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Section 1: What is a Health Promoting School?

In a Health Promoting School (HPS), health is defined in its broadest sense and refers to social, emotional, mental, spiritual, cognitive and physical health. The school recognises that these dimensions of health are interconnected and are influenced by the school environment.

Health Promotion in a school setting could be defined as any activity undertaken that aims to improve and protect the health of everyone in the school community. The HPS strives to make school a positive experience for pupils, staff and visitors by paying special attention to all aspects of health in every area of the school. The whole school community takes action and places priority on creating an environment that will have the best possible impact on the health and learning of pupils, staff and parents/guardians. Through whole school consultation and involvement, the HPS aims to actively engage everyone in the whole school community.

The Health Promoting School is not so much about a goal to be achieved, but rather a process that develops and grows with the ever-changing life of the school.

What are the aims of a Health Promoting School?

A Health Promoting School aims to:

- Foster the healthy development of the whole school community;
- Provide a framework for developing health promotion initiatives in a way that supports and enhances the implementation of the curriculum;
- Support the planning, implementation and evaluation of health-related activities under the school development planning process;
- Enhance the links between schools and their communities.

‘A health promoting school can be characterised as a school which is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy place in which to live, learn and work.’

(WHO, 1997)
What are the benefits of a Health Promoting School?

Ongoing evaluations from the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS) report the following benefits:

- Better learning outcomes for pupils
- Improved staff well-being
- A more co-ordinated approach to social, physical and environmental needs
- Increased pupil self-esteem
- Lowered incidence of bullying
- Safer and more secure school environment
- Better understanding of schools’ health aims
- Improved relationships within the school
- Increased involvement of parents/guardians
- Better use of external agencies

Furthermore, evidence suggests that:

- Both education and health outcomes are improved if the school uses the HPS approach in addressing health related issues in an educational context;
- Multifaceted approaches are more effective in achieving health and educational outcomes than classroom only or single intervention approaches;
- The factors affecting learning are mostly influenced by socio-emotional factors, for example, pupil-teacher and teacher-teacher interactions, school culture, classroom climate, peer group relationships and so on;
- A whole school approach, where there is coherence between the school’s policies and practices that promote social inclusion and commitment to education, facilitates improved learning outcomes, increases emotional well-being and reduces health risk behaviours.
For the HPS model to become a way of working for the school, it must:

- be owned by the whole school community
- fit with the organisation and structure of the school
- be consistent with legislative requirements
- be presented in a language that is understood by all.

The Four Key Elements of a Health Promoting School

Developing as a HPS involves putting in place policies and practices that enable the school community to develop sustainable programmes of action. It involves the whole school community coming together and working towards better health for all. This process encourages schools to focus on four key Elements as outlined in figure 1.

Figure 1: The Four Key Elements of a Health Promoting School

A HPS aims to make progress in each of these key Elements. Each Element of a HPS influences and supports the other and the whole school is stronger and more robust as a result of this interlinked, comprehensive approach.
Environment (Physical and Social)

The school environment has both physical and social aspects. Each school has a distinctive atmosphere which can often be sensed within minutes of entering the school. This atmosphere is determined not only by the physical appearance of the school, which obviously has an impact on health and well-being, but is also reflected in the extent to which the school takes care of the social, emotional and physical needs of those who learn, work and visit there. The physical aspect of the school environment can therefore be described as the facilities and the appearance of the school and how the school is maintained. The social aspect of the school environment is ‘felt’ rather than seen, and is evident in the quality of the relationships among pupils, staff and visitors to the school. It encourages individuals to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.

Curriculum and Learning

In a HPS, health is recognised as an essential element of the formal and informal curriculum. In particular, the effective implementation of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is important to the development of a HPS. The quality of teaching and learning and the relationships fostered within the classroom play a key role in contributing to the health and well-being of the school community. In a HPS, opportunities to promote health are sought, not just in SPHE, but throughout the curriculum. For example, physical activity in PE (Physical Education), rights and responsibilities in SESE (Social, Environmental and Scientific Education).

Policy and Planning

Policies are written documents that support the everyday running of the school through their consistent implementation on a day-to-day basis. They form the background script by which the school navigates its way. The most effective policies are those that have been developed in consultation with representatives from the whole school community, rather than those that are developed by one or two people and then ‘imposed’. The communication of school policies and what they mean is vitally important for effective implementation. Developing as a HPS involves the formation, implementation and regular review of health-related policies and practices. These health-related policies are developed and implemented in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

Policies supporting the HPS include:

- Healthy eating policy
- Physical activity policy
- Code of behaviour
- RSE policy
- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Anti-bullying policy
- Substance use policy
- Additional policies that address the broader aspects of health (Health and Safety, Child Protection and Critical Incidents).

