture, ethos and the activities which serve to assist the wellbeing of students at St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones.
- To recognise the interplay between a positive experience of school life, student achievement and long-term wellbeing.
- To offer a coordinated structure in supporting our young people through the creation of a multiplicity of opportunities both within and outside of the classroom, focused on the promotion of wellbeing.
- To outline the ways in which the expertise of the staff and outside agencies are engaged to support and respond to needs.

- To provide an umbrella policy which links other school policies that relate to wellbeing
- To comply with DES Circular 0015/2017 which mandates 400 hours of timetabled wellbeing by 2020 (although the D.E gave schools liberty to hold this off for full implementation until 2022. St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones has implemented this since 2020).

### **Philosophy of the Policy**

The philosophy of the policy is based on the NEPS document "Wellbeing in Post-Primary Schools". Using the NEPS continuum of provision as a framework, this policy provided an overview of the provision in the school in relation to promoting and supporting the wellbeing of all the students in the school. The NEPS document suggests a continuum of support from 'support for all' through 'school support for some' to 'school support plus (for a few)'. This policy will be structured on this basis and will allow us to outline the links between services, procedures and processes in the school as they relate to each other in providing for the wellbeing of students in this school.



### **Section A: Support for all**

At this level, we have a series of policies and procedures that promote wellbeing for all members of the school community – a whole school approach is adopted and acted on.

Processes on this level aim at:

1. The establishment of a safe environment that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing

2. Promotion of an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing
3. Early identification and intervention in the cases of challenge behaviours
4. Monthly Team Meetings, after school on Wednesdays between A.P. 1 post holders and school senior management and separately, A.P. 2 post holders and school senior management.

Establishing a safe environment – Policies include:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Critical Incidents Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- Guidance Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- RSE Policy
- Substance Use Policy (Draft)
- SEN Plan
- TY Policy
- Literacy Plan
- Numeracy Plan
- Suspension and Expulsion Policy
- Trips and Tours Policy

## **Promoting Wellbeing**

The management and staff of St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones are committed to the creation of a positive, engaging learning experience for all of our students through engagement with our School Self-evaluation Wellbeing Promotion Process and integrated into our School Improvement Plan.

Since 2017, St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, has six active teams working within the S.S.E framework:

1. Literacy
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Numeracy
4. Wellbeing: Stress amongst exam students (Third Years)

5. Wellbeing: Nutrition and Physical Activity (girls in Second & Third Years)
6. Wellbeing: First Year Induction

### **Use of a variety of learning & teaching methodologies and strategies**

Mindful of the mixed ability settings in the majority of classes, staff utilise a variety of teaching approaches and methodologies to maintain student engagement and maximise learning and achievement, supported by feedback from school inspections, annually. In recent years staff has attended CPD in Assessment for Learning (AFL) methodology, team teaching, differentiation, sharing teaching methodologies, Wellbeing, R.S.E, S.P.H.E and the organising of group work and active learning methodologies. Emphasis has also been placed in recent years on the integration of ICT into teaching and learning in the school, with the onset of Covid and its impact in particular. These skills are of benefit in creating an engaged learning and teaching environment. This work is on-going and support and funded by the school B.O.M and senior management team.

### **Mixed ability class grouping**

St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, operates a mixed ability class grouping policy apart from the banding of core subjects: English, Irish and Maths to allow for uptake at differentiated levels. At J.C level, all classes, except Irish, English, Mathematics, are taught at common level, as required under new J.C.

At L.C level, classes are taught at H.L. with the exception of the three core subjects of English, Irish and Mathematics, in which streaming of classes, at H.L. and O.L. are taught. The school therefore is serving the educational needs of all. This serves to promote a sense of democracy and a sense of community in all classes. In keeping with best practice, staff sees this structure as central to the promotion of student self-esteem. Team-Teaching (In-Class Support) for students with additional needs is also now an emerging strategy in the provision of Student Support in the school.

### **The promotion of a culture of high expectations in all elements of school life**

Explicit in our Code of Behaviour and in our Mission Statement is the strong emphasis on creating a culture of high expectation in our students. Whether in relation to academic achievement, social engagement or non-curricular activities, students are consistently reminded of the value our school places on their whole-hearted engagement in school work and its hope and expectation for them as individuals and members of a community.

