

To inspire every child to recognise their full potential, believe they can make a difference and respect themselves, others and the world in which they live.

Healthy Lifestyle Policy 2026

Aim of the Policy

At iCAN, we believe that wellbeing is fundamental to learning. Healthy brains, bodies and minds help learners feel safe, connected, confident and ready to engage with new experiences.

As a learning-focused school, we are committed to supporting the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of our learners alongside their academic development. We aim to provide an environment, curriculum and range of experiences that help learners develop positive habits, understand their own wellbeing needs and make informed choices that support their health throughout their lives.

We recognise that every learner is different and that wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors, including nutrition, hydration, physical activity, sleep, relationships and emotional health. We work in partnership with families to promote a consistent, inclusive and positive approach to wellbeing.

Healthy Brain

At iCAN, we recognise that learning is influenced by a range of factors, including hydration, nutrition, physical activity, sleep and emotional wellbeing. We aim to help learners understand how everyday habits can support their ability to learn, concentrate and participate in school life.

The brain needs water

Why it matters

Water is essential for normal brain and body function. Dehydration can affect how a person feels and may make concentration and participation more difficult.

Our approach

- All learners have access to clean drinking water throughout the school day.
- Learners are provided with named, refillable stainless-steel water bottles, which are kept in the classroom and taken to other learning spaces, including the canteen, gym and specialist classrooms.
- Water dispensers are available along school corridors and in the canteen, alongside filtered-water taps accessible to learners.
- Learning Facilitators encourage learners to drink water regularly throughout the day and provide opportunities to refill bottles as needed.
- Learners take their bottles home at the end of each school day so that they can be washed and refilled for the following day.

The brain needs good food

Why it matters

Food provides the energy and nutrients needed for growth, development and everyday learning. A varied, balanced diet supports children's overall health and helps them develop positive eating habits.

Our approach

- School lunches are planned to provide balanced meals appropriate for our learners, with known dietary requirements and allergies managed in accordance with school procedures.
- Learners bringing lunch from home are encouraged to bring a varied, balanced meal.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided at break times.
- Learners explore nutrition and healthy eating through the Wellbeing curriculum and relevant IPC and Science learning.
- We share information with families through workshops, newsletters and other resources to support healthy eating at home and school.
- When learners bring food to school events, families are encouraged to provide balanced, nutritious options.
- We promote positive attitudes towards food and eating, recognising that food choices may be influenced by culture, family circumstances, dietary requirements and individual needs.

Where concerns arise about the food brought to school, we communicate respectfully with families and work together to support the learner's wellbeing.

The brain needs movement and oxygen

Why it matters

Physical activity supports children's physical health, coordination and general wellbeing. Movement also provides opportunities for learners to develop social skills, confidence and self-regulation. Regular opportunities to move can help learners feel refreshed and ready to engage in learning.

Our approach

- Our curriculum includes one hour of PE and one hour of swimming each week.
- Our After-School Activities (ASA) programme offers opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities.
- Primary learners have opportunities to participate in Wake Up Shake Up from Tuesday to Friday before the start of the school day, where scheduled.
- Learning Facilitators incorporate movement breaks and active learning opportunities where appropriate.
- Physical activities are planned to encourage participation, enjoyment and inclusion, with adaptations provided where needed.

The brain needs sleep

Why it matters

Sleep supports children's growth, memory, attention, emotional regulation and overall health. Consistent sleep routines can help learners arrive at school feeling rested and ready to participate in the school day.

Our approach

- We share information with families about the importance of age-appropriate sleep and consistent bedtime routines through workshops, newsletters and other resources.

- Morning Meetings provide opportunities for Learning Facilitators to check in with learners, understand how they are feeling and identify any barriers to learning.
- Through our Wellbeing curriculum, learners explore the importance of rest, recognising their own needs and developing healthy daily routines.
- Learning Facilitators respond sensitively when learners appear tired or unsettled and consider appropriate support to help them engage with learning.

Healthy Body

At iCAN, we aim to create an environment that supports physical health, positive relationships and lifelong healthy habits. We recognise that children benefit from opportunities to eat well, move regularly, develop independence and participate in a welcoming school community.

Our approach

- School lunches are planned to offer balanced, nutritious meals appropriate for our learners.
- Learners bringing food from home are encouraged to bring balanced meals and snacks.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided at break times.
- Healthy eating is explored through Wellbeing sessions and relevant IPC and Science learning.
- Families are offered workshops, newsletters and other resources to support healthy lifestyle choices.
- Learners are encouraged to participate in PE, swimming, active learning, playground activities and the ASA programme.
- We provide welcoming eating environments that encourage positive social interaction between learners and staff, while respecting different cultural practices and dietary needs.
- Staff promote healthy habits through positive role modelling and the everyday routines of school life.
- We teach learners about personal hygiene and the importance of caring for their bodies.