Partnerships

Developing strong partnerships with parents/guardians, outside agencies and the wider community is an important part of a HPS. The school recognises the role that families and guardians have in supporting pupils’ learning and it works to strengthen the ties between the school and the wider family.
HPS develop and foster partnerships within the wider school community to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning. This involves building supportive partnerships with the local community as well as local and national agencies.

Once a HPS Team is established within the school and they have identified a priority area of work, it will become clearer who else needs to be involved both internally and externally.

**Criteria for a Health Promoting School**

Criteria which are based on European HPS quality standards have been identified that support schools to develop as a HPS. These are internationally recognised quality criteria and they form the benchmark of a HPS (IUHPE, 2008). This handbook document identifies nine criteria that are grouped under the four key Elements of a HPS. These in turn can be linked to the themes employed by the DES in terms of School Development Planning and Whole-School Evaluation.

**Environment**

These criteria incorporate both the physical and social environment.

**Criterion 1**

Promoting a healthy school involves the provision of a safe, secure and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff and members of the whole school community, both in and out of school.

**Criterion 2**

Promoting a healthy school encourages and promotes self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute to school life. The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their own health.

**Criterion 3**

Promoting a healthy school involves the creation of a climate in which good relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.

**Curriculum and Learning**

This refers to formal and informal teaching.

**Criterion 4**

Promoting a healthy school involves the planning and implementation of a curriculum that promotes health and well-being, adheres to statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils.

**Criterion 5**

Promoting a healthy school provides challenges for pupils and staff through a wide range of physical, academic, social and community activities.

**Policy and Planning**

Effective policy development involves consultation and collaboration.

**Criterion 6**

Promoting a healthy school involves the formulation, implementation and regular review of health-related policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

**Criterion 7**

The whole school community should be encouraged to participate in the development of policies where possible and appropriate.
Partnerships
This involves developing links and working together towards agreed goals.

Criterion 8  Promoting a healthy school engages parents/guardians, other schools and the local community in a range of health-related initiatives.

Criterion 9  Promoting a healthy school involves the efficient use of appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning.

Please see diagram below as an example of a school working on the theme of healthy eating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/topic</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Curriculum &amp; Learning</th>
<th>Policy &amp; Planning</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Eating</td>
<td>Create school garden grow fruit vegs Carry out recycling</td>
<td>SESC SPHE PE energy in energy out Geography link with food grown in different countries</td>
<td>Healthy eating policy Healthy eating guidelines No fizzy drinks, bottled water etc</td>
<td>Link with local growers/farmers create partnership approach with local industry shops healthy foods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do we know what to work on?

The priority area(s) that a school decides to focus on is determined following a period of consultation with the whole school community. This consultation can be undertaken in a number of ways taking into consideration the number of staff, audience, pupils’ age, parental involvement, access to IT. Tools to support the consultation phase are available on www.healthpromotion.ie. The priority area identified for progress must demonstrate action across the four key elements of a HPS – Environment, Curriculum and Learning, Policy and Planning, and Partnerships. As these key Elements interact and influence each other, working not only within them but also between them is essential to the successful implementation of the chosen priority area. It is also important as part of action planning that the school refers to the national HPS Criteria for guidance and direction.
Section 3: The Health Promoting School Process

The stages involved in developing as a Health Promoting School

In the HPS model, how the goal is achieved is as important as the goal itself. Schools that fully embrace this process (as illustrated in Figure 2 below) transform their health related focus from a project completed by a small group of people to something that has the potential to impact on the whole school community. Working through the process in a methodical way encourages whole school commitment, involvement and participation.

In this process, the school community works through a series of stages. Each stage is structured, carries its own importance and builds on previous stages. Through using a structured process, the HPS concept becomes embedded in the school setting. Involvement and commitment from the whole school community at each stage is required for the process to work effectively. This HPS process recognises that sustainable change takes time to achieve.

Figure 2: The Stages in the Health Promoting School Process
Stage 1: Expression of interest
Schools express an interest in becoming involved in the HPS process by contacting their local Health Service Executive (HSE) Health Promotion Department.

Stage 2: Meeting with principal and key staff
A local Health Promotion Officer will arrange a meeting with the principal and other key staff. The purpose of this meeting is to outline what is involved in developing as a HPS. The Health Promoting School Agreement Form (Appendix 2) is discussed at this meeting and is left with the principal and staff for them to consider fully before deciding if the school will become involved.

