

# The Wellbeing specification | Information for parents

## What is the Wellbeing specification?

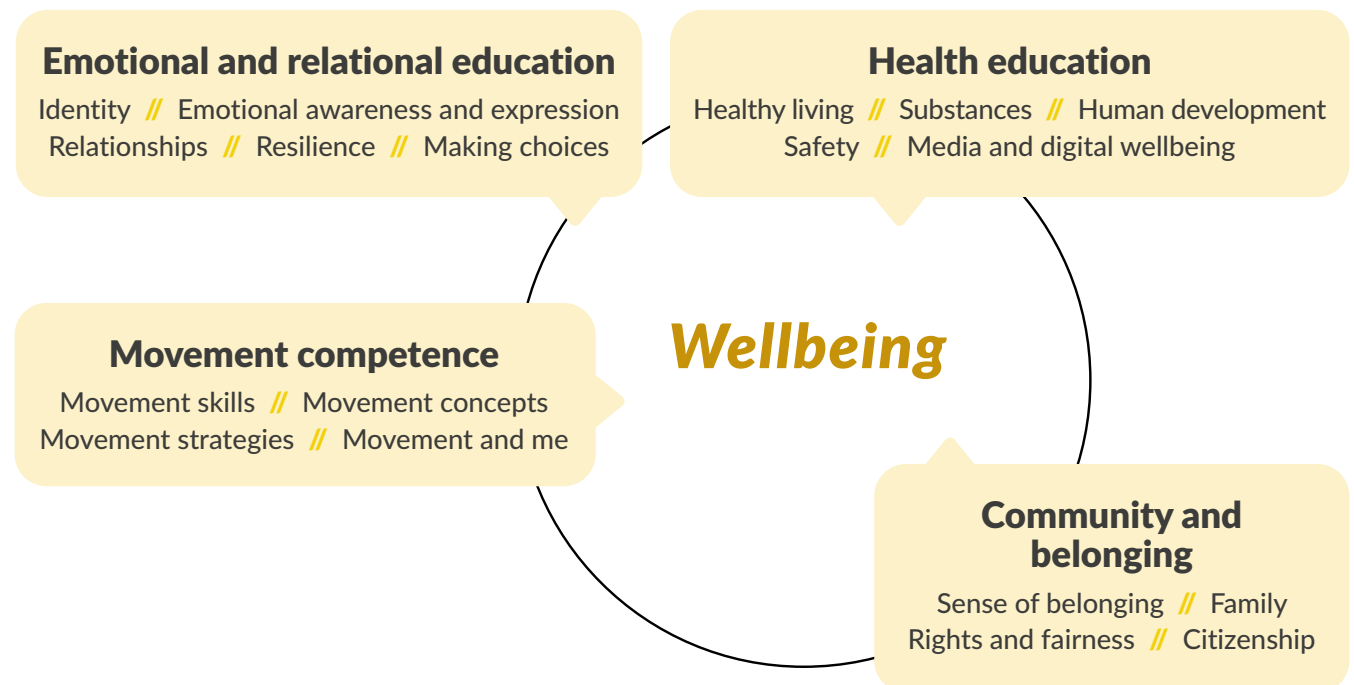
The *Wellbeing* specification is part of the redeveloped *Primary School Curriculum* that helps support every aspect of your child's development. It brings together Physical Education (PE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) to help children build the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to live active, healthy and happy lives.

## What will my child learn about in Wellbeing?

Learning in the *Wellbeing* specification is grouped into four main areas, called Strands. Each Strand focuses on key things children need to learn. The Strands are:

- Movement competence
- Emotional and relational education
- Health education
- Community and belonging

Each Strand is divided into smaller parts called Strand Units, which focus on more specific areas of learning. Topics are introduced and built on gradually in age and developmentally appropriate ways.



## Movement competence

This Strand helps children build their movement skills and learn how to move in different ways, helping them to enjoy being active.

*Examples of learning include:*

- Building basic movement skills like running, jumping, balancing, rolling, catching and kicking
- Understanding how their body moves and becoming more aware of different actions that the body can do
- Learning how to solve problems and use simple tactics during games and activities
- Finding ways to challenge themselves at the right level for their ability
- Thinking about how they are improving and what they enjoy about being active
- Exploring ways to be active in their class, school and community
- Building confidence and motivation to enjoy being active
- Taking part in a wide range of physical activities.

## Emotional and relational education

This Strand supports children in understanding their feelings, relationships and how to work with others.

*Examples of learning include:*

- Developing a strong sense of self and feeling good about who they are
- Respecting differences and recognising what makes each person unique
- Understanding and naming their own feelings, managing emotions in healthy ways and showing empathy and kindness to others
- Learning about and applying the features of teamwork
- Building and maintaining friendships and other relationships
- Learning how to deal with disagreements and conflict
- Learning about attraction and sexual orientation (5th and 6th class only)
- Understanding harmful behaviours like bullying or abuse and knowing how to seek help
- Taking part in teamwork activities that involve challenge, risk and adventure to build resilience
- Developing strategies to cope with everyday challenges
- Making thoughtful and responsible decisions.

