



# **LINSLADE LOWER SCHOOL**

## **Positive Mental Health Policy for Staff**

**2024**

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| <b>Governor Approval:</b> | March 2024 |
| <b>Review Cycle:</b>      | Triennial  |

Policy review chronology:

|            |            |          |
|------------|------------|----------|
| March 2024 | New policy | Approved |
|------------|------------|----------|

## Introduction

### Key people / dates

|                                           |                |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team   | [Hazel Farlam] |
| Staff Wellbeing Lead (if different)       | [Hazel Farlam] |
| Mental Health Lead (if different)         | [Hazel Farlam] |
| Mental Health Governor link governor      | [TBC]          |
| Date this policy was reviewed and by whom | [March 2024]   |
| Date of next review and by whom           | [March 2027]   |

### What is this policy?

A staff wellbeing policy explains and sets out the school's commitment to the wellbeing of all staff. It should outline how the school will support its staff, its ongoing commitment to staff training, and ensuring that all staff are treated fairly and professionally at all times. It should be also reviewed and monitored against the National Health and Safety standards.

### Who is in charge of Wellbeing?

The school recognises the statutory responsibilities related to employment and staff have the primary responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, this policy should also be viewed alongside other policies and procedures in relation to duty of care as an employer to all members of staff.

These may include (but are not limited to):

- Attendance and Absence Management Policy; (CBC HR Documents)
- Stress Management Policy; (CBC HR Documents)
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy/Procedure; (CBC HR Documents)
- Harassment Procedure; (CBC HR Documents)
- Grievance Procedure; (CBC HR Documents)

- Whistleblowing Procedure. (CBC HR Documents)

### **Why the need for a Staff Wellbeing policy?**

Education Support in conjunction with YouGov carried out a *Teacher Wellbeing Index 2018*, this found that more than three-quarters of teachers surveyed experienced work-related behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms and more than half were considering leaving the profession due to poor health. Senior leaders have been particularly hard hit with 80% suffering from work-related stress, 40% suffering from symptoms of depression and 63% considering leaving the profession – an issue, which unaddressed will leave many schools with no one to lead, motivate staff and maintain and improve educational outcomes.

### **How will this policy be communicated?**

This policy can only impact upon practice if it is a (regularly updated) living document. It must be accessible to and understood by all stakeholders. It will be communicated in the following ways: emailed to staff when updated, displayed in the staff rooms and given to new staff and students as part of their induction.

### **1. Policy Statement**

Linslade Lower School wants to ensure that staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. We recognise that staff are our most important resource and we seek to value our staff through personal and professional support, involvement in school decisions and access to professional development. Linslade Lower School as an 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 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.

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.

We are committed to making sure that this Staff Wellbeing Policy is implemented so that each individual is able to cope successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress within a "no-blame" environment.

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and wellbeing by making sure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently.

This policy applies to all employees working in Linslade Lower School. The School's performance on wellbeing and stress management will be assessed in the context of the HSE Management Standards.

## **2. Scope**

This policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive staff wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

## **3. Policy aims**

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to pupils.
- To help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through regular communication and consultation with staff and their trade union representatives on health and safety matters
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- To encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- To comply with all statutory requirements
- To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- To provide staff with training to deal positively with stressful incidents and provide them with a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies via training.
- To improve staff development, co-operation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- To make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work-related health and wellbeing issues.

## **4. Legislation**

Pieces of legislation that will be considered when promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, including, but not exclusively:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010

- Working Time regulations
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1 The Governing Body:**

- Will take overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy while ensuring that staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.
- Will adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns etc., where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.
- Actively demonstrate recognition and acceptance of common mental and physical health problems by creating an environment where staff feel comfortable in asking for help.
- Ensure that staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Ensure that all of Linslade Lower School's policies are assessed for workload impact
- Act early and provide consistent support
- Ensure the policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed with the recognised workplace unions on an annual basis, in the light of changing needs and legislative frameworks.

### **5.2 The Headteacher:**

- Will support the governing body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress.
- Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner
- Will ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life.
- Will create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns and will enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems, ensuring that a return-to- work policy is established in workplace that is supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work.
- Will monitor and review any measures that are planned and assess their effectiveness.
- Ensure that all staff have access to regular training sessions on health and wellbeing in schools, including practical sessions to deal with mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues, and that they are given the appropriate time and resources to undertake this.

- In consultation with the workplace unions, conduct an annual survey of staff, focussed on health and wellbeing, and share and act upon results.

### **5.3 Staff:**

- Will act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves and others whilst in the workplace and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or colleagues
- Will make themselves aware of all the relevant school policies e.g. Capability, Staff attendance, health and safety.
- Seek support or help if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and therefore is important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads.
- Consider attending training on health and wellbeing issues where they feel that this is appropriate.
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.

## **6. Support Mechanisms**

- The Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy Head, and other managers) must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The Senior Leadership Team should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.
- Where additional, professional advice is required, then Occupational Health Professionals and other avenues through the NHS should be utilised.
- On joining the school and also moving to new roles the following support will also be offered:
  - ◆ All new staff will be given a school orientation and ensure that they receive the staff induction pack/staff handbook
  - ◆ All new staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as possible.
  - ◆ There will be reviews for new staff held throughout the first 6 months of employment
  - ◆ Discussion of new roles and expectations alongside support for new role and related tasks

## **7. Arrangements for implementing the Wellbeing Policy**

Arrangements for wellbeing and stress prevention through good management practices.

These include the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures.
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Formal accreditation such as workplace charter.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers, to be cascaded through to all levels of management and supervision.
- Training and Development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Promotion and reward procedures.
- Managing performance procedures
- Capability and absence management & return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness.
- Suitable adaptations for disability.
- Harassment and anti-bullying procedures.
- Procedures for communicating with employees on the work of the School and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements, and contact days with staff on maternity leave.
- The arrangements will be updated and augmented as required and when deemed necessary by the findings of stress risk assessments.

## **8. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years. The next review date is March 2027

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Hazel Farlam.