Stage 3: Whole staff presentation
If the principal and key staff support the idea of becoming involved then a whole staff presentation is given to introduce and explain the HPS initiative to the rest of the staff.

Stage 4: School agreement and appointment of co-ordinator
If the whole school decides to engage with the HPS process, the school nominates a HPS co-ordinator (and assistant co-ordinator if possible) to facilitate the HPS process within the school and signs the agreement form. The HPS co-ordinator will be the key contact in the school for all health promotion activities and will receive ongoing support and training from the Health Promotion Department. (See page 15 for more detail on the role of the co-ordinator.)

Stage 5: Health Promoting School team established
The co-ordinator will establish a HPS team from within the school community to support, plan and develop the initiative. Ideally, the HPS team should be representative of the whole school community, including pupils, staff and parents/guardians. An important part of the HPS process is building a ‘portfolio’ of work and this is an ideal stage to begin. (See page 18 for more detail on the portfolio.) The portfolio is a record not only of the work done and achieved, but also the process of the work and how it was achieved.

Stage 6: Raising awareness and consultation
Raising awareness of the HPS concept within the school community is an essential part of the HPS process. Awareness can be raised in many ways and will be decided by the HPS team. Some examples include hanging HPS banners, distributing HPS leaflets, using email and other social media, or discussing the HPS concept at assembly or in class.

Consulting with pupils, staff and parents/guardians is the most effective way to raise awareness as well as gaining valuable insight into what is working well and what might need further attention. Following the consultation process, the HPS team collates the responses into key priority areas and these are then communicated back to the whole school community.
Stage 7: Setting priorities and developing an action plan
The HPS team will identify priority areas for action from the results of the consultation process. These priority areas will form the basis of the Health Promoting School Action Plan which will be implemented over an agreed time frame. (See Appendix 3 for action plan.) Initially the school will focus their attention on one or two priority areas. The action plan should incorporate work across the four key Elements of a Health Promoting School – namely Environment, Curriculum, Policies and Planning, and Partnerships. At this stage, the school should ensure that their priorities and action plan are in line with the national HPS Criteria (Appendix 2). The action plan, once drawn up, is submitted to the Health Promotion Officer who will review it and provide guidance and support.

Stage 8: Implement action plan
The action plan is implemented over an agreed timeframe and is assessed and self-evaluated on an ongoing basis. Whole school support is vital to the plan’s implementation, so establishing and maintaining good communication within the school about ongoing activities and future activities is crucial. Planning for the implementation of the HPS should happen in the context of the School Development Plan.

Stage 9: Applying for HPS recognition
At the end of an agreed timeframe, the HPS team completes an application form for recognition as a Health Promoting School (Appendix 4). This will allow the HPS team, on behalf of the school, to review and evaluate the work they have carried out and the processes they have undertaken. This should be communicated to the wider school community. At this stage, the HPS team submits the application form together with their portfolio of work to the Health Promotion Department for review.

Stage 10: Recognition and celebration
Developing as a HPS is a continuous process, not a short-term project. It is important to acknowledge work done, to highlight goals achieved and to celebrate. The application form and the school’s portfolio are reviewed by an agreed review body with representatives from health and education and, if they agree that the school has made sufficient progress across the four key Elements of a HPS, the HSE will formally recognise the school as a HPS. This process is done in a spirit of partnership with and support for the school in its efforts. To acknowledge and recognise the school’s work, a celebration event is organised. This event is an opportunity for pupils, staff, parents/guardians and members of the wider community to participate, celebrate and recognise the work that the school has achieved as part of the HPS process.

Stage 11: Reviewing and planning for next phase
Becoming a Health Promoting School is a cyclical process that follows a pattern of ‘review-plan-do-review’. Before beginning the next phase of development where the school progresses to a new priority area of work, it is important that the HPS team reflect on the previous stages in terms of what worked well, what didn’t work so well and what could be done differently (see Appendix 5 for Self-Reflection template). When the HPS team has completed this reflection and assessment of work done they can then begin planning for the new phase. Schools may decide to undertake another consultation to choose their next priority area of work or they might choose a theme that emerged from their initial consultation. As well as developing a new priority area of work, it is important that the actions from previous years are also maintained.
REMEMBER

There is no single end-point to the HPS but rather a cycle of review-plan-do-review which helps ensure that participating schools reflect, sustain and build on earlier work.
How long does the HPS process take?

Each school is asked to commit to the HPS process for an initial period of 2 – 3 years, bearing in mind that it takes time to develop, implement and embed actions in any school. Stages 6 – 11 in Figure 2, page 9, represents one cycle of the process. Schools usually work on one or two priority areas per phase and the timeframe for each cycle is determined by the school.