## Health education

This Strand helps children learn how to take care of their body, stay safe and make healthy choices.

*Examples of learning include:*

- Understanding what it means to live a balanced, healthy life – including eating well, staying active, getting rest and spending time outdoors
- Learning how to look after their body, including the names of body parts and personal hygiene
- Building a respectful attitude to their own body and others'
- Understanding the changes that happen during puberty and learning about reproduction
- Learning how to stay safe in different situations and how to ask a trusted adult for help
- Exploring the risks of substance misuse
- Using media and technology safely, respectfully and responsibly.

## Community and belonging

This Strand helps children feel connected to others and understand their role in the wider world.

*Examples of learning include:*

- Feeling a sense of belonging and connection with family, friends, school and community
- Understanding that families can look different and all deserve respect
- Learning about fairness, rights and treating others equally, for example in friendships, games and fair play in PE
- Making group decisions and learning to navigate different views
- Taking part in cultural sports and exploring how these can build a sense of belonging
- Recognising and standing up to unfairness, discrimination or stereotypes
- Understanding how they can make a difference in their school and community
- Taking responsibility and acting as caring, active citizens.

## How do children learn in the *Wellbeing* specification?

Learning in the *Wellbeing* specification is designed to be fun and interesting for children at every stage. The aim is to create a positive, welcoming classroom where every child feels included and valued for who they are – supporting all children to thrive and flourish and realise their full potential.

Teachers will use different ways of teaching, depending on what the children are learning, the school setting, and the children's needs and interests. When children are learning, they will have the chance to talk, explore, try things out, move and think about what they are learning. Children will learn in many different places, both indoors and outdoors.

In PE, they will take part in a wide range of activities to help them learn in an active and balanced way. The *Wellbeing* specification includes seven PE activity areas: Active living; Aquatics; Athletics; Dance; Games; Gymnastics; Outdoor and adventure education.

## Is the same *Wellbeing* specification taught across all schools?

Yes, the *Wellbeing* specification is part of the national curriculum and is taught in all primary and special schools. It sets out what children should learn and experience at each stage. However, schools can decide how and when to teach the different topics, including the resources they will use. When making these decisions, schools take into account the age and needs of the children, as well as what works best in their school.

## What is the role of parents in the *Wellbeing* specification?

Parents are their child's first and most important teachers. The *Wellbeing* specification recognises that supporting a child's wellbeing is a shared job between families and schools.

Working together and keeping good two-way communication helps build trust and creates a positive learning environment for children. Teachers and parents can share what they notice and keep each other updated on how the child is doing. Parents can also let the teacher know if there's anything going on that might affect their child's learning or wellbeing.


Parents can support their child's learning in *Wellbeing* by talking about what they're learning in school and encouraging it at home through simple conversations and activities.


## Where can I find out more information?

Parents can find more information about the *Wellbeing* specification at [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie). You might like to read our 'Frequently Asked Questions' document.

Each school will also explain how they teach and support Wellbeing in their school plans and policies. If you have any questions about the *Wellbeing* specification, you're encouraged to talk to your child's teacher or the school principal.

**You can also contact NCCA with any questions:**

 +353 1 661 7177

 [info@ncca.ie](mailto:info@ncca.ie)

## More detailed information for each Strand Unit

Strand: Movement competence	
<b>Movement skills</b>	Children explore and develop many different ways of moving, like running, jumping, balancing, twisting, catching and throwing. As they go through primary school, they improve at these skills by practising, building confidence and focusing on participating and doing their best. They also learn how to change or adjust their movements depending on the game, activity or task.
<b>Movement concepts</b>	Children learn about how their bodies move. They explore things like the shapes they can make with their bodies and how they can move in different ways. They also learn how to move safely and smoothly in the space around them and how to move with other people, like following a pattern or working together in a group.
<b>Movement strategies</b>	Children learn how to solve problems and use simple tactics and strategies during physical activities. They practise choosing challenges that are the right level for themselves and others. As they grow in confidence, they learn how to change and use these strategies in different games and activities, focusing on joining in and making their own progress.
<b>Movement and me</b>	Children think about their own movement experiences, both on their own and with others. They talk about how trying their best and making progress is important. They also notice what they are learning and how it helps them move better. They think about ways to stay active in class, at school and in their community, helping them understand and take responsibility for their own movement journey.

