



Staff Well-being Policy

January 2024

Date Apporved	December 2024
Chair of Governors signature	Linda Foster

Our vision

At Woodborough Woods, we 'Grow Together' following Jesus' example to 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39) because through love for one another, we can build a strong learning community ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Support the wellbeing of all staff to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health.
- Provide a supportive work environment for all staff.
- Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time.
- Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities.
- Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience.
- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims.

2. Promoting wellbeing at all times

We will have a staff wellbeing action plan which is reviewed termly by the mental health lead and senior leadership to highlight focus areas of how we will monitor and improve the wellbeing of staff throughout the school year.

2.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff.
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance.

- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support.
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit.
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices.
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing.

2.2 Role of mental health lead

Mental health lead (Melda Gough) is expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with staff and value them for their skills.
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to staff.
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies.
- Promote information about and access to external support services.
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate.

2.3 Role of the Leadership Team

Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours.
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff.
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through structured conversations.
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance.
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help.
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures.
- 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.
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation.
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring.

- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible.
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes.
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives.
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school.
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated.
- Ensure staff know about meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload such as through staff briefings etc.
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities.
- Promote information about and access to external support services.
- Organise extra support during times of stress.

2.4 Role of the governing board

Di Bathgate and Alex Wilkes are the link governors responsible for mental health and wellbeing.

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 Executive 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 regard 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.

3. Managing specific wellbeing issues

The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by the mental health lead and senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis.
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services.
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified.
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise.

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. At every review, it will be approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Board.

5. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Appraisal policy.
- Behaviour & Attendance policy.
- Capability procedure.
- Staff code of conduct.
- Mental Health and well-being policy

Ways Woods Foundation School supports Staff Mental Health & Well-Being

1. The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter

The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter is used as a tool for our school to create, and publicly commit to, our own wellbeing strategies". Please click here to [download the charter from the government website](#).

2. Meeting Times – used to promote a better work-life balance.

We aim to reduce meeting times to ensure they are clear, purposeful and time limited.

We guarantee weekly leadership time for subject leaders to complete directed activities.

Staff meeting & INSET days are well organised. Staff are given directed time for additional Directed tasks to be completed.

3. Revise and Reiterate School Ethos

Putting your school's ethos into practice to [make it feel more genuine](#) has a positive impact on wellbeing by helping craft a more positive, open and intentional culture. Our school ethos of 'Growing Together' helps us model good mental health across the school.

4. Provide Wellbeing discussion time.

Short sessions on topics such as managing stress at work or time management can help teachers and other education staff find their own tools to protect wellbeing. Not only this, but these topics can also spark conversations about current struggles and raise awareness about sharing the responsibility of high-pressure tasks.

5. Use Appraisals for Checking In

Appraisals are used as an appropriate and confidential setting to speak privately about any wellbeing concerns. These periodic meetings can help in improve wellbeing as we take the opportunity to give praise and steer professional development.

6. Improving School Environment

Turning attention to the wider school environment as had many knock-on effects — one of them being better staff wellbeing. A happier environment with happier children makes for a happier school.

Over the past 2 years lots of refurbishment has occurred, these include new office spaces, a new staffroom and a PPA office space.

7. Signpost Support

Wellbeing at work is complex. It can be impacted by the professional environment and personal issues that happen at home. It's important to have a well-rounded approach to wellbeing that supports staff no matter where their problems stem from.

Signposting staff to the relevant support services gives them the tools to deal with issues independently, should they need to. Some support services include [Education Support](#), [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) and [Mindful Teachers](#).

Our school purchases the Occupational Health package through Nottinghamshire County Council, so we have access to counselling intervention for employees. The current counselling provider, Health Assured, offer counselling where it can be evidenced that an issue is impacting on an individual employee's ability to attend, remain in and / or be productive at work, including areas like absence, stress, relationships, coping with change or in connection with HR procedures such as performance or grievance matters.

The provision is for up to 6 sessions (as determined by Health Assured) of confidential, independent, counselling intervention.

Our Executive Headteacher can refer employees for an initial assessment with the full agreement of the employee using the online referral form available on the schools portal. Alternatively, employees can refer themselves directly to Health Assured for counselling support. The freephone number is: 0800 028 0199 - this is available 24/7, 365 days a year.

8. Promote an Open-Door Policy

Communication can effectively combat feelings of isolation and dispel wellbeing issues before they arise. We have an open-door policy and make this a crucial part of our culture, emphasising your willingness to listen.

For SLT, this means we always aim to follow up on discussions when they happen and take appropriate action in line with staff feedback.

9. Write Mental Health Policy

The Staff Education Charter and wellbeing lead role make it clear that every school needs to commit to a written mental health policy. With mental health impacting around [three children in every classroom](#) our Mental Health and Well-Being policy is very important.

10. We will commit to Staff Wellbeing Surveys

Gaining feedback is the most straightforward way to gauge what's affecting wellbeing at work. Surveys can be school-wide, for both staff and children to give a more targeted overview of which environmental aspects impact staff and children the most.

Creating a separate staff wellbeing survey means we can tap into [staff-only subjects](#) like management, workload, learning and development, pay and benefits, engagement and fair treatment.

11. We take Team Building Seriously

Team building isn't an activity to organise for if and when we have some leftover budget. Instead, team building should prioritise spending allocated to this at the start of every school year.

Teacher team building activities can help staff create closer bonds, increase collaboration and improve communication. The benefits of team building translate back into the office and classroom.

3 Staff have volunteered to be our Social Secretaries and they regularly will offer to organise staff fuddles, nights out and attendance at local sporting events.

12. Involved Governors

Although everyone is involved in wellbeing with a whole-school approach, the message from our Governor Body to all staff is that mental health matters.

Wellbeing is an item on our board meeting agenda to create investment among governors and senior leadership. Our links wellbeing Governors ([appoint a wellbeing link governor](#)) spread awareness amongst senior leaders and devise a wellbeing strategy.

When it comes to mental health, the main thing is to talk.