



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”
Proverbs 22:6

STAFF WELLBEING POLICY

Author	J. Hackney
Committee	Standards
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The scope of this policy is Forsbrook CE Primary School and Nursery OOSC	

We are a Christian school where quality and opportunities make a difference. We value all children as unique ‘Children of God’ and nurture each other to show **LOVE** in our relationships and a **RESPECT** for all. We foster **HOPE** within our community and encourage children to find **PEACE** by creating times and places for stillness and reflection. We strive for excellence, inspiring dreams both now and in the future. We promote **POSITIVITY**, celebrate **COURAGE**, demonstrate **RESPONSIBILITY** and share **JOY** through...

‘Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus’.

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Statement of Intent

Forsbrook Church of England Primary School endeavours to ensure that staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. We recognise that staff wellbeing is important to pupil achievement and the school's performance.

Forsbrook Church of England Primary School is committed to ensuring 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. Staff who work with children are supported through termly **safeguarding supervision**, which provides a confidential setting in which to discuss concerns about children and the emotional demands of that work. Safeguarding supervision is held separately from appraisal.

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, and that support is available for mental health and stress management, including access to internal and external resources.

The school is maintained by Staffordshire County Council, which is the employer of all staff. This policy is applied alongside the local authority's HR policies for schools as adopted by the governing body.

Work-related stress is a workplace risk, not only a welfare matter. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, it must be assessed and controlled in the same way as any other risk to health. The school uses the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards – demands, control, support, relationships, role and change – as the framework for doing so.

The governing body runs an on-site nursery taking children from birth to five. Where this policy refers to staff, it includes staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the arrangements described are applied in a way that works for staff who are counted in statutory staffing ratios.

1. Aims of the policy

- 1.1 To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high standard of education to pupils.
- 1.2 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.

- 1.3 To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices, including remote working where appropriate, without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- 1.4 To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- 1.5 To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 To improve staff development, co-operation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 To provide structured termly safeguarding supervision for staff who work with children, and to ensure that staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive supervision meeting the requirements of the EYFS statutory framework.
- 1.10 To protect staff from bullying and harassment at work, including from parents, carers, visitors and other third parties.
- 1.11 To ensure that staff know how to raise a concern about their own wellbeing, and what the school will do in response.

2. Roles

The governing body:

2.1.1 Will take overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.

2.1.2 Will adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment. All employees have a statutory right from their first day of employment to request flexible working, and requests will be handled in line with that right and with the local authority's terms and conditions.

2.1.3 Will ensure that clear procedures are in place that will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures, such as those adopted by the governing body from the local authority's HR policies for schools.

2.1.4 Will provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision-making processes.

2.1.5 Will review the demands on staff, including workload and communication practices, and seek practical solutions wherever possible.

2.1.6 Will provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building, and wellbeing initiatives.

2.1.7 Will consider and address the workload and wellbeing of the Headteacher and other leaders, and satisfy itself that leaders have access to support from outside the school.

2.1.8 Will take all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment of staff, including harassment by parents, carers, visitors and contractors, and will ensure staff know how to report it.

2.1.9 Will receive a report on staff wellbeing at least annually, including the findings of the stress risk assessment and the action taken.

The Headteacher:

2.2.1 Will ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard.

2.2.2 Will support the governing body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress.

2.2.3 Will adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons.

2.2.4 Will ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life, and manage expectations of digital communication outside school hours.

2.2.5 Will create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, including mental health and workload, and will encourage openness without stigma.

2.2.6 Will ensure that all staff are aware of and trained in-line with the school's priorities and offered opportunities for development.

2.2.7 Will monitor and review any measures that are planned, and assess their effectiveness through staff feedback and wellbeing surveys.

2.2.8 Will conduct risk assessments for work-related stress in consultation with senior staff and recognised trade unions, using the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards, and will complete an individual stress risk assessment where a member of staff is affected.

2.2.9 Will make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer-term reasonable adjustments to work.

2.2.10 Will ensure that termly safeguarding supervision takes place and that staff receive structured guidance and support.

2.2.11 Will put arrangements in place for the supervision of staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stage, giving them the opportunity to discuss children's development or wellbeing including child protection concerns, to identify solutions as issues arise, and to receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

2.2.12 Will access professional supervision or equivalent support for their own role, and will tell the governing body what arrangement is in place.

2.2.13 Will ensure that records of supervision are held securely and seen only by those who need to see

them, and that staff are told at the outset that confidentiality cannot be absolute where a safeguarding concern arises.

Staff members:

2.3.1 Will make themselves aware of the school's policies and ensure that these are adhered to.

2.3.2 Will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.

2.3.3 Will ask their Line Manager for help or support if required, and engage fully in termly safeguarding supervision.

2.3.4 Will identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school.

2.3.5 Will apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance, and will report sickness absence promptly in line with the local authority's sickness absence procedure.

2.3.6 Will share their views, ideas, and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.

2.3.7 Will report any bullying or harassment of themselves or a colleague, whether by another member of staff or by a parent, carer, visitor or contractor, to the Headteacher or, where the concern is about the Headteacher, to the Chair of Governors.

3. Actions to support new staff

New staff, including those new to a role within the school and those returning after a long absence, are supported as follows.