## Strand: Emotional and relational education

<b>Identity</b>	Children think about who they are and learn to feel good about themselves. They explore what makes them special, including their abilities, talents and interests. This helps them grow in confidence and understand themselves better, while also learning to accept and respect how other people can be the same or different.
<b>Emotional awareness and expression</b>	Children learn to notice their own feelings and the feelings of others. They practise ways to manage and express their emotions. They also learn skills to help them manage their feelings in different situations and become more caring and understanding towards others.
<b>Relationships</b>	Children learn about the important people in their lives, like family, friends and teammates. They build skills to help them make and keep healthy relationships, such as showing respect, giving and getting consent, talking and listening well and working together. They also learn how to spot harmful behaviour, like bullying or abuse, and what to do to stay safe. As they get older, children learn how to deal with changes in relationships, peer pressure and disagreements in a healthy way. In Stage 4 (5th and 6th class), they are introduced to the idea of sexual orientation and begin to understand that it means being attracted to other people.
<b>Resilience</b>	Children are encouraged to see learning and challenges as chances to grow. They build confidence and learn to keep going, even when something is difficult. They are supported to take healthy risks, try new things and know it's okay to ask for help. Learning ways to cope with stress and bounce back from setbacks helps support their wellbeing.
<b>Making choices</b>	Children learn about the choices they make each day and what can influence those choices, including things they can't control. They are encouraged to take healthy risks, set goals they can reach and use strategies to help them make good, responsible decisions. This helps them understand that their actions have consequences and builds a sense of responsibility.

## Strand: Health education

<b>Healthy living</b>	<p>Children learn how to take care of their wellbeing by living a balanced life. This includes being active, spending time outdoors, eating well, having good hygiene, getting enough sleep, and taking time to rest and relax. They think about how their needs change as they grow. They also explore different things their bodies can do and reflect on how it feels and changes when they are active.</p>
<b>Substances</b>	<p>Children learn that some substances, like medicine or sunscreen, can help keep us safe and healthy when used properly. They also learn that some substances around them can be harmful or dangerous and why it's important to follow safety rules.</p> <p>As they get older, children learn about different substances like vapes, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs or medicines. They find out how these substances can affect the body and learn that some are illegal, while others are only legal for adults over 18. They also talk about why people might choose to use these substances and learn ways to handle peer pressure or other situations where they might feel pressured to try them.</p>
<b>Human development</b>	<p>Children reflect on how their body changes as they grow and that people grow and develop in different ways. They learn to name body parts using the correct terms. They learn about body boundaries, private and public behaviours, and that some body areas are private.</p> <p>Children learn about the human life cycle, including how babies grow and develop. In Stage 4 (5th and 6th class), they learn about human reproduction, including sexual intercourse, conception, pregnancy and birth.</p> <p>From 3rd class onwards, children learn about the physical, social and emotional changes that happen during puberty. They learn that these changes are different for everyone and that this is completely normal. They are encouraged to have a positive attitude towards their growing bodies and to talk to a trusted adult if they have questions or need support.</p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p>Children learn how to stay safe in different situations, like crossing the road, during PE, when they are near water, or on the farm. In the early years, they learn simple safety rules, how to notice when something might be unsafe, and how to practise ways to stay safe. As they grow older, they become more confident and start to take more responsibility for keeping themselves safe.</p>
<b>Media and digital wellbeing</b>	<p>Children learn how to use media and digital technology safely and responsibly. They begin to understand how things like advertising can influence their thoughts and choices, and they learn to think carefully about what they see and hear. They reflect on their own use of technology, recognising both the positives and the challenges. They learn why it's important to keep a healthy balance between online and offline activities. They also develop safety skills and strategies to help them make smart, safe choices when using digital technology.</p>

## Strand: Community and belonging

<b>Sense of belonging</b>	Children build connections with others and with the places around them, helping them feel they belong in their class, school and community. They learn to respect and value the differences between people and explore how everyone can help create a kind and inclusive place to learn. They also learn how taking part in sports, games and cultural activities can help people feel included and part of a group.
<b>Family</b>	Children learn about their own family and understand that families can look different for everyone. They talk about how families show love and support and what makes a healthy family relationship. They also learn that families can go through changes, like moving house, having a new baby, or dealing with loss, and think about how people can support each other during these times. As they grow older, children begin to see how their family can shape their values and sense of who they are.
<b>Rights and fairness</b>	Children learn about rights, fairness and the idea that everyone should be treated equally. They learn why fair play is important in PE and games. They explore what fairness and equality mean in their own lives and the lives of others and learn about laws that help protect people's rights. In the senior classes, they explore examples of stereotypes, unfair treatment and discrimination, and learn how people can stand up for human rights and fairness. This helps them become active citizens who care about fairness and respect for everyone.
<b>Citizenship</b>	Children learn how they can take responsibility and help out at home, in school and in the community. They get the chance to take part in democratic activities, share ideas and make decisions together. They are encouraged to listen to different opinions with respect. They also explore ways people can help create a fair, kind and inclusive community.