## **Positive relationships**

Our promotion of positive relationships is based on the recognition of the dignity of each individual (based on the values explicit in the founding vision of our school by Margaret Aylward and in the Le Chéile Charter) and the importance of respectful relationships between teachers, students & parents. Building an emphasis on positivity and on rewarding positive behaviour underpins all the relationships and is expressed through a number of engagements within the school community, for example, teacher/Sixth Year student mentoring. There is also an Induction for First Years and a buddy system to help these pupils to integrate. More fundamental in all of this is how we as a school work and interact every single day.

## **Broad provision of programmes and a comprehensive curriculum**

Central to the ethos of St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones is a belief in the importance of providing a broad spectrum of curricular programmes and subjects. This helps to meet the educational needs of a broad spectrum of our student cohort whilst also offering staff the opportunity for a diverse teaching experience. This supports a positive student experience of their learning choices. Alongside this, a number of subjects are also provided to students outside of the traditional teaching timetable, ensuring St. David's students are offered as many opportunities as possible.

St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones is in the process of a whole-school review and policy development of the provision of sports in our school. All the partners of school are involved, and it is envisioned this will facilitate an increased emphasis on encouraging students to engage in sport, both competitively and recreationally, over the next number of years.

## **Junior Cycle**

The Framework for Junior Cycle presents a dual approach to assessment that supports student learning over the three years of junior cycle and also measures achievement at the end of those three years. This dual approach reduces the focus on one externally assessed examination as a means of assessing students and increases the prominence given to classroom-based assessment and formative assessment. This change of emphasis arises from an acknowledgement that students learn best when teachers provide feedback that helps students to understand how their learning can be improved.

## **Wellbeing & the Curriculum**

In our school we have chosen to strongly prioritise and highlight wellbeing within our school community. This is reflected strongly in our curricular provision. There is a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of CSPE, PE and SPHE as part of the wellbeing programme in Junior Cycle. Alongside this, Wellbeing is specifically



taught within the timetable to ensure the full 400 hours are provided as per Department of Education guidelines.

Staff are afforded opportunities to work collaboratively in planning for these subjects and CPD is actively supported through Le Chéile Middle Leadership *courses and PDST*. Curricular provision is informed by student and parental input through our School Self Evaluation process, inclusive of regular reflective questionnaires on progress to date.

Guidance-related learning is an important aspect of the Wellbeing curriculum in Junior Cycle. The guidance counsellor works collaboratively with staff in relation to the wellbeing programme and its implementation. The guidance counsellor actively supports students in Junior Cycle, both through the teaching of guidance and counselling support, on an individual basis.

We endeavour to provide a Junior Cycle Programme that builds the foundations for Wellbeing.

We do this through the provision of a programme that is:

- broad and balanced
- provides choice
- has meaning and relevance
- is enjoyable and engaging
- provides opportunities to experience challenge and success
- equips students with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to develop as learners and build positive relationships

### **Transition into Post Primary School (First Year)**

The school has worked to develop a systematic approach for the transition of students from primary school into post-primary school. This involves a close working relationship with our all primary schools in Greystones which are our feeder schools, teachers, and our SNA, along with the SEN department. Student profiling forms developed by the D.E are received from the students' primary schools (Education Primary Passport) and are used in conjunction with our own school developed forms to create a profile of incoming students. We carry out CAT4 Entrance Assessments of our new First Years too.

School Management, our AP2 Post Holder for Induction and the SEN Team coordinate the use of these forms in supporting the transition of students into the school. The transition programme also involves a series of events (Orientation Day) which allows each student to become familiar with the geography of the school, the key personnel, their timetable and the expectations the school will have of them and the additional supports and activities they may avail of. The First Year Year Head, along with his/her team of teachers and class tutors, fulfil a very important

role in assisting and encouraging our First Years to grow and prosper in school, from day one.

During SPHE classes in the first few weeks, teachers help students to learn about each other, their teachers' names and subjects.

## **Transition Year**

Transition Year provides engagement in a wide and varied programme of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences. Student growth, maturity and self-awareness are central to this programme. Student work placement, social justice work and career explorations all develop opportunities for student learning. Academically, students receive opportunities in all the subjects available at Senior Cycle in St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones. This programme allows the staff the opportunity to teach in a creative manner, explore the vocational aspects of each subject and offer subject extension and enrichment opportunities. Students are encouraged to develop a growth mindset (Carol Dweck, Ph.D.) through:

- Embracing challenges
- Persisting in the face of obstacles
- Seeing effort as the path to mastery
- Learning from criticism
- Finding lessons and inspiration in the success of others

A wide and varied approach to fostering key wellbeing indicators is practised through a number of programmes, which include:

- G Metrix (Computer Science)
- Homeless contact work - hampers for 5 Loaves in Bray
- Carol Singing to the Elderly in Greystones Retirement Homes
- Fundraising for Amber Flag - Pieta House, CF Ireland
- Young Social Innovators
- Debating
- Amber Flag & Mental Health
- Young Scientist
- Team Hope Assistants
- Green schools - fund raising through non-uniform day
- Virtual volunteering
- Creative Schools Workshops

## **Leaving Certificate**

St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones offers an extensive range of subjects at Leaving Certificate Level. This comprehensive approach to subject

provision increases the opportunity for student subject contentment, which in turn maximises student engagement in the context of the content-laden curricula to be studied. As of writing this policy, the school offer eighteen choice subjects, with an additional, new subject being offered next year, P.E to be offered in 2022, and Computer Science, in 2023.

### **Study Skills, Homework and Assessment Policies**

In the pursuit of academic excellence, it is our belief that appropriate study and revision practices must be in place for all students. It is essential that students, through self-discipline, develop a habit of study. The appropriate amount of time spent on homework, study and revision is outlined in the Homework Policy (currently in review). The school promotes an engagement in evening study for students who desire a supportive structure for study. Free Study Supervision is provided by St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, by our Parent Association. Parents volunteer to supervise 7-9 p.m. from Monday to Thursday each week and weekend mornings, 9: 30 a.m. – 12: 30 p.m Saturdays and Sundays.

The Guidance Department in the school organises a comprehensive Study Skills Programme with all students. Talks are provided on a yearly basis to students on the structuring of study and on learning strategies.

Study skills are also delivered in SPHE classes to First, Second and Third Year students.

### **Extra-curricular Programme**

Through hard work and commitment, the Staff along with the AP2 for Sports Development (appointed January 2022) provides a broad programme of extra-curricular activities which include Tennis, Gaelic football, Basketball, Soccer, Athletics, Rugby, Hockey, Camogie, and Hurling as well as other outdoor and indoor activities. Again, these events serve to broaden the educational engagement and sense of belonging central to a sense of wellbeing at St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones. This programme is complemented by our numerous other programmes which offers students a broad array of activities (Debating, Music, Green Schools, Club Na Gaeilge, Diversity Club, Spanish Club, Young Scientist, Chess etc.). In January 2022, the school appointed its first A.P. 2 post-holder, as Sports Development Officer, who, at time of writing this policy, is drafting the school's first whole-school Sports policy. In tandem with this appointment, the school has appointed a Campus Development Officer, at A.P. 2 level, to coordinate all aspects of the school campus.

## **Support Structures**

### **Pastoral Structures**

St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, has a full suite of pastoral support structures which provide support to all students as part of their general education in the school.

### **Leadership role of Year Heads**

Our Year Heads (each assigned to all year groups, at A.P. 1 level) work in a committed manner to manage the Wellbeing of each year group. Year Heads lead the whole group, offer mentoring, guidance, academic support, to all students and focus particularly, with those who need extra support and work one-on-one with the few (small number of students who need specific interventions and plans). Year Heads also work closely with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Learning Support, and the pastoral care team (SEN) in the provision of student support.

### **Recognition of student & staff achievement**

In order to promote an awareness of the many accomplishments and positive events undertaken by our students (with the support of our staff), we offer reward and recognition for the diverse achievements at the school through our celebrations on Presentation Day. The use of our school website, school magazine – Chalkdust, as well as announcements over the intercom, twice daily by the school Principal, reinforce the positive feedback provided to the student and staff community. It is planned that with the new sports arena (scheduled to open May 2022), there will be monthly whole-school assemblies to recognise the achievements of both staff and students.

### **Student Council Engagement and Activities**

The Student Council has the opportunity to present student plans and concerns to management in a coordinated fashion through two student representatives of each year group. This structure promotes a sense of involvement in the development of the school and a sense of partnership between students and teachers.

### **Parents' Association engagement & activities**

The Parents' Association in the school meets once an academic term. Working with parents to plan for student wellbeing is central to its function. They plan their Study Rota, in the past they have done the Tea and Coffee at school shows and Fundraising. Parents are also engaged in developing policy and procedure via consultation. The academic year, 2021 – 2022, the parents' team (six parents) worked very well in the development and implementation of our new school uniform and for the first time, a new P.E. uniform. The parents' team worked with school management in the re-design of the new school crest.