What is the purpose of consultation and how do we go about consulting with the whole school community?

Carrying out a survey or needs assessment is an important part of the HPS process because it raises awareness amongst the whole school community.

The consultation process:

• Gives staff, pupils and parents/guardians an opportunity to voice their opinions;
• Helps with prioritising and action planning;
• Gives the HPS team a mandate and focus for their work.

The survey doesn’t need to be an in-depth statistical analysis; rather it is simply a tool to assist the school in prioritising areas of work that have been chosen by the whole school community. Sample health-promoting school surveys are available on www.healthpromotion.ie. Schools can adapt these surveys or develop their own survey methods to suit their own school’s needs.

Prior to the consultation process, the HPS team will need to consider the following:

• How many pupils, staff and parents/guardians will be consulted? For example, will they involve everyone or representatives of the various groups.
• How will the consultation be carried out and who can help?
• When will the consultation be carried out?
• How will the results be collated and who will do this?
• How will the results be presented and communicated back to the whole school community? (pupils from the team should be involved in doing this.)
• How does the team get ideas and suggestions throughout the process to help them formulate actions?

Who should be included in the HPS team?

Ideally the HPS team should be representative of the whole school community. Therefore there should be representatives from pupils, the parent body, staff and, where appropriate, other members of the local community. Schools have autonomy about deciding who becomes a member of the HPS team, for example some schools may elect to pull children’s names out of a hat while others might ask pupils to apply for the position. Some schools may decide to invite particular parents/guardians with relevant or practical skills to join the group while other schools might take all those who are willing to support the process. The consultation process should in most cases have identified interested parties and those that have put themselves forward should be invited to participate. About 8 people approximately is a good size for an efficient HPS team (2 staff members, 2/3 parents/guardians and 4/5 pupils).

How often should the HPS team meet?

It is important that the HPS team meets regularly to progress actions. In a busy school environment, scheduling these meetings will be important to ensure that they happen. Setting future meeting dates and times at the end of meetings is essential so that progress can be monitored and work done assessed. Continuous monitoring and assessment of the work through regular meetings is important because people might need support, problems may need to be addressed and changes may be required to keep the process flowing and on track.

What should be discussed at HPS team meetings?

This depends on what stage the process is at. Initially there might be a need to discuss how best to promote HPS within the school community or the logistics of the consultation stage. As the school moves through the action plan, some regular pointers for discussion at team meetings might be:

• What is our progress to date? (include updates from those who had assigned tasks.)
• What is working well? How do we know? What evidence do we have?
• What is not working so well? How can this be addressed?
• Is everyone in the school being kept informed about what is happening? If not, how can we address this?
• Is information being gathered and recorded for the portfolio?
• Are the actions impacting on the whole school community? If not, how can we address this?
• Are the efforts of the HPS team and individuals being acknowledged within the school community?
• When should the team meet again?
• Who needs to do what before the next meeting?
What is the role of the HPS co-ordinator?

The role of the co-ordinator includes:

- To be the lead person responsible for HPS in the school, in some schools they may have two co-ordinators or an assistant co-ordinator.
- To recruit, set up and establish a HPS team which is representative of the whole school community.
- To inform the whole school community about the HPS undertaking with the assistance and support of the HPS team.
- To promote the HPS concept throughout the whole school on an ongoing basis and keep staff, parents/guardians and pupils updated on progress with the assistance and support of the HPS team.
- To schedule regular HPS team meetings.
- To assist the HPS team in organising themselves (for example, encouraging pupils to take on roles and responsibilities such as taking minutes, recording actions, promoting the HPS).
- To oversee the completion of the consultation, action planning and self-evaluation with the assistance and support of the HPS team.
- To link with other staff and structures within the school community.
- To liaise with the Health Promotion Department regarding the HPS.
- To oversee the completion of the HPS portfolio.

The co-ordinator will be supported throughout the process by a Health Promotion Officer from the HSE.

Who should lead the HPS team meetings?

While the HPS co-ordinator is the lead person responsible for the HPS process in the school, they may not necessarily always lead the HPS team meetings. The HPS co-ordinator’s role is largely one of facilitation, and a non-hierarchical approach should be taken insofar as possible. Initially, this might be a challenge for all concerned. Parents/guardians and pupils on the team need to be supported and encouraged to participate as fully as possible.

