

White Laith Primary School

Staff Wellbeing Policy

(including work life balance and staff development)

To be approved by the Governing Body November 2022

Due for review November 2025

School Aims

Through commitment, determination and a willingness to embrace change we aim to:

- Develop independent, effective learners who enjoy school
- Create a cohesive school community in which there is mutual understanding, trust and respect
- Empower staff, governors and children by raising confidence, self-esteem and self-belief
- Equip children with the attitudes, qualities, skills and understanding they need for success in our ever-changing, diverse world
- Bring about optimum achievement for every child.
- Become an excellent school

Rationale

White Laith Primary School places a high priority on maintaining the well-being of all employees. We recognise that people are our most precious resource and have put together this policy to ensure that employee well-being is regularly monitored and reviewed against the National Health and Safety standards.

Introduction

The School as employer has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It is also required to have in place measures to mitigate as far as practicable factors that could harm employees' physical and mental well-being, which includes work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the School's control.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as "the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

This policy recognises that there are many sources of work related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or students. The Health and Safety Executive have produced a number of Management Standards which cover the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:

Demands – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment.

Control – i.e. how much say the person has in the way they do their work.

Support – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

Relationships – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Role – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.

Change – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

Statement of Intent

The Governors and the School's Leadership Team:

- Acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health, and that there is a persuasive business case as well as a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote employee well-being as far as reasonably practicable.
- Are committed to fostering a culture of cooperation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.
- Recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' well-being, and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

The Staff Well-being policy expands upon the School's Health and Safety policy, setting out how the School will promote the well-being of employees by:

- Creating a working environment where potential triggers of work-related stress are avoided, minimised or mitigated, as far as practicable, through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development.
- Increasing SLT and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- Developing the competence of SLT so that they manage staff effectively and fairly.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the School.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and well-being through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.

Responsibilities for implementing the Staff Well-being policy

The Governors, Headteacher and the School's SLT will:

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the School.
- Champion good management practices and the establishment of a work ethos within school which discourages assumptions about long term commitment to working hours of a kind likely to cause stress and which enables employees to maintain a reasonable "work life balance".
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements.
- Encourage staff to be fully involved in the decisions of the school through staff forums in which staff can talk freely about any issues which impact on their ability to carry out their jobs.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and well-being.
- Treat individuals reporting to them with consideration and dignity, and will promote a culture of mutual respect in the teams they manage. They will not permit unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work-related stress.
- Encourage their staff to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the school to promote well-being and more effective working.
- Take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.

Employees will:

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Co-operate with the school's efforts to implement the Well-being policy, attending briefings and raise their own awareness of the causes and effects of stress on health.
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being.
- Take responsibility for their own health and well-being by adopting healthy lifestyles.
- Take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, thus helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

HT and SBM will:

- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress, referring them to the School's Occupational Health advisers where appropriate.
- Enable the School to measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee well-being, such as: Sickness absence data, Staff turnover, exit interviews,

number of referrals to Occupational Health, numbers of grievance and harassment cases.

- Seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the School's Well-being policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.
- Ensure that the Well-being policy is kept under review and updated as appropriate, under the remit of the Resources (incl. Health & Safety) Committee.
- Organise in conjunction with the staff, appropriate events and initiatives to promote health and well-being.
- Liaise with the staff on the development and implementation of the Well-being policy.

The Resources Committee of the Governing Body will:

- Determine the Well-being policy, and recommend its adoption by the school.
- Monitor the implementation of the Well-being policy and the operation of associated arrangements such as the staff counselling service.
- Review the policy every three years following feedback from staff surveys, SLT information provided by staff.

Work-Life Balance

A good work-life balance is central to staff effectiveness and satisfaction, and student learning. Work-life balance is about helping staff combine work with their personal interests and commitments. Everyone must take responsibility for their own work-life balance and be aware of the role model they are setting for others.

An important element is the statutory responsibility governors have with regard to the work-life balance of the head teacher. The head teacher, in turn, will have regard to the work-life balance of other staff.

In order for our staff to be at their most effective they need to have a healthy work-life balance:

- To attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for a 21st Century education system;
- To improve the school's effectiveness by actively reducing staff absenteeism and turnover;
- To develop a more motivated workforce, with high morale, even more able to deliver a better education for our children;
- To improve team work, staff development and co-operation by effectively distributing leadership and creating new leaders;
- To recognise that excessive hours of work do not equal commitment but might reduce staff effectiveness;
- To recognise that improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the whole school workforce.
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All staff within the school, including the head teacher, will be supported in attaining a balanced lifestyle where they can achieve their best at work and manage other areas of their life effectively.