3.1 An induction is provided before, or in the first week of, appointment. It covers the school's vision and expectations, the staff code of conduct, safeguarding, and the practical arrangements of the working day.

3.2 All staff read Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education in full at induction, are told who the designated safeguarding lead and deputies are, and are given the child protection policy, the behaviour policy and the staff behaviour policy.

3.3 Staff appointed to the nursery additionally receive an induction covering the Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements, including safe sleep, safer eating, supervision of children, and the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

3.4 A named colleague is identified as a first point of contact for the first term. Early career teachers additionally receive their statutory induction entitlement and a mentor.

3.5 Workload is kept under review during the first term, and new staff are not expected to take on additional responsibilities during that period.

3.6 New staff are told at induction how to reach the sources of support listed at 4.10, and that information is repeated during the year rather than given once.

4. Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

4.1 Early indications

Stress affects people differently and the early signs are easy to miss. They may include changes in mood or behaviour, withdrawal from colleagues, uncharacteristic irritability or tearfulness, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, increased short-term absence, or working excessive hours. Leaders and staff are asked to notice these signs in themselves and in one another, and to act early rather than wait for a crisis.

4.2 What a member of staff should do

Any member of staff who is finding work difficult, for whatever reason, should raise it. This can be with their line manager, with the Headteacher under the open-door arrangement described at section 5, or with a trade union representative. Staff do not need to wait until they are unwell, and do not need to give a reason before asking for a conversation.

4.3 What the school will do

The Headteacher, or a member of the senior leadership team, will meet the member of staff promptly and in private. Where work is a contributing factor, an individual stress risk assessment is completed with the member of staff, using the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards to identify what is causing pressure and what can reasonably be changed. Actions are agreed, recorded, given a date and reviewed.

4.4 Occupational health and reasonable adjustments

Where it would help, a referral is made to the local authority's occupational health service. Staff may also refer themselves to the counselling service described at 4.10. Where a member of staff has a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, which can include a mental health condition, the school will make reasonable adjustments. Adjustments are reviewed with the member of staff rather than left in place indefinitely without discussion.

4.5 Absence and return to work

Sickness absence is managed under the local authority's sickness absence procedure. Where absence relates to stress or mental health, the school agrees with the member of staff how and how often contact is kept during absence, and plans the return to work in advance. A phased return or a temporary change of duties will be considered.

4.6 Bullying, harassment and abuse of staff

Staff are entitled to work without being bullied or harassed. This includes harassment by parents, carers, visitors and contractors as well as by colleagues. The school takes all reasonable steps to prevent it, does not treat abuse of staff by parents as something to be absorbed, and acts on reports. Incidents are recorded. Formal complaints are dealt with under the local authority's grievance and anti-harassment procedures.

4.7 Raising a concern about practice

Staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, including any failure in the school's safeguarding arrangements, and to do so without detriment. Concerns are raised with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, or through the school's whistleblowing procedure. Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a safeguarding concern internally, the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available on 0800 028 0285.

4.8 Support for staff subject to a concern or allegation

A concern or allegation about a member of staff is distressing, whatever the outcome. Where one is raised, the member of staff will be told as soon as it is possible to do so without prejudicing an investigation, will be kept informed of progress, and will be given a named point of contact who is not the investigating officer. They will be reminded of the support available under this policy and of their right to be accompanied by a

trade union representative. These arrangements sit alongside, and do not replace, the school's procedures for handling allegations and low-level concerns.

4.9 Confidentiality and records

Conversations under this section are treated in confidence. Records are held securely, kept only for as long as they are needed, and seen only by those who need to see them. Confidentiality has one limit: where information indicates a risk to a child or to the member of staff themselves it will be acted on, and the member of staff will be told that this is the case.

4.10 Sources of support

Education Support is the charity for everyone working in education, including teaching assistants and administrative and site staff. Its helpline is free, confidential and available at any hour on 08000 562 561. ThinkWell is Staffordshire County Council's staff counselling service. Staff may refer themselves, and a self-referral is confidential – the school is not told that a member of staff has made one. The local authority's occupational health service is available by referral through the Headteacher. Staff may also contact their trade union, or their own GP.

5. Procedures to promote staff wellbeing

- Twice weekly communication via staff meetings and morning staff briefings.
- Additional communication via email/notice board where necessary, respecting workload boundaries.
- Continuing professional development for all staff.
- Performance management and appraisal, held separately from **safeguarding supervision**.
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan during staff meetings.
- All staff invited to staff meetings/INSET days.
- Recognition on staff birthdays/special occasions.
- Staff room to relax, work, and support colleagues.
- PPA time is taken from home. Equivalent arrangements are agreed with the Headteacher for nursery staff who cannot leave the setting during session times.
- Leaders have designated leadership time plus additional 'gain' time where necessary.
- Time given for special events e.g., child's sports day.
- Health & Safety board in staff room provides information about services that can be accessed if needed. The same information is given at induction and is available from the school office.
- A day in lieu for running a club all year.
- All staff who work with children engage with termly safeguarding supervision.
- Open door policy where problems/issues (personal or professional) can be shared with Headteacher.
- Access to external mental health support and counselling, including the Education Support helpline on 08000 562 561 and the local authority's ThinkWell counselling service – see 4.10.
- An annual stress risk assessment using the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards, with the findings reported to the governing body.