

Gorse Hall Primary and Nursery School



Staff Wellbeing Policy

Reviewed: December 2023
Review date: December 2024

1. Introduction

At Gorse Hall Primary and Nursery School we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a close-knit, purposeful learning community.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils, and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

We believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

This purpose of this policy is to ensure that we embrace the many school practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harmful effects of stress and ensure that there is cohesion in working towards health and wellbeing for all staff. It outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining staff wellbeing and it recognises that each individual member of staff and their circumstances are different but provides an overview of the basis on which everyone can contribute, and expect to be treated. This year, we have worked alongside Emotionally Friendly Settings programme which has audited our wellbeing provision and allowed us to develop an action plan.

2. Aims

We aim to ensure that our school:

- Supports staff mental health and wellbeing and recognises how these change over time
- Minimises stress
- Helps staff to keep a healthy work-life balance
- Helps staff to manage their family and work responsibilities
- Staff feel valued
- Recognises and promotes the importance of a happy team
- Involves staff in decision making
- Takes account of equality implications
- Ensures that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The senior leadership team (SLT), governing body and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, empathy and honesty underpin all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice. We expect all staff to show respect and empathy for each other, and to treat confidential information sensitively.

The nominated persons are

- Wellbeing Lead -J. Evans,
- SENDCO Lead - N. Suleman
- Wellbeing Working Team - S.Abbott/N.Thompstone/ J.Hand
- Wellbeing Nominated Governor – Glyn Goodchild

The governing body is responsible for:

- Fulfilling its duty of care as an employer
- Monitoring and supporting the wellbeing of headteacher
- Receiving and responding to any concerns from members of staff
- Ensuring that the resources are in place to keep staff workload at healthy levels

- Be reasonable about the format and quality of information asked from staff as part of monitoring work
- Reviewing this policy in conjunction with the headteacher
- Considering how its own members are treated and valued
- Ensuring that demands are not placed on individual members of staff that interfere unfairly with their work-life balance
- Ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff wellbeing
- Overseeing that any change in management is operated in a fair and reasonable way.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading and setting standards for conduct, including how they treat members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Managing a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Making sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly reviewing the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seeking alternative solutions wherever possible
- Making sure job descriptions are up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff are consulted before any changes made
- Listening to the views of all staff and involve them in the decision -making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicating any initiatives effectively with all staff to ensure they feel included and are aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Making sure the efforts and successes of all staff are recognised and celebrated
- Providing staff with a list of meetings, deadlines and events in advance so they can plan ahead
- Providing resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promoting information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organising extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections.

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the deputy headteachers, senior leaders, Wellbeing leads and pastoral staff and who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice.

The Wellbeing Team are responsible for:

- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Providing staff drop in sessions where needed
- Cascading information /knowledge to improve wellbeing of all staff
- Monitoring of staff wellbeing and conducting staff wellbeing surveys
- Ensuring that areas of development are actioned and evaluated
- Promoting wellbeing and good mental health through planned activities, policies etc
- Ensuring that staff have opportunities to contribute to the wellbeing of staff and have a voice e.g. Staff suggestion box
- Ensuring support services are made available or signposted on behalf of members of staff where additional specialist support is needed.

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

Where possible, support will be given by phase leaders or Senior Leadership Team. This could be through:

- Giving 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.

Members of staff are responsible for:

- Treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness
- Taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support
- Being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- Valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes
- Contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit
- Developing and respecting shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax as well as appropriate work spaces.

Staff are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, support will be given on an individual basis.

Examples of good practice may include:

- Providing fitness classes for staff (subsidised or free where possible)
- Promoting wellbeing through activities after school e.g. Book Club, Crochet Club, Wellbeing Coffee and Chat, Staff lunch
- Giving staff the option to plan their own social activities
- Celebrating staff achievements and promoting kindness via various methods e.g. Staff shout out display/ Random Acts of Kindness
- Providing pastoral services – drop-ins and confidential sessions with Wellbeing Leads and signposting to outside agencies and support if needed
- Providing creative spaces for staff to be able to meet, relax and work quietly
- Having an open-door policy with SLT
- Supporting teachers in their workload by ensure professional development meetings are designated to planning, assessing and reporting
- Ensuring staff meetings are purposeful
- Putting a Wellbeing plan in place
- Wellbeing surveys being conducted and reviewed at least twice in the academic year
- Reviewing of workload management on a frequent basis and implementing changes that reduce workload and maintain a good work/home-life balance.

4. Support in specific circumstances

The school will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to specific circumstances. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek external services but the school will continue to support even when external services are involved.

Where possible, staff are supported with their work-life balance and wellbeing outside the school. This could be through providing staff with paid leave for special events and celebrations, or time off to deal with specific family circumstances or crisis.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- Feedback and marking
- Bereavement and loss
- Performance management
- Health and safety
- Attendance management and procedure
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing.

This policy should be read in conjunction with guidance for:

- Equal statement
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour policy