Wincanton Primary School

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Approved by the Headteacher: **December 2024**

Approved by the Governing Body: **December 2026**

Signed: Graeme Wilson. **Headteacher**

Wincanton Primary School
Staff Wellbeing Policy

Wincanton Primary School, as employer has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff, as far as reasonably practical. It is also required to have in place steps to manage those factors that could harm staff members' physical and mental wellbeing, 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.

The Health and Safety Executive have developed a set of Management Standards which cover the primary sources of stress at work, and that if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:

Demands
Workload, work patterns and anything within the work environment that adds to the demands that staff face, including deadlines, student behaviour and parents.

Control
How much say a staff member has in what they do and how they are able to do their work.

Support
Including the sponsorship and resources provided by the school, and encouragement of leaders, line managers and colleagues.

Relationships
Including how positive working behaviours are promoted to avoid conflict and effectively dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Role
Including the extent to which staff understand their role within the school, how this fits with that of their department or function and the aims of the school and whether leaders ensure they do not have conflicting roles.

Change
Includes how well organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the school.

The School's performance on wellbeing and stress management will be assessed in the context of the HSE Management Standards.

Statement of Intent

- The Governing Body and Senior 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 staff wellbeing as far as reasonably practicable.
- We are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with fairness and dignity, and can work at their optimum level.
- We also recognise that work related stress has a negative impact on staff wellbeing, and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.
- This Staff Wellbeing Policy sits alongside the School's Health and Safety policy, and the Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, setting out how the School will promote the wellbeing of staff by:
- Creating a working environment where potential work related stressors are understood, and managed as well as practically possible.
- Increasing whole staff awareness of the possible causes and effects of stress.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships, both within teams and across the school.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby staff feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance e.g. vacating school by 5.30pm, limiting time worked at home.
- Out-of-school hours working, is not controlled by hourly restrictions. This is to fit in around people's family and personal commitments. For example, emails may be sent at a time suitable to the authors working times, however a response is not expected during hours of 9pm and 7:00am including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives e.g. signposting to support organisations and services. morning mindfulness moments, developing a professional culture.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.

Responsibilities for implementing the Staff Wellbeing Policy.

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the School.
- Champion good management behaviours and strategies proven to help prevent/reduce staff stress. Establish a work ethos within Wincanton Primary School aimed at enabling staff to maintain a reasonable “work life balance”.
- Promote effective communication and procedures for supporting staff on any changes in Wincanton Primary School, at both school wide and departmental/year group level.

Team Leaders and SLT will:

- Treat individuals reporting to them with consideration and will promote a culture of mutual respect in the teams they manage. They will quickly and effectively deal with unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Ensure that there is good communication within their team and there are opportunities for individuals to raise concerns or seek advice about their work, from Line Managers, Team Leaders and/or trusted colleagues at an early stage where concerns are raised.
- Ensure workload is distributed appropriately and fairly among their team and that when work is delegated, team members have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver it.
- Regularly check in with team members, thank and encourage them and offer praise when it is due.
- Take action in the interests of all team members, other colleagues and students to manage the underperformance of any individual staff member.
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work related stress.
- Co-operate with Governors, Senior Leadership Team and Wellbeing Team to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles or working practices that may give rise to work related stress and poor wellbeing.
- Encourage their staff to participate in activities undertaken by the team or whole school to promote wellbeing.

- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work, including phased returns.
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

Staff will:

- Treat colleagues and others they interact with during the course of their work with fairness, consideration and respect.
- Co-operate with the school's efforts to implement the Staff Wellbeing Policy, attending briefings and raising their own awareness of the causes and effects of stress and poor wellbeing.
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Be honest about oneself wellbeing by raising concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on them.
- Be responsible for their own health and wellbeing as far as is practically possible.
- Take ownership of setting out their own development plan and discussing this as appropriate with their line manager, as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and reduce the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, supporting others as appropriate and helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.
- Be kind to each other and support one another's ability to fulfil their role.

Role of the governing board:

The governing board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing

- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

Human Resources in conjunction with Headteacher and Wellbeing team:

- Provide advice to managers and staff members on best practice in relation to developing policies, strategies and procedures as required.

- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress e.g. referring them to the School's Occupational Health Advisers where appropriate.
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support managers experiencing problems with employee performance, including managing capability.
- Collate management information which will enable the school to measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee wellbeing, such as:
    - Sickness absence data
    - Staff turnover and exit interviews
    - Cover periods provided
    - Number of self-referrals to a counsellor / staff assistance scheme
    - Number of referrals to the Occupational Health Adviser
    - Numbers of grievance and harassment cases.
- Seek the views of staff on the effectiveness of the School's Staff Wellbeing Policy and stress management arrangements using evidence-backed staff surveys and other appropriate tools.
- Review the policy regularly following feedback from staff surveys, reviewing management information and the findings of stress risk assessments, and in consultation with the appropriate teams e.g. SLT, Governors.

Arrangements for wellbeing and stress prevention through good management practices will include:

- Having clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure staff members are clear on what is expected in their role, including flexibility, and the right person is recruited where vacancies exist.
- Ensuring training and development procedures are in place so individuals have the necessary skills and understanding to undertake the tasks and duties required of them.
- Ensuring managers are aware of those behaviours proven to prevent and reduce staff stress and providing opportunities for them to self-assess against them and undertake training where appropriate.
- Having effective processes and procedures for:
    - Promoting staff well being appropriately
    - Reward and recognition
    - Managing performance and capability
    - Absence management and return to work to ensure that individuals are supported following illness.
    - Harassment and anti-bullying.
    - Communicating with staff on the work of the School and issues affecting their work.
    - Seeking staff feedback, including use of anonymous staff surveys.
    - Flexible working arrangements
    - Keep in touch days with staff on maternity leave.

Suitable adaptations should be made for disability and accessibility.
These arrangements will be updated and developed as required and when necessary.

The contents of the policy will be covered during general induction training sessions for staff and through specific training on stress awareness.

Monitoring and reviewing the Wellbeing Policy
The Staff Wellbeing Policy will be regularly reviewed by Head Teacher, SLT and the Wellbeing Team. This will take into account all relevant collected data and risk assessments as outlined in this policy.

Roles within the Wellbeing Team

Senior Mental Health Lead: Graeme Wilson
Deputy Mental Health Lead: Denny Verlander (ELSA)
Wellbeing Governor: Jackie Andrews
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Samantha Clifton

Adopted: December 2024
Review: December 2025