One way of doing this is to assign roles of responsibility, perhaps on a rotating basis, such as chairperson, secretary and treasurer (if the team has a budget to work with). It is really important when assigning roles that people feel comfortable and confident with the task they are given. People need to have a clear idea of what the role entails and what is expected of them. It should be emphasised that everyone on the HPS team is important to the success of the HPS and no one person should have to do all the work. Everyone should leave team meetings with a clear idea of who needs to do what and by when.

Pupils are very able to take on tasks independently. Before adult members of the HPS team take on tasks or feel they have to take on tasks, they should ask themselves: ‘could a pupil do this?’ or ‘how could I encourage and empower a pupil to take on this task?’ A shared workload will encourage ownership of the process by the whole team and make the experience more democratic and empowering.
How do we know what to work on?

The health-related theme(s) that a school decides to work on is determined by the school community following a period of consultation. During the consultation period members of the school community are provided with an opportunity to indicate areas they would like the HPS team to consider for prioritisation. The HPS team will use this feedback, as well as the information gathered from the needs assessment to identify priority areas for action. Whatever theme the HPS team decide to work on, action on this theme needs to be evident across the four key Elements of a HPS (Environment, Curriculum and Learning, Policies and Planning and Partnerships).

What is pupil participation and why is it important in a HPS?

Children and young people are not the adults of tomorrow but the citizens of today... It is Government policy to promote the participation of children and young people in civic society. This commitment is in line with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Goal 1 of the National Children’s Strategy is that ‘children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) is committed to implementing this goal by promoting and supporting participation by children and young people in issues that affect them.’

(Part of the Children and Youth Affairs website)

Pupil participation, in its broadest sense, is ‘children and young people taking part in making decisions on issues that affect their lives’. Acknowledging that children and young people spend a considerable period of their youth in the school setting, and, that school has an impact in terms of shaping who pupils are and who they become, promoting participation and the pupil voice in the school setting is a very important part of a HPS.

What are the benefits of pupil participation?

Involvement in decision-making brings direct benefits to children and young people themselves. They gain by learning skills such as teamwork, negotiating, problem solving and influencing. They obtain knowledge of how policy is made and how organisations work. They learn to engage with adults as partners and their confidence and self-esteem may be enhanced.

(Part of the Children and Youth Affairs website)
Participation by children and young people increases their sense of being valued and their sense of belonging and connectedness. In a school setting, feeling connected to the school and valued within the school community will impact on a pupil's ability to learn and reach their potential, as well as impact on their health and well-being. A setting wherein meaningful participation is encouraged also benefits because policies and plans worked on collaboratively might be easier to implement and are much more likely to meet the needs of the whole school community.

What does participation look like in a Health Promoting School?

Effective pupil participation is at the core of a HPS. Participation does not mean simply being ‘at the table’, which is tokenism, but rather being actively involved in all aspects of the HPS. Pupils have a valuable contribution to make in terms of promoting the HPS within the school community, providing a young perspective on the chosen theme, generating ideas, taking on tasks and shaping actions. Pupils have a unique perspective on their own lives and the pupil voice can very often reflect a more accurate picture of issues within a school community than that which is perceived by others. Pupils are best placed to come up with solutions to problems or point out why ‘adult led’ ideas might not work for them and their peers.

There are different ways that pupils can participate in the HPS. All pupils can take part in the initial consultation and needs assessment. They can be facilitated to contribute on an ongoing basis throughout the process by way of a suggestion box, for example, and they can take part in activities throughout the year. Having pupils collaborate with school staff and parents/guardians through participation on the HPS team promotes respectful relationships within the school environment and promotes a cohesive school community that works together for the benefit of all.

Where do we begin with pupil participation?

Participation in a school setting can present various challenges. Pupils might come up with ideas that may seem unworkable within the school system and structure, so implementation of any actions usually requires the support of staff and senior management.

Best practice would therefore suggest that, for an honest and effective working relationship to exist between adults and young people, the purpose of the work and the level of influence they will have should be made clear to pupils from the start. It is recognised that some schools are already more participative than others and already have defined structures, that encourage participation and support the pupil voice. What is important, therefore, is that the schools involved in the HPS initiative acknowledge the value and importance of having pupils involved in a meaningful way and look for opportunities within the HPS process and the wider school community to promote this.

How can we get parents/guardians involved?

Parents/guardians are key members of the school community and every effort should be made to engage with them. Parental representation on the HPS team is important, as is parental involvement throughout the HPS process. A key area of the HPS process is that of ‘partnerships’ and parents/guardians are integral to this. Involving parents/guardians on the HPS team ensures that links between home and school are strengthened. When working on a particular action area, the HPS team should consider how they can engage with parents/guardians and what would have most impact. A parental representative will have great ideas on how best to link with other parents/guardians.
What is the HPS Portfolio and what should it contain?