Our approach focuses on education, encouragement and positive habits rather than shame or judgement about individual food choices.

Healthy Mind

At iCAN, we recognise that emotional wellbeing and mental health are important foundations for learning. When learners feel safe, understood and supported, they are better placed to engage with others, manage challenges and participate in school life.

We aim to create a supportive environment in which learners develop emotional awareness, resilience, positive relationships and strategies to manage a range of feelings.

Our approach

- We use the RULER approach to help learners recognise, understand, label, express and regulate their emotions.
- We provide a Peace Corner or other calm space where learners can pause, practise regulation strategies and return to learning when they feel ready, with adult support where needed.
- We explicitly teach age-appropriate strategies for managing difficult feelings, resolving challenges and seeking help.

- Learners in Years 3–6 participate in mindfulness learning to explore stress, attention, self-awareness and strategies that may help them regulate their responses.
- Morning Meetings provide opportunities for learners to share how they are feeling, build connections and identify support they may need.
- Learning Facilitators model respectful communication, empathy and positive relationship-building.
- We recognise that learners may express distress in different ways and respond with curiosity, care and appropriate support.
- Where a learner's needs require additional support, we work with families and relevant members of the school team to identify appropriate next steps.

Calm spaces and regulation strategies are used to support learners, not as a punishment or a replacement for adult support.

Initiatives and Strategies to Support Healthy Brains, Bodies and Minds

Wake Up Shake Up

Wake Up Shake Up provides an opportunity for learners to participate in a short session of movement before the start of the school day. Sessions take place from Tuesday to Friday, where scheduled, and generally last between five and ten minutes.

The initiative aims to:

- Provide an enjoyable and positive start to the school day.
- Offer opportunities for movement, coordination, rhythm and body awareness.
- Help learners feel energised and ready to engage with learning.
- Support positive connections between learners and staff.
- Develop positive attitudes towards regular physical activity.
- Encourage participation through accessible, age-appropriate activities.

We recognise that learners respond differently to movement and that the impact of physical activity varies between individuals. Activities are adapted as appropriate to support safe and inclusive participation.

Peer Massage

Where included in the class wellbeing programme, peer massage offers learners an opportunity to practise relaxation, respectful communication, personal boundaries and positive social interaction.

Sessions are differentiated to suit learners' developmental needs and are supported by staff. Participation is voluntary, and learners are taught to ask for and respect consent before any physical contact. Alternative non-contact activities are available for learners who prefer not to participate.

The intended aims include:

- Developing awareness of personal boundaries and consent.
- Encouraging respect for others and positive relationships.
- Providing opportunities to practise calmness and relaxation.
- Supporting communication, cooperation and consideration for others.

- Helping learners understand that they can make choices about physical contact.
- Contributing to a calm, respectful classroom environment.

Peer massage is delivered in line with school safeguarding expectations. Learners must always ask for consent. Learners are never required to participate in physical contact, and all concerns about safety or boundaries are addressed appropriately.

Teeth Cleaning

Dental hygiene is an important part of children's overall health. Developing consistent oral hygiene habits from an early age can help protect teeth and gums and encourage lifelong self-care.

At iCAN:

- Learners are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch each school day, where this is part of their class routine.
- Learners are supported to develop age-appropriate independence in caring for their teeth.
- Staff reinforce the importance of oral hygiene through everyday routines and relevant learning opportunities.
- Families are encouraged to maintain regular toothbrushing routines at home and seek appropriate dental care.

Toothbrushes and other personal hygiene items are handled and stored hygienically in accordance with school procedures.

Working in Partnership with Families

We recognise that supporting healthy brains, bodies and minds is a shared responsibility between school and home. We aim to build positive partnerships with families so that learners receive consistent messages about wellbeing.

We support this partnership through:

- Family workshops and information sessions.
- Newsletters and resources about nutrition, hydration, sleep, physical activity and emotional wellbeing.
- Communication between families and Learning Facilitators about factors that may affect a learner's readiness to learn.
- Opportunities to discuss individual wellbeing needs and agree appropriate support.
- A school culture that values positive habits, inclusion, belonging and lifelong learning.

Our Commitment

At iCAN, wellbeing is embedded in the everyday life of the school rather than being treated as a separate part of the curriculum. Through our learning environment, curriculum, routines and relationships, we aim to help every learner develop the knowledge, skills and habits needed to care for their brain, body and mind.

We are committed to reviewing our approaches as our learners' needs evolve and to working collaboratively with families and staff to maintain a safe, supportive and health-promoting school environment

Policy to be reviewed in November 2027