Ten actions that schools can undertake to promote well-being of a school community

Within the school context, positive mental health promotion should focus on enhancing protective factors that contribute to the social and emotional growth, and general well-being of young people.

The following key statements are a guide to promoting well-being and mental health in schools:

1. Developing and maintaining a safe, caring culture and climate within the school where a sense of belonging and connectedness is fostered.

2. Building positive relationships between teachers and children to promote participation, social interaction and pro-social behaviour.

3. Adopting a whole-school approach to health promotion, where health is promoted by all and not just by a few members of staff.

4. Actively involving children, their parents/guardians and the wider community in developing and implementing school policies to support mental health and health promotion.

5. Supporting and implementing a well-planned, consistent and integrated SPHE curriculum to enable children enhance their coping, resilience, communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills.

6. Developing whole-school systems and structures to support the early identification of children experiencing social, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties.

7. Actively involving, supporting and encouraging children’s participation in extra-curricular activities.

8. Fostering a whole-school ethos that accepts and values diversity within the pupil and staff population.

9. Providing easy access to information for pupils and staff on supports available to them within the school and wider community.

10. Facilitating access to continuing professional development for school staff on the promotion of the mental health and well-being of children.