The ‘Portfolio’ is a record of the HPS work that has been done in the school. It is a way of honouring that work and of acknowledging the time and effort that has been involved in the HPS process. The portfolio is submitted when the school nominates itself for HPS recognition. It is an integral part of the assessment procedure. The portfolio should map the journey of the HPS work within the school. Therefore, schools are advised to build their portfolios as they go along, rather than leave it until the end of the process.

The portfolio should contain:

- Health Promoting Schools agreement form
- Records of all meetings
- Copy of the survey methods used or explanation of same
- Collated results of the school survey
- Copy of the action plan
- A record of how the action plan was implemented
- Photographs
- Review and assessment tools
- Self Evaluation.

Actions and progress that are documented in the portfolio should also be presented to the whole school community.

How is a Health Promoting School formally recognised as a HPS?

An application form for recognition as a Health Promoting School is included in Appendix 4. This form is completed by the HPS team when they have made sufficient progress on their HPS action plan and want to be formally recognised by the HSE for their work.

Only those within the school community can truly appreciate the extent of the work done and the impact it has made on the health and well-being of pupils, staff and parents/guardians. Schools should take time throughout the process (and prior to formal recognition by the HSE Health Promotion Department) to reflect on their progress and achievements to date. Periodically, the HPS team should reflect on and access what the school has achieved in relation to the action plan and make amendments if necessary based on best practice and with the aim of sustainable outcomes.

What happens after formal recognition?

After formal recognition, the school community reviews the work they have done, their challenges and their successes. Following this review, the school might make some changes (for example, invite new committee members, set meeting times, engage more parents/guardians, and so on) and then move into a second phase (stages 6 - 11). The HPS process is ongoing, cyclical and organic. It does not end. Themes need to be sustained and nurtured over time as do the people involved in the process.
Appendices

Appendix 1  20
National Health Promoting School Criteria

Appendix 2  21
Health Promoting School Agreement Form

Appendix 3  22
Appendix 3A Action planning guidelines
Appendix 3B Action planning template

Appendix 4  28
Application Form for recognition as a Health Promoting School

Appendix 5  36
Self-Reflection Template

You can download the appendices and other supporting information from www.healthpromotion.ie
Appendix 1: National Health Promoting School Criteria

The following criteria are adapted from the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS). These criteria will help schools to review and measure their progress in the HPS process and evaluate their health outcomes.

1 Promoting a healthy school involves the provision of a safe, secure and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff and members of the whole school community, both in and out of school.

2 Promoting a healthy school encourages and promotes self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute to school life. The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their own health.

3 Promoting a healthy school involves the creation of a climate in which good relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.

4 Promoting a healthy school involves the planning and implementation of a curriculum that promotes health and well-being, adheres to statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils.

5 Promoting a healthy school provides challenges for pupils and staff through a wide range of physical, academic, social and community activities.

6 Promoting a healthy school involves the formulation, implementation and regular review of health-related policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.

7 The whole school community should be encouraged to participate in the development of policies where possible and appropriate.

8 Promoting a healthy school engages parents/guardians, other schools and the local community in a range of health-related initiatives.

9 Promoting a healthy school involves the efficient use of appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning.

The Health Promoting School and School Self-Evaluation are mutually supportive and therefore the above criteria may also be considered within the context of the Department of Education and Skills themes for school self-evaluation in Looking at Our School: An Aid to Self-Evaluation in Primary Schools (2003) and in School Self-Evaluation: Guidelines for Primary Schools (Inspectorate, 2012)
Appendix 2: Health Promoting School Agreement Form

This form is an agreement between your school and the HSE Health Promotion Department. It signifies your commitment to engage in the HPS process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Commitment</th>
<th>Health Promotion Department Commitment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● To hold a staff meeting to introduce the Health Promoting School process</td>
<td>● To support the school throughout the HPS process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To get commitment from staff to participate in the HPS process and support it</td>
<td>● To provide support for the school community to help them to take action to create and maintain a health promoting school climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To agree to participate in the HPS process for a minimum of 2-3 years</td>
<td>● To provide the school with advice on curricular materials and resources to support health education in the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To establish a HPS team</td>
<td>● To provide support and training to the school HPS co-ordinator and team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To appoint a co-ordinator to support the HPS team and to link with the broader school community and the HSE</td>
<td>● To support the consultation process with the whole school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To allocate time and space for the HPS team to do their work</td>
<td>● To act as a resource where possible in linking with the HSE and other services to help support the HPS action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To inform and consult with parents/guardians, staff and pupils regarding the HPS process</td>
<td>● To give recognition as a Health Promoting School to the school following review and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To carry out a HPS consultation across the whole school community</td>
<td>● To maintain ongoing support to help the school to sustain health promotion work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To draw up and implement an action plan based on this consultation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To keep a portfolio of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To apply for recognition as a Health Promoting School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● To review, evaluate and plan on an ongoing basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Name: ________________________________________________________________
(Please print)