## **Pastoral Programmes and curricula**

We have a full suite of pastoral support programmes which provide support to all students as part of their general education in the school:

- Our SPHE programme
- Our RE programme
- Our CSPE programme
- Our Guidance programme
- Our RSE programme

## **Retreats & Religious celebration**

It is the belief of school management and a core element of the ethos of the St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones that a grounding in spirituality and faith is an essential basis for Wellbeing and happiness in this world. As such, the school provided opportunities, as part of the faith formation programme of the school, for students to engage meaningfully in the development of their faith and in exploring their spirituality. Retreats are organised by the RE department for Third Years, Transition Years and Sixth Years. Whole School Masses are also run at the start of the school year and Sixth Year Graduation. Our calendar is punctuated by the liturgical

year and includes commemoration of the dead in November, celebration of Advent, Christmas, the national saints, Lent, Easter, and Margaret Aylward's heritage.

We are very lucky to have the two parish priests, Fr. John and Fr. Gerard, here in school, who work very closely with the school community.

## **Social Justice Engagement**

Through the P.E/T.Y/R.E/S.P.H.E/C.S.P.E departments and Year Head engagement students are engaged in a number of social justice and fund raising events throughout the year. These include raising student awareness on charitable needs through fundraising, through the organisation of Hampers for the homeless including Simon and 5 Loaves, St. Vincent de Paul, fundraising and encouraging advocacy for charities such as Pieta House through Amber Flag and assisting the checking of the Team Hope Boxes. Engaging students in community development and support for the more vulnerable in society assists the development of awareness in our students. There is a very strong commitment to Social Justice especially in TY.

## **Section B: Support for some**

As part of the whole school approach, outlined in the introduction of this policy, there is a more focused approach adopted with a number of identifiable groups of

young people who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour, or who show signs of mental health challenges or who are in specified at risk categories. These structures seek to provide a more targeted support structure to promote and scaffold wellbeing for these identified groups.

### **Code of Behaviour and anti-bullying policy**

Each policy has a set of procedures in relation to engaging with some students who have not lived up to the expectations in the codes.

### **Use of restorative reflection processes**

Year Heads and teachers utilise the restorative reflective practice process to support the engagement with behaviour issues in a calm and structured fashion. Restorative practices facilitate an increase in understanding of consequence and aids the rebuilding of relationships following a serious incident or situation. It also offers a framework in which staff can work with sensitivity and with progression with students who require support and structure in moderating their behaviour and in learning good interpersonal skills. Additionally, students work with the school Guidance Counsellor in areas requiring targeted supports and interventions.

School senior management work with outside agencies, such as the E.W.O from Tusla Emma Smith, N.E.P.S educational psychologist Terri Callaghan, local Gardaí and all other apparatus afforded to us by the State.

### **Proactive Pastoral Care Team and Engaging Interventions**

Our pastoral care team includes representatives from the SEN department, the guidance counsellor and is coordinated by both Principal and Deputy Principal. The team reviews its current caseload and students indicated to them by members of staff, by parents or by student peers. It monitors ongoing concerns, agrees plans of action, forwards students to external agencies and indicates where staff may need training. Year Heads, as A.P. 1 post holders meet with senior management monthly and case-loads and plans for students are devised and actioned.

### **SEN team work**

The S.E.N coordinator role is completed by two A.P. 2 post-holders who oversee student progress in Learning Support, ensures that student support files are being created, plans for testing and target achievement, examines resource allocation in the context of newly identified needs and requests for support from teachers and parents for students. All information pertaining to students with S.E and/or A.N, constitute approx 18% in this school, and their information is currently being uploaded onto VSware (academic year, 2021 – 2022).

Planning for SEN delivery takes into account high and low incident needs students through withdrawal, team teaching, small class groups. In keeping with the ethos of St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, we also support those students whose needs have been more locally identified by mainstream teaching

staff in consultation with parents/guardians. Adjusting the level of academic stress and reorganising support is a key element to managing student wellbeing. This work is governed by the school's SEN policy which details the practice in the school in relation to the individual students.

### **Guidance counselling and mentoring**

Targeted guidance is delivered by our Guidance Counsellor. This supports students with study, anxiety, passivity, relationship, peer, social or addiction issues in an in-school support environment.

### **Year Head tracking: report & reward systems**

Year Heads offer targeted support and interventions to students with behaviour management difficulties, organisational concerns, time management problems, study skills difficulties, school/life balance issues in a supportive, mentoring fashion. Where a report system might assist, this is monitored by the Year Heads who also use positive reinforcements to support improvements. Year Heads and senior school management work very closely on a daily basis.

### **Health Alert information**

Under the procedures outlined in the medical policy of the school a list of students with health-related issues is maintained by school management within the school main office complex (A.P. 2 post-holder Health and Safety) and circulated as needed to all members of staff in compliance with GDPR guidelines. Students with a chronic or life-threatening serious illness are placed here with key actions and contacts listed. There is renewed focus on staff training on First Aid, purchase and maintenance of new defibrillators, and these updated very regularly.

A Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) is in place, in accordance with our Critical Incident Management Policy. The team meets annually to ensure that each member is aware of their particular role and to review the operation of the team post-critical incident, where this arises. At all times the welfare of the students is the key focus of the CIMT and its work is designed to provide the maximum level of support and care for students experiencing distress or trauma in the event of a critical incident.

### **Staff Wellbeing**

Staff work in a supported and collegial environment. Undoubtedly, the nature of the role – in seeking to develop the whole person – is hugely demanding. The Board of Management sees its role as supporting and affirming the work of its staff. At each board meeting the Principal's report keeps the Board informed of the work of staff. This is formally affirmed at staff gatherings, through the agreed report. As a small gesture of gratitude, the Board invites members of staff to a lunch at Christmas and Summer each school year.

Senior School Management works collaboratively with the whole staff. Particular requirements are listened for and responded to, through identified needs in the S.S.E process. Senior School Management respects the professional commitment of each staff member and regards them as colleagues and friends. Management is understanding of the complex pressures which may come to bear on all members of staff from time to time and respond with compassion.

At staff meetings, teacher/staff achievement is recognised, staff are informed through an open-door policy by management, at all times. As a consequence of staff commitment, student behaviour and engagement with school is of a high level in St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones. Each year, the staff Social Committee organises a number of events to mark the end of each term or special events. In addition to the teachers and SNAs our non-teaching staff are essential in the provision of a positive climate in the school. The non-teaching staff includes our secretaries, caretaker and cleaning staff. The office staff provide essential administrative support to Senior Management and ensure that a wide range of administrative tasks are conducted which provide for the efficient running of the school. Our care taking and cleaning staff provide a safe, well-maintained and clean working and learning environment for all.

The Dignity at Work Policy (currently in process), ensures that the workplace environment is free from bullying/harassment and is characterized by mutual respect, tolerance and affirmation.

## **Section C: Support for the few**

This support focuses on putting in place interventions for young people with more complex and enduring needs, and represents a very small number of students, with immediate and/or on-going interventions and supports.

### **Close relationship with external agencies and services**

The pastoral care team, guidance teacher, year heads and senior school management avail of all the supports or agencies appropriate to the identified needs of "the few" students. The school has worked to establish close supportive relationships with a broad spectrum of services in order to have the capacity to call on the expert assistance available. These agencies and support services consist of the following: National Education Psychological Services, Special Education Needs Organiser, Education Welfare Officer and TUSLA, HSE Social services, Child Adolescent Mental Health Services, Juvenile Liaison Officer Service, Garda Youth Diversion Programme workers. While many of these agencies engage in a reactive role, the work of N.E.P.S in particular supports, proactively.



## **SNA Team Work**

Our school SNA ( Rachel Flynn ) works to support those students (with access to the expert skills required) navigate the school day, each day. As a school community we are blessed to have such a committed and diligent SNA who works tirelessly for the children assigned to her. Members of the SEN team also help to support students with organisational or behavioural difficulties to support the wellbeing of these students. The SNA and SEN team successfully supports a number of extremely complex cases facilitating their capacity to integrate into the school community with hard work and sensitivity.

## **Year Head mentoring**

Year Heads work closely to monitor, support and guide the few students who struggle in the school context. Senior school management and all staff ensure all staff are aware, that ancillary staff play their part in the wellbeing of all students.

## **Pastoral Support and Counselling**

Our Guidance Counsellor works closely to support and guide the few students who struggle with mental wellbeing issues. These students are identified through the Pastoral Care support system in the school and support for them is monitored by the team. Outside referrals, are made, where deemed necessary. Where the guidance counsellor or pastoral care team, in agreement with the student and his/her parents/guardians believe that counselling may be of benefit, the student may avail of support during the school day and this support is always of a non-therapeutic nature.

## **Policy protocol**

All elements of this policy are reviewed periodically, through informal student feedback on the speakers, programmes and activities and small group discussions.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 with a recommendation that it be reviewed every three years or earlier if legislative or other factors suggest the need for a review.