

Pikes Lane Primary School



Staff Wellbeing Policy



Policy Leader: Miss A Hicks

Linked Governor Sub Committee: Curriculum and Standards Committee

Introduction

The Governing Board at Pikes Lane is committed to providing a working environment and management practices that promote the good health and wellbeing of all its employees and fosters a culture of resilience in which all can thrive. We fully recognise that staff are our most important resource and are to be valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally within a learning and caring community.

We know there to be a relationship between healthier, more positive staff, pupil achievement and school improvement. As such, there is an ethos and an expectation that staff will be committed to doing their best in all job roles in the best interests of the school and our children. There is also recognition that the school will support and reward staff for this. The purpose of this policy is to provide a document that summarises the ways in which both employer and employee can contribute to positive wellbeing in school and how this will support the aims and high standards we want to achieve for our children and community.

Intent

At Pikes Lane, we fully acknowledge the demands and challenges within the teaching professional and for those working in the wider school community. Within this realisation, there are limitations to what the Governing Board can reasonably do to balance staff wellbeing priorities within the success of the organisation and commitment to providing the best for our children. This policy seeks to outline that balance but ensure staff feel supported and there are no remaining barriers which the school has not sought to address.

Wellbeing Strategy

The Governing Board's 'duty of care' towards employees, legislation and case law, require them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological well-being of the school's employees.

To help meet these objectives, the School has adopted and is committed to the principles of:

- the **Attendance Management Policy and Procedure** which provides a framework with clear milestones enabling school leaders to effectively to manage attendance and outlines how support will be provided.
- the **Health and Safety Policy** which provides a framework for, and measurement of, safe working practices and associated risk assessments.
- the **Equality Policy** which ensure staff are free from harassment and discriminatory behaviours and can work in an environment committed to all protected characteristics within the Equalities Act.
- the **Visitor Code of Conduct** which ensures that staff have protection from inappropriate conduct from visitors to the school.
- this **Staff Wellbeing Policy** which focuses on the school's obligations to supporting staff's health and wellbeing.

It is vital that all staff are aware of these policies and the role all employees undertake to ensure we all work in a healthy workplace. These policies form part of all staff induction procedures.

At Pikes Lane, we value the contribution of all staff to create the culture where our children succeed. We expect all staff should model our ethos and motto; Together we can be the best.

Staff Attendance

We prioritise attendance in order to deliver the best outcomes for our children but acknowledge that absence can be unfortunately unavoidable. We acknowledge that absence can be seen as a symptom of issues with wider wellbeing. We need to have a clear understanding of the causes of absence in order to formulate strategies that address non-attendance (sickness absence). The main causes of absence can be viewed as four distinct areas:

<u>Health and lifestyle factors:</u> Genuine illness/poor health Smoking Excessive use of alcohol Lack of exercise Body weight	<u>Workplace factors:</u> Working patterns Health and safety concerns Travel times Excessive hours Safe place of work Relationships at work
<u>Attitudinal and stress factors:</u> Job satisfaction Career satisfaction Intention to leave Organisational commitment Stress Absence 'culture'	<u>Domestic and relationship factors:</u> Divorce/separation Number of children under 16 Lack of flexible working arrangements Caring responsibilities Financial worries Bereavement

Managing Attendance

We are transparent in our policies for managing attendance and supporting staff. Clear and consistently applied procedures play an important part in managing attendance. However, these mechanisms do not necessarily address some of the underlying causes of sickness absence. It is in some of these areas where prevention may be more effective than cure.

Specific areas for preventative action which we adopt at Pikes Lane include:

- Promotion of good health management.
- Recruitment and screening procedures.
- Flexible working applications to the Governing Board (where operationally appropriate).
- Improving the physical working environment through annual investment.
- Managing career expectations through the appraisal review process and CPD.

- Building trust and loyalty within our team culture.
- Monitoring of working hours.
- Monitoring of individual workloads.
- Prevention of accidents through effective health and safety.
- Occupational ill health referrals.
- Provision of Employee Advice Programme and support.

Advice and guidance in all these areas is available through existing policies or via your line manager at supervision meetings and RF meetings.

The Need for a Workplace Wellbeing Policy

Promoting and protecting the wellbeing of the workforce is important to the Governing Board. Many factors in the workplace influence the wellbeing of individual employees, or the school. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect staff wellbeing has a wide range of benefits, both for the individual and the school.

The Governing Board will continue to promote and work towards performance improvement and efficiency, getting the very best from our people, retaining and attracting the people who are best skilled and well-motivated which support the work that we want to do in the service of our children and families.

Wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing at work for themselves as well as others. Addressing workplace wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health.

Guidelines for Implementation

Senior Leaders and the Governing Board will;

- Seek to identify potential circumstances that may affect the wellbeing of staff and conduct risk assessments through reflection facilitator meetings.
- Seek to recruit and retain staff who are committed to our ethos and motto; *Together we can be the best*; promoting the spirit of collaboration and support.
- Increase awareness and understanding of how to promote wellbeing at work and the avoidance of absence.
- Ensure advice and guidance is available to leaders in dealing with wellbeing concerns of staff.
- Ensure that there is a culture where there is no expectation that staff communicate about work outside of normal working hours (except in an emergency, e.g. child protection issues); see 'communication' section.
- Continue to adhere to national terms and conditions for all staff, including occupational sick pay.
- Provide staff with the opportunity to undertake confidential health assessment activities.
- Ensure that all staff take part in a supportive performance management appraisal process.

- Promote the opportunity for organised staff social events.
- Provide personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness, communications.
- Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes.
- Operate sensitive appraisal and performance management linked to clear job roles.
- Provide extra support from SLT at times of stress and challenge, e.g. Ofsted inspections, Child Protection cases.
- Provide a non-judgmental and confidential support system, e.g. ECT mentors.
- Promote information about access to supportive services.
- Provide staff with sense of security and safety through our building security, training, and support for dealing with challenging incidents.
- Role model appropriate work life balance and resilience.

Where possible, staff are supported with their work/life balance and wellbeing outside the school. Examples of this include the discretionary provision of staff paid leave for exceptional special events and celebrations, and compassionate leave in the event of family difficulties.

All staff are encouraged to take a responsible approach to health and wellbeing issues, including adopting a robust self-management to their own health. We prioritise a culture of resilience with our children, which we expect to be role modelled by our staff team.

How we help employees

Some of the ways in which we support the wellbeing of staff include:

- Provide personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness, communications.
- Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes.
- Operate sensitive appraisal and performance management linked to clear job roles.
- Provide extra support from SLT at times of stress and challenge, e.g. Ofsted inspections, Child Protection cases.
- Provide a non-judgmental and confidential support system, e.g. ECT mentors.
- Promote information about access to supportive services.
- Provide staff with sense of security and safety through our building security, training and support for dealing with challenging incidents.
- Creating an expectation that staff 'work smart' and have opportunities built in directed time to complete work in school.
- Streamlined feedback policy and focus on expectation.
- Use of verbal feedback and self/peer assessment across marking profile.
- Expectation of 2/3 written outcomes in books each week, use of Showbie/ Earwig for other evidence.
- Using line managers to help support and provide advice for all staff in the school.
- Giving time within designated staff meetings and assemblies to carry out tasks.
- One INSET day given annually to support teacher report writing.
- Leadership provision for leaders in school and blocked subject leader time.
- Providing an overview of school activities, including monitoring, on the termly