Roll Number: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________________________

Principal: __________________________________________________________________
(Please print)

HPS Co-ordinator: ____________________________________________________________
(Please print)

HPS Assistant Co-ordinator: _________________________________________________
(Please print)

Health Promotion Officer: ____________________________________________________

Tel: _______________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Health Promoting School Handbook
Appendix 3A: Action planning guidelines

The following guidelines and action planning template will help your HPS team to address your chosen theme.

Before you begin

Prior to action planning (Stage 6), the HPS team will have collated the consultation results and chosen a priority area or areas to work on. It is important to feedback the consultation results and chosen priority area of action to the school community before developing an action plan.

The HPS team are representatives acting on behalf of the school community and, by sharing the consultation results, ownership of the priority area of action is ‘given back’ to everyone in the school. Collating and feeding back the consultation results is also a way of beginning to delve beneath the surface of the chosen action area to explore exactly what needs to be done. For example, ‘mental health promotion’ might arise from consultation with the whole school community. However, before the team decide to concentrate on mental health related actions, it is important to consider what it is in particular about mental health that is important to this school community. This will differ from school to school. Feeding back the results also offers an opportunity for the whole school community to contribute to suggested actions.

How can this happen? This does not have to be another in-depth consultation process – it may simply be that a one-page document with a short summary of results and chosen theme is prepared and shared by pupils during assembly or SPHE class. Pupils can give their reactions to this and perhaps, as a class, suggest a few actions that would make a difference to the school. To focus pupils, a few agreed questions could be asked of all classes as part of the feedback. For younger pupils a draw/write technique could be used.

For example, using the theme of mental health, pupils could be asked to comment on:

- What would help pupils in this school to feel happy?
- What could we do together that could help everybody at the school to be happier?
- Do you have any ideas on how we could do this?

Pupils should also be informed of how they can make suggestions on an ongoing basis. For example, there could be a suggestion box available to receive their ideas and they could be informed of progress and developments by way of a notice board. This keeps everyone on board and encourages whole school participation.

Beginning the action plan

This is the point where you begin to define your goals. Priorities emerge and clearer objectives are set out so that actions and tasks become more real and tangible. This is a very important time as this will give you an idea of where you are headed and how you are going to get there and will also give the team an added sense of purpose. During this time, you move from recording general aims (Section 1) through to identifying specific objectives and planning specific actions (Section 2). Sections 1 and 2 on the following pages outline this process and the templates supplied here should be used to assist you in your planning.
Appendix 3A: Continued...

Section 1: Rationale and vision

As a team, decide:

- What is your vision?
- What would you like to achieve?
- What are your overall aims?
- What is your rationale for doing this?
- What are your priorities in terms of your main aims?

These aims will be distilled further in Section 2

Section 2: Setting objectives and planning

This is the stage in the planning when you begin to set clear objectives for your work based on the priorities identified in Section 1. It is best to have a few achievable objectives rather than an extensive list that will be difficult to progress. Start small, plan carefully, talk, listen, take your time, bring in colleagues and work together. When you are ready, begin with the simpler actions that are easier to implement. Success is a motivator!

For each aim consider:

- What could we do to contribute to this aim?
- How could we address this under the four key Elements of a HPS
- Who will do this? (who in the school and in the wider school community can help? Who on the committee will take responsibility for making sure this gets done?)
- When will this be done? (timeframe and completion date.)
- What resources might be needed?

Remember that the process of developing as a HPS is ongoing.

A Summary of Actions template has also been included to use if you want. This is an ‘at a glance’ overview of the agreed actions that can be used as a checklist of sorts for the HPS team. The HPS team should present the action plan at a staff meeting so that all staff are aware of the proposed actions and can see how they might get involved.
Appendix 3B: Action planning template

Section 1: Rationale and vision

School Name:

What priority area of action will the HPS team work on, on behalf of the school community? Write down your main aims and what you hope to achieve.

Why is this important to your school community?

Prioritise your aims.
Section 2: Setting aims, objectives and planning health outcomes

### Aim
(Write your specific Aim here. Use this as a template for each Aim):

---

### Priority Action Area

What will your school do under the four key Elements of a HPS to address this priority?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element of HPS</th>
<th>Tasks/Actions</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>When (Timeframe)</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Curriculum and Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Policy and Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3B: Continued...