Our strategies to support a balanced lifestyle will include:

- Clear identification of duties and responsibilities relating to individual staff roles, reviewed annually through appraisal interviews, to aid them in the delivery of their work and managing the expectations of the job;
- Regular review, discussed at annual staff meetings, of how effectively the school is taking into account the work-life balance of all staff;
- Continually looking at existing and new practices to make systems as efficient and time saving as possible;
- Working with staff to agree and provide appropriate training to enable them to do their jobs competently and effectively and within normal hours;
- Involving staff in agreeing and setting realistic work-related targets for the staff and the school;
- Providing a system for and encouraging efficient and effective working practices, and discouraging staff from working excessively long hours;
- Involving, encouraging and enabling staff to actively manage their own careers and personal development;
- All new initiatives be examined in the light of work-life balance;
- Consulting with staff on decisions relating to their employment, encouraging them to seek third party advice, e.g. to confer with their Union representatives, where appropriate;
- Granting special leave, as appropriate, when staff are faced with an emergency outside work;
- Governors and senior managers will be pro-active in looking for appropriate opportunities for flexible working practices and in responding to flexible working requests from staff including where the request is not underpinned by statutory requirements;
- Providing suitable equipment (such as personal laptops for teachers) to enable them to work as effectively as budgetary constraints allow;
- Increasing teacher administrative support as much as possible within the constraints of the budget
- Communicating with parents and the wider community the benefits of our work-life policy.
- Governors will monitor the effectiveness of the statutory Appraisal policy in which the Head Teacher will be asked to comment about strategies the school is adopting with regard to staff work-life balance;
- The Governing body have a responsibility to ensure that the Head Teacher manages an acceptable work-life balance. This includes providing appropriate administrative and leadership support and leadership and management time for the Head. The Governors will regularly review their own practices with consideration to staff workload.
- The Head Teacher has a duty to monitor their own work-life balance, model good practice and report concerns to the Governing Body.

Flexible Working Practices

From April 2003 new flexible working legislation gave all parents with children under the age of 6 (or age 18 if a child is disabled) the right to apply to work flexibly. This does not provide an automatic right to flexible working but employers now have a statutory duty to consider such requests seriously.

A flexible arrangement should be applied for by the employee in writing to the Head Teacher, clearly stating the type of arrangement under consideration and how ideally it would work in the context of the school and the needs of the job. All requests will be considered taking account of the needs of the employee, the school, the LA and any legal requirements and will assess how best to accommodate the employee's needs without impairing the needs of others and the school.

Types of Flexible Working

Not all types of flexible working will be appropriate for all roles within the context of the school (recognising that teachers and support staff have different contracts of employment nationally). However, all requests must be given fair consideration.

The types of flexible working include:

- Flexi-working
- Job Share
- Home working
- Annualised Hours
- Part-time work
- Special leave arrangements
- Employment breaks

This list is not exhaustive.

Home Working

The Governors recognise that in order to effectively implement PPA, Dedicated Headship Time and Leadership and Management Time, in some circumstances it may be more efficient for staff to work at home. Staff are permitted to work at home by prior agreement with the Head Teacher.

Staff Development

Staff development is the process of staff learning which aims to increase the effectiveness of all staff (teaching and non-teaching) as individuals and as team members. It is in keeping with the School's mission statement and is set in the context of the current Development Plan. It therefore enables staff to contribute to the School's vision and goals and to fulfil its guiding principles. The process should ensure mutual benefit for staff and pupils.

The staff development process will:

- Contribute to improving and developing the overall effectiveness of the school, raising pupil achievement and meeting the needs of pupils, parents and the wider community
- Ensure job satisfaction, personal achievement, and individual and team effort, thus providing for personal advancement within the school or outside it.
- Improve and develop teaching, management and other job-related skills in the context of changing educational needs
- Improve and develop skills relevant to specific SEND, general learning difficulties, therapeutic work, individual and family work, and behaviour management skills.

- Ensure that all staff are valued and recognised as the Schools most important asset.

All staff development activity is planned in the context of the School's aims and values.

Financial and other resources for staff development are allocated annually and apportioned in accordance with School priorities for strategic development and continuing professional development. Staff are supported in determining their own development needs. The school will endeavour to assist in the meeting of those with priority given to requests which would result in the improvement of teaching and learning.

Staff development is provided through a wide range of activities including internal and external courses. Staff are encouraged to share expertise in order to develop others and also to enhance their own skills. All staff development activity is monitored and evaluated to assess its contribution to school improvement and raising pupil achievement.

Criteria for the award of financial support for members of staff voluntarily undertaking additional qualifications.

White Laith Primary School is committed to the principle of life-long learning and therefore, within certain specified conditions, will look favourably on members of staff (teaching and non-teaching) who request financial support to assist them to undertake relevant courses.

Such requests, made on an annual basis, will be considered by the Head teacher and a recommendation brought to the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors and hence to the full Board as to whether or not to offer financial support in accordance with the following conditions.

- That the head teacher is satisfied that the course or relevant sections of the course provide a benefit to the school and contribute towards the development of specific school responsibilities.
- That the award of financial support will be subject to a financial limit as determined by the board of Governors and revised annually.
- That when more requests are made than funds available within the total financial limit that awards are made according to the overall relevance of the qualification to the needs of the post of the applicant and the likely educational benefits to the school.
- In the case of two or more requests being ranked equally according to the criteria above, the funds will be distributed equally to the applicants
- That individuals applying for such financial support and who are granted it for one qualification will not be entitled to further support in respect of any further qualification.
- Requests for financial support should be submitted to the Head teacher in writing.

Consultation

The School will consult with its employees on the Well-being policy and measures taken to implement the policy through the operation of the Governors Health and Safety Committee and via staff consultation.

- Staff surveys (formal and informal) will be used to gather feedback on the Well-being policy.

- The Well-being policy will be published to all staff.
- The Well-being policy will be promoted in school
- The contents of the policy will be covered during general induction training sessions for employees and specific training on stress awareness.

Monitoring and reviewing the Well-being policy.

The Well-being policy will be reviewed every three years.