



### STAFF WELLBEING POLICY

<b>Person(s) responsible for this policy</b>		<b>Head</b>	
<b>Last review by</b>	<b>C Elliott</b>	<b>Review date</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Date of next review</b>		<b>September 2025</b>	

#### 1. Introduction

The school as an employer has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It has a commitment to mitigate, as far as possible, factors that could harm employees' wellbeing, including work-related stress. This duty can only extend to those factors which are work-related and within the school's control, although we recognise that wellbeing is holistic and we strive to ensure that every employee can flourish and feel supported in the workplace. Please see Appendix A for a summary of approaches to support staff wellbeing over the past year.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive's definition of work-related stress as "*the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them*" and the definition of well-being as "*the mental, emotional, sociological and physiological health of an individual*". We recognise a distinction between 'reasonable pressures', which stimulate and motivate, and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with sustained and/or 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, parents or students.

The Health and Safety Executive has 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. The school's effectiveness in managing employees' wellbeing and stress management will be assessed in the context of the HSE Management Standards.

These are:

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control:** how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support:** the encouragement and resources provided by the school, line managers and colleagues
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working relationships to avoid conflict and dealing fairly and proportionately with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** ensuring that every employee understands their role within the organisation
- **Change:** effective planning, management, communication and support for organisational change (large or small)

#### 2. Statement of Intent

- The school acknowledges the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health and prioritises actively promoting employees' wellbeing as far as reasonably practicable.
- Employee wellbeing is a core consideration in all planning and organisational matters.
- The school is committed to fostering a culture of mutual trust, respect and cooperation, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level, in line with our whole school values of kindness, respect, integrity and compassion.
- The school recognises that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' wellbeing and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

- The Staff Wellbeing policy is aligned with the school's Health and Safety policy.

The school will promote the wellbeing of employees by:

- Creating a working environment where potential work-related stressors, as far as possible, are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, organisation and planning, effective human resources policies, and staff development and support.
- Increasing managers' and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress.
- Listening to the voices of staff, including responding to the feedback from surveys and other sources.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of ill-health.
- Developing the professional awareness of managers to support their team's wellbeing.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the school, with the Staff Consultative Committee as a key part of this.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate life balance.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and encouraging engagement with the Employee Assistance Programme as part of this.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Providing additional support for wellbeing through the training and support of staff Adult Mental Health First-aiders. Currently the Head of PSHCE and Head of Transition fulfil these roles.

### **3. Responsibilities for implementing the Staff Wellbeing policy**

**The school will:**

- Support all steps taken to develop a culture of mutual trust, respect and cooperation, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level, in line with our whole school values of kindness, respect, integrity and compassion.
- Champion good management practices and forward planning so that pinch points are carefully managed and supported.
- Promote effective consultation, planning and communication to support employees in any changes in the organisation, at both a school-wide and departmental level.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and wellbeing.

**Managers and supervisors will:**

- 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 tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- Ensure that there is excellent communication and forward planning and that there are opportunities for individuals to raise concerns about their work through line management structures and in ad hoc ways as necessary.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work-related stress to ensure consistency and fairness across the school.
- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles, initiatives or working practices that may give rise to work-related stress, with an awareness of "unintended consequences".
- Support and encourage their staff to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the school to promote wellbeing and more effective working.
- Take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress.

**All employees will:**

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration and dignity in line with our school values of kindness, respect, integrity and compassion.
- Support the school's wellbeing policy in spirit and action and raise their own awareness of the causes and effects of stress on health.
- Feel empowered to 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 wellbeing.
- Take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- Take responsibility for their own professional development to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.

**The GDST will:**

- Provide advice to managers of staff and employees on best practice in relation to human resource management and developing policies and procedures as required including membership of the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Ensure that there are arrangements in place for communicating the content of the GDST's human resources management policies and procedures to managers and staff.
- Develop arrangements to enable managers and staff to achieve the necessary competences.
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals who are experiencing stress, referring them to the Employee Assistance Programme where appropriate.
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support managers experiencing problems with employee performance.
- 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, exit interviews
  - Number of grievance and harassment cases
- Seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the school's Wellbeing policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires or means.

**The School will additionally:**

- Ensure that the Wellbeing policy is reviewed every three years following feedback from all relevant sources of information.
- Assist and support managers to undertake local stress risk assessment where required.
- Liaise with the Staff Consultative Committee on the development and implementation of the Wellbeing policy.

**The Staff Consultative Committee will:**

- Act as the main focus group for consulting on the effectiveness of the well-being policy and the measures taken to implement it, consulting staff in relation to wellbeing
- Monitor the implementation of the Wellbeing policy

**Arrangements for implementing the Wellbeing policy**

**1. Risk Assessment**

In school risk assessments will be developed to establish whether the school's policies and procedures are sufficient to enable compliance with the HSE's "Management Standards" in relation to the management of work-related stress.

## **2. Arrangements for wellbeing and stress prevention through good management practices**

These include the following:

- Robust and safe recruitment and selection procedures.
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that recruitment for the job is appropriate.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers, to be cascaded through to colleagues at all levels
- Training and development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them, including detailed new staff induction procedures.
- Effective appraisal and performance management procedures
- Capability, absence management and return to work procedures followed in a timely and consistent way to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness or absence.
- Appropriate adaptations for disability.
- Effective procedures against harassment and bullying and zero tolerance of this.
- Procedures for communicating with employees about the strategic development of the school and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements where possible and appropriate to the role. Well planned 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.

## **Appendix A**

### **Approaches to support staff wellbeing in the senior school in 2023-2024:**

- The reduction of break-time staff meetings to only once a week on Tuesdays.
- The rescheduling of Senior Tuesday after-school staff meetings to avoid whole school staff meetings in the same week as other significant evening events involving a large number of staff such as Parent Teacher meetings
- Extending the time when lunch is available to staff to start from 12:30 to give greater flexibility to have lunch and provide curricular support and co-curricular activities to pupils in lunchtimes
- The creation of a more nuanced duty system whereby staff are on Priority Cover (when they are most likely to be used for cover) thereby freeing up other cover lessons (except in exceptional circumstances) so that meetings and extra sessions can be scheduled in that time.
- The scheduling of fortnightly department meetings in timetables or lunchtimes (protected time) for all departments from September 2024.
- Improvements to the forward planning and organisation of school events so that all staff can plan ahead, avoid clashes and have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in events.
- Improved communication of school organisation through Headlines emails and staff briefing notes.
- An open and listening response to concerns raised in the staff Engage survey.
- Active progress in presenting the views of staff about concerns about pay in order to develop a new GDST pay structure for all staff.
- Increased department time during INSET, as requested in staff feedback on INSET.

### **Approaches to support staff wellbeing in the Prep school in 2023-2024:**

- Launch of new specific Prep School Staff Council
- Work with Emma Gleadhill to develop culture and communication across the staff
- Reduction of the number of clubs staff lead across an academic year
- Reduction of email traffic through the encouragement of conversation and use of appropriate emoji responses
- Scrutiny of time allocation and allowances to ensure transparency, consistency and fairness across staff including HoDs' time allowance for subject assurance focus
- Restructure of after-school staff meetings to avoid whole school staff meetings in the same week as other significant evening events involving a large number of staff such as Parent Teacher meetings
- Allocated 'cover' slots identified on timetable for teacher who have 'time in hand' to reduce pressures on wider teaching team
- Scheduling of key meetings in timetables within time allowances for positions of responsibility
- Improvements to the forward planning and organisation of school events so that all staff can plan ahead, avoid clashes and have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in events, with a working party established to support with planning and timing of key events
- Improved communication of school organisation through staff briefing notes and briefings on Monday/Thursday and also the appointment of a colleague to oversee operational logistics on a day-to-day basis including cover and weekly overview planning
- An open and listening response to concerns raised in the staff Engage survey
- Active progress in presenting the views of staff about concerns about pay in order to develop a new GDST pay structure for all staff
- Increased 'set up' time during INSET, as requested in staff feedback on INSET
- Managing and Identifying Stress as part of IHASCO CPD training
- Redesign of the weekly overview and use of outlook features such as tagging to tighten up communication and reduce email traffic
- TA technology training and timetabled meetings
- Chill and paint event for team building
- Revamp of outdoor area for staff to enjoy during break times
- Wellbeing Day- feedback taken on board about staff non-contact time and inclusion of KS1 assemblies
- 1:1 line management meetings