Summary of Actions template

Action plan role out for period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Tasks and actions</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority no.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority no.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority no.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recognition as a Health Promoting School

APPLICATION FORM
Appendix 4: Application Form for Recognition as a Health Promoting School

Part 1 For schools who apply for HPS recognition:

- This recognition form is to be completed by the Health Promoting School team on behalf of the school after a period of 2 - 3 years of active participation in the Health Promoting School process.

- This recognition form is the school’s opportunity to present in full the work that has been completed as part of the HPS process. Only those within the school community can appreciate the extent of the work and the impact that it has had on the health and well-being of pupils, staff and parents. It is important that you take the time to fully document the work you have done and what you have achieved. When the reader gets to the end of the form, they should have a good sense of both the process that the school went through as well as what was achieved.

### Health Promoting School – School Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roll No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPS co-ordinators:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School address details:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Include here:*
- County
- Email
- Telephone Number
- Website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of pupils:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of staff:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Continued...

Completion instructions

The form must be signed by each member of the HPS team to validate your application for recognition.

Signatures of the HPS team

**Principal**

Name: 

Signature: 

**HPS co-ordinator(s)**

Name: 

Signature: 

Name: 

Signature: 

Team members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Status (Pupil/Parent/Teacher/Other)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### HPS Team

Please give details on how pupils, parents/guardians and staff were recruited onto the team.

If any of the above groups were not represented on the team, please say why.

How does your HPS team operate? How often does your team meet per year?
### Consultation

How did you carry out your school community consultation? (Please describe who was involved and any audits, questionnaires, discussions, suggestion boxes, other, that were used to get feedback, opinions and ideas.)

### Raising awareness

How did you raise awareness of the HPS with pupils, parents, carers and staff?

What were the results of the consultation? (Attach summary of results if applicable.)
## Appendix 4: Continued...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action planning</th>
<th>What main priority areas of action did the school choose to work on in this phase?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How did you decide on this priority? (If the committee decided, how did they get suggestions and input on this priority from the rest of the school?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please attach a copy of your completed action plan with this application.*
**Aims:**

What did the school set out to achieve? (you don’t need to give specific details here – just give broad aims.)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please provide details of how the school worked towards achieving these aims under the four key Elements of a HPS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Curriculum and Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Policy and Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Partnerships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Implementation

**What worked well?**  

---

**What difficulties, if any, did you encounter? If there were difficulties, how did you overcome them?**

---

## Monitoring and evaluation

**How are you monitoring and evaluating your progress?**

---

## General

**How has the experience of HPS benefited your whole school community?**

---

**How will you sustain the HPS into the future?**

---

*Please add any additional information that you feel is relevant to your application. (This is optional. If you decide to submit additional information, please limit this to five A4 pages.)*
Please review the National Health Promoting School criteria below and rank them according to where you think your school is at the end of this process as follows:

4 - We feel we have made extensive progress in this area
3 - We feel we have done a lot of work in this area but more is needed
2 - We feel that we have made some progress but we have a lot to do
1 - We feel that we have made limited progress
0 - We feel that we have made no progress whatsoever

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Health Promoting School Criteria</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school involves the provision of a safe, secure and stimulating environment that encourages and supports pupils, staff and members of the whole school community, both in and out of school.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school encourages and promotes self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute to school life. The school community is encouraged to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for their own health.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school involves the creation of a climate in which good relationships, respect and consideration for others prosper, and where individuals are encouraged to make a vital contribution through their personal skills and qualities.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school involves the planning and implementation of a curriculum that promotes health and well-being, adheres to statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school provides challenges for pupils and staff through a wide range of physical, academic, social and community activities.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school involves the formulation, implementation and regular review of health-related policies for staff and pupils that are in accordance with the school aims, philosophy, vision and ethos.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The whole school community should be encouraged to participate in the development of policies where possible and appropriate.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school engages parents/guardians, other schools and the local community in a range of health-related initiatives.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a healthy school involves the efficient use of appropriate agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to health and well-being, teaching and learning.</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We, the Health Promoting Schools team, wish to formally apply for recognition as a Health Promoting School.

Signed on behalf of the HPS Team: ________________________________

Principal: ______________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________________
Appendix 5: Self-Reflection Template

It is important to reflect on the work that you have undertaken so that you can discuss what worked well / didn’t work so well and build learning from this into future plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What worked well?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What didn’t work so well?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What could we have done differently?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations for future work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions for continuing this work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>