# Ratoath Senior National School

# Our Self-Evaluation Report and School Improvement Plan 2024-2025

# 1. Introduction

This document records the findings of this self-evaluation process and our current school improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

Ratoath Senior National School is a co-educational school located in Co. Meath. We have 361 pupils. There are seventeen mainstream classes and five Special Education Needs teachers, a shared SEN teacher with Ratoath Junior National School and an EAL teacher who we have three days each week.

As a school we have a holistic approach to the development of the children in a Catholic, moral and spiritual atmosphere. We promote social, personal and physical development so that children may grow in self-confidence, empathy and tolerance.

This plan records the findings of our evaluation of Wellbeing, how it impacts teaching in our school and our current improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets which we have decided upon.

**2. Step 1: Identify Focus**

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period 2023 - 2024 and now will continue the process of School Self-Evaluation using Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools and Special Schools and the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019).

‘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,’ WHO (2001).

After receiving a copy of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019), the Principal examined the Statements of Effective Practice following a school leaders’ seminar in term one of the 2022/23 school year. This was discussed at in-school management team meetings, staff meetings and at a staff wellbeing session facilitated by OIDE in May 2023. The Principal provided an overview of the Wellbeing Framework and 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 headings as outlined in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019):

* Culture and Environment
* Curriculum Teaching and Learning
* Relationships and Partnerships
* Policy/Planning

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. The Principal invited the post holder with responsibility for Wellbeing to work with the staff in order to lead the whole school community through a Wellbeing promotion and self-evaluation process. Using guidance from the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework, it was agreed that the Wellbeing promotion process involves a whole school approach, so there was a need to gather 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 December 2024. Once all the data was collected, it was analysed and judgments were formed on what information had been gathered.

We also looked at the following aspects of teaching and learning and leadership and management from the perspective of identifying which wellbeing practices are working well in our school and what needs to be improved upon in order to implement the requirements of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.

**Pupils**

* Learner Outcomes – Pupils enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners
* Learner Outcomes – have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand themselves and their relationships
* Learner Experiences – grow as learners through respectful interactions and experiences that are challenging and supportive
* Learner Experiences - experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning

**Teachers**

* Teachers’ Individual Practice – The teacher has the requisite curriculum knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills
* Teachers’ Individual Practice – The teacher selects and uses teaching approaches appropriate to the learning objective and to pupils’ learning needs
* Teachers’ Individual Practice – The teacher responds to individual learning needs and differentiates teaching and learning activities as necessary
* Teachers’ Collective/ Collaborative Practice – value and engage in professional learning and professional collaboration
* Teachers’ Collective/ Collaborative Practice – Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise.

**School Leaders**

* Leading Teaching and Learning– Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment
* Leading Teaching and Learning– Foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each pupil
* Leading Teaching and Learning– Foster teacher professional development that enriches teachers’ and pupils’ learning
* Leading School Development – Communicate the guiding vision for the school and lead its realisation
* Leading School Development – Manage, lead and mediate change to respond to the evolving needs of the school and to changes in education
* Leading School Development – lead the school’s engagement in a continuous process of self-evaluation
* Leading School Development – build and maintain relationships with parents, with other schools, and with the wider community
* Developing Leadership Capacity – promote and facilitate the development of pupil participation, pupil leadership and parent participation

**Vision for Wellbeing in Ratoath Senior National School**

**Child-Centred**

The wellbeing needs and the best interests of our pupils are a central focus of this school self-evaluation process. This requires us to respect and value the voice of our pupils and foster their belonging and connectedness to the school community. This ensures a sound developmental base for present and future wellbeing, as well as academic achievement.

**Equitable, fair and inclusive**

All children need access to equitable, fair and inclusive opportunities to develop their wellbeing, in ways that are responsive and suitable to their particular needs and contexts. Practices need to be tailored, responsive and relevant, building on the existing strengths of pupils, school staff, families and school communities. This means that practices will vary across schools and centres for education and from pupil to pupil.

**Evidence informed**

This policy promotes the use of evidence-informed practice, which brings together evidence accrued from consultation with our school stakeholders regarding wellbeing in Ratoath Senior National School. Questionnaires were completed by our pupils, staff members and parents to this end. Based on the findings from the questionnaires, a plan will be put into action on the areas we need to improve upon as a school.

**Outcomes**

This policy promotes continuous improvement practices and the use of data relating to outcomes to guide practice in our school in relation to the promotion of wellbeing for all of our pupils. This school self-evaluation process will ensure the use of a self-reflection process for the identification, monitoring and review of outcomes. A Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice will be developed for our school using all of the information we have learnt through the school self-evaluation process. The outcomes of this school self-evaluation process will also inform the development of our Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Statement which is based on the four key areas of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.

**Partnership**

The wellbeing of our pupils is a shared responsibility. Working in partnership with other parents, other agencies and government departments is key to ensuring that this process is further developed and implemented.

**3.Findings**

The data gathered shows effective practices in our school.

**Key Area of Culture and Environment**

**Wellbeing Statements of Effective Practice for All**

* The wellbeing of the whole school community is central to the school’s ethos/mission statement and school leaders and management actively promote wellbeing.
* The school communicates with parents about the supports that are in place regarding the promotion of the wellbeing of children.
* 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.
* The relationship between academic achievement and a child’s wellbeing is understood by all children and staff in the school.
* There is a positive approach to discipline where issues are resolved with care, respect and consistency.
* The school recognises that wellbeing is as important for the staff as for the children. Appropriate supports are available for staff wellbeing.
* Opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are provided to teachers to ensure that they have the relevant knowledge and understanding to promote wellbeing and to create a positive classroom environment.
* Opportunities are provided for children and young people, staff and parents to have an active voice in decisions relating to school improvement.
* The school building, grounds, classrooms, bathrooms and work spaces are well maintained and appropriately furnished, creating a welcoming, safe and warm environment.
* The indoor space displays the work, talents and accomplishments of children and young people.
* The school building is accessible for all children and young people and accommodation is modified to meet the needs of all.
* School leaders and management understand the link between physical activity and wellbeing and facilitate physical activity and movement breaks within the school environment.
* Indoor and outdoor space is provided to facilitate social interaction and physical activity and quiet time.
* The school environment is conducive to promoting healthy eating choices.

**Wellbeing Statements of Effective Practice for Some and Few**

* The school demonstrates commitment to identifying, including and providing targeted supports for children and young people experiencing barriers and challenges to wellbeing and learning.
* Staff, children and young people are welcoming and inclusive of those from different cultural backgrounds and those with additional needs.
* Schools are proactive in meeting the professional development needs of teachers, who attend relevant CPD and can identify signs and triggers in vulnerable children and young people, and recognise the need for early intervention.
* The physical environment is modified to meet the needs of children and young people with additional and/or complex needs.

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| **Key Area - Culture and Environment**What is working well* The school building, hall, play grounds and all grass areas are well maintained, secure and appropriately equipped to accommodate full engagement with physical activity for our pupils.
* The wellbeing of our pupils is a central concept within our school community and is recognised by school leaders, management and staff.
* There is high staff morale where staff are interested and invested in supporting the wellbeing of all of the children.
* We have a number of staff members who have an abundance of experience in GAA in particular and who themselves have performed at a high level. These staff members offer their lunch times and time outside of school hours to train school GAA teams. Our school teams have performed extremely well over the years in both the Cumann na mBunscol and Fingal Leagues. This promotes a very positive attitude around physical activity in our school.
* The school has established positive links with various local coaches who can attend our school and offer their expert coaching knowledge to help promote positive physical wellbeing (e.g. GAA, rugby, athletics, rounders).
* Our school has appropriate wellbeing policies in place, e.g. Bí Cineálta – Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, Critical Incident Policy, RSE Policy and SPHE Plan.
* Our school Sports Day traditionally encourage both competitive and non-competitive physical activity.
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| * Older classes helping younger classes
* Active Schools
* Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation
* Use of the pitch at yard time
* School Assemblies
* School matches
* Break times
* Healthy eating
* Sports training for girls and boys – Gaelic football, hurling, camogie, athletics, soccer, rounders, five aside indoor soccer, rugby, skipping workshops
* Choir
* Gardening Club
* Wellbeing – mindfulness and yoga
* Rainbows
* Anti-Bullying - Bí Cineálta
* We are a ‘Telling School’
* Daily Mile
* Fun Runs
* Credit Union Quiz teams
* Talks from Community Garda
 | * School Assemblies
* Restorative Practice
* Pitch and Nature Walk
* School Grounds
* Children are very well cared for and are known by all staff
* Occasional treats for staff
* Occasional treats for children
* Student Council
* Fundraisers for school and charities
* Supportive teams
* Share resources and ideas
* Religious festivals celebrated
* All cultures celebrated
* Rainbows
* Outside classroom
* Lego Club
* Staff Christmas Breakfast
* Social Committee
* Staff Kris Kindle
* Cyber Safety talks
* Garda Band
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**These are areas of effective practice in our school.**

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| **Areas for Improvement** |
| * We are in our second year of having a Student Council and it is working very well. We need to further embed the culture of listening to the student voice in our school and then following up on their ideas and suggestions.
* We can further expand the level of physical activity in our yards at break times by encouraging the use of the yard equipment and problem solving with the children whenever an issue arises.
* We had our first Wellbeing Week this year organised by the Special Duties Post Holder with responsibility for Wellbeing. It demonstrated the importance of wellbeing promotion to all staff and children. A Wellbeing Day for staff and pupils, once a term has been suggested.
* We continue to embed Restorative Practice into all aspects of practice and culture in our school.
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**Key Area of Curriculum and Teaching**

**Wellbeing Statements of Effective Practice for All**

* Teachers’ preparation for teaching and learning explicitly references teaching, learning and assessment approaches that promote collaborative learning, peer and self-assessment and a sense of achievement.
* Teachers design and prepare teaching/learning approaches and assessment of learning outcomes which are differentiated for children, providing adequate access, challenge and opportunities for success.
* Teachers use various teaching and assessment methods that promote a sense of achievement and differentiate their expectations to promote full participation and achievement for all children.
* Teachers are encouraged and facilitated to attend relevant CPD to meet the needs of the school population and are encouraged to incorporate and model learnings in their practice and engage in collaborative working.
* Teachers use opportunities to promote wellbeing across the curriculum.
* Throughout primary school, the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum is implemented on a mandatory basis. An SPHE Programme that has been planned in consultation with children and young people and parents is taught to every class, in accordance with the required time allocations.
* Universal, evidence-based programmes are chosen and guided by Circulars 0042/2018 (primary) to teach core social and emotional competence and to help children and young people develop coping skills to manage challenges.
* Where an extra-curricular programme is provided, the school links with community-based clubs and organisations to ensure that it is broad, accessible and inclusive.
* Schools are guided by Circulars 0042/2018 on the use of programmes/facilitators when guest speakers are invited to contribute to wellbeing promotion in the school.
* A broad range of children’s success is rewarded and celebrated to demonstrate the value the school places on all types of achievement.
* Children’s enjoyment in learning is evident and is linked to a sense of making progress and of achievement. Children are motivated to learn, and see themselves as learners, demonstrating this in their positive approach to classwork and homework.
* Wellbeing promotion within the school develops children’s awareness of mental health difficulties and information is shared about when to seek help and who to go to when distressed.

**Wellbeing Statements of Effective Practice for Some and Few**

* Teachers design and prepare for differentiated teaching methods and assessment of learning outcomes for children at risk or with additional and/or complex needs so that they experience a sense of achievement.
* Teachers attend CPD and deliver specialised and targeted programmes, selected in line with best practice and grounded in research and evidence, to individuals and/or small groups.
* The school deploys resources based on individual learning, behavioural, social and emotional needs under the Special Education Teaching Allocation model.
* A dedicated team (e.g. Student Support Team) supports all teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to implement appropriate strategies for children additional and/or complex needs, including those recommended in professional reports.
* There are opportunities for training and on-going practice support and guidance for SNAs to further build their capacity to support children with additional needs.

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| **Key Area – Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)**What is working well * There is a clear whole school approach to the teaching of the SPHE and PE curricula which have been communicated to staff.
* There are opportunities for all classes to engage with specialised coaches in order to fulfil the requirements of the various strands from the curriculum across all class levels.
* Teachers have engaged in relevant TPL over the years to help meet the needs of the children and are encouraged to share best practice and engage in collaboration.
* Teachers with greater knowledge in facilitating and organising activities which would promote wellbeing are encouraged to share their knowledge and help build a wider understanding of the importance of wellbeing across all staff members.
* Staff utilise all opportunities across the curriculum to promote wellbeing.
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| * Interesting teaching and learning methodologies
* Interesting activities when work is completed
* Art
* Competitions
* Homework
* Schoolwork
* School tours, educational and activity based
* P.E
* Student Council
* Scratch
* Lunch-time Logic
* iPads
* Computer Room
* Seomra Scéalaí
* Seachtain na Gaeilge
* Maths Week
* Science Week
* Internet Safety Day
* World Book Day
* The school is well-resourced in all curricular areas
* Class plays
* Drámaí Gaeilge
 | * Active Schools.
* Continuum of Support
* Zones of Regulation
* Purchase of new books
* Staff development provided by OIDE or other agencies
* Movement breaks
* Mindfulness tasks
* Yard Games
* Cluichí Gaeilge sa chlós
* iPads
* DEAR time
* Sports Day
* Class Level Planning
* Teacher/Teacher meetings
* Passport to Post-Primary School
* Transition from Ratoath Junior School to Ratoath Senior School
* Tin Whistle
* Coiste Gaelbhratach
* Digital Team
* STEM workshops
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**These are areas of effective practice in our school.**

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| **Areas for Improvement** |
| * There is room for improvement around the area of teaching simple playground games to the children. The knowledge amongst the children of these games seems to be lost. Some traditional games could be taught as part of PE lessons so that the children have a wider variety of active games to play at break times.
* Ta deis againn cluichí a mhúineadh trí mheán an Ghaeilge. Ta forbairt déanta againn cluichí a mhúineadh trí mheán an Ghaeilge i rith an bhliain seo le páistí ó Rang VI do na paistí i Rang a III.
* Further provide for the purchase of equipment for use at break times to ensure that there is a constant supply of balls of different sizes, skipping ropes of different lengths, hula hoops, elastics for jumping games etc.
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This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further.

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| **Key Areas** | Culture and Environment Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)  |
| **Indicators of Success** | **Culture and Environment the indicators of success are:** * Pupils and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
* The voice of the pupil, teacher and parent are heard and lead to improvements in school culture and ethos.

**Curriculum (Teaching and Learning) the indicators of success are:** * Pupils experience positive, high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, which provides opportunities for success for all.
* Pupils access curricular activities to promote their physical, social and emotional competence to enhance their overall wellbeing.
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| **Statements of Effective Practice** | **Culture and Environment** * The school recognises that wellbeing is as important for the staff as for the children and young people. Appropriate supports are put in place for staff wellbeing
* The indoor space displays works, talents and accomplishments of the pupils
* Interactions among pupils, among staff and between pupils and teachers and all staff are respectful and positive and conducive to wellbeing (LAOS 2024)
* Teachers create an inclusive, purposeful, pupil centred learning environment based on mutual respect, affirmation and trust (LAOS 2024).

**Curriculum** * A broad range of pupils’ success is rewarded and celebrated to demonstrate the value the school places on all types of achievements
* Pupils’ enjoyment in learning is evident and is often linked to a sense of making progress and of achievement. Their engagement with learning contributes to their sense of wellbeing (LAOS 2024).
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**School Improvement Plan for Ratoath Senior National School 2024 - 2025**

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| **Targets** | **Actions** | **Who is Responsible?** | **Timeframe** | **Achieved****Yes/No****Date** |
| **Culture and Environment** * The school recognises that wellbeing is as important for the staff as for the children. Appropriate supports are put in place for staff wellbeing
 | * Supports that are available to staff to support their wellbeing will be displayed in the staffroom. There will be a reminder at staff meetings of any support or upcoming events that may help support their wellbeing (e.g. Spectrum Life).
* Wellbeing events will be organised each term to help contribute to staff wellbeing. Wellbeing Week will be celebrated after the February mid-term break.
* Wellbeing activities will be promoted using our Croke Park Hours.
* Seasonal events organised, e.g. Kris Kindle, birthday cakes, celebrations
* Social gatherings etc. will be further promoted
* Student Council - We are in our second year of having a Student Council and it is working very well. We need to further embed the culture of listening to the student voice in our school and then following up with them on their ideas and suggestions.
 | * Principal
* ISM Team
* Wellbeing Special Duties Post holder
* Whole staff

* Social Committee
* Special Duties Post holder
* Whole staff
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |
| **Curriculum** * A broad range of children’s success is rewarded and celebrated to demonstrate the value the school places on all types of achievements
* The indoor space displays works, talents and accomplishments of pupils
 | * Class level assemblies will continue to be organised for the last Friday of every month. One class teacher will host the assembly, with each class taking its turn throughout the year. Success and achievements will be marked with the distribution of appropriate certificates. The class teachers will inform the children as to why a specific certificate has been awarded, using language which positively reinforces the behaviour or the achievement.
* Regular changing of internal display areas is advised to ensure that the work of all of the children is displayed throughout the year.
* Teachers should ensure to update their assembly board each month so that it is a current reflection of the achievements from each class.
 | * Principal
* ISM Team
* Class Teachers
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |
|  | **Actions** | **Who is Responsible?** | **Timeframe** | **Achieved****Yes/No****Date** |
| * Outside agencies will be involved in enhancing pupils’ physical education.
* Cricket coaches
* G.A.A. coaches
* Rugby coaches
* Skipping Workshops
* Athletics’ coaches
 | * Principal
* Special Duties Post holder
* ISM Team
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |
| * Workshops will be organised to enhance the pupils' learning experiences across different curricular areas.
* STEM workshops - all classes.
* Community Garda - talks about road safety, safety at Hallowe’en and online.
* Bicycle safety workshop
* Music workshops
* Drama workshops
* Cyber safety workshops
 | * Principal
* ISM Team
* Class Teachers
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |
| * Active homework or doing something helpful at home may be included as part of homework for June.
 | * Principal
* ISM Team
* Class Teachers
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |
| * Weather permitting – outdoor teaching and learning to take place where possible at all class levels using the outdoor classroom, the campus facilities and the Nature Walk
 | * Principal
* ISM Team
* Class Teachers
 | September 2024 - June 2025 |  |

**This document was approved by the Board of Management on May 26th 2025. It is subject to ongoing change and review.**

**Monitoring**

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| **Strategies and Approaches** | **Who is Responsible?** | **Additional Information** |
| Feedback at meetings | Post holder with responsibility for Wellbeing | Always on the agenda at staff meetings |
| Check-in with Principal | Post holder with responsibility for Wellbeing | Always on the agenda at ISM team meetings |
| Student Council – check in with classes re. other activities | Post holders with responsibility for Wellbeing and the Student Council | Always on the agenda at staff meetings |
| Feedback from parents | Post holder with responsibility for Wellbeing |  |

**Evaluation**

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| **Criteria for Success** | **Are we making progress?** | **Evaluation Tools (How will we know?)** |
| Positive feedback |  |  |
| Staff feedback |  |  |
| Pipil feedback |  |  |

**Necessary adjustments throughout the evaluation process**

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| **As we monitored, did we have to adjust targets? Did we need to change or adapt actions?**  |
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**Target achieved**

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| **Target (original and modified)** | **Achieved Yes/No** | **Date Achieved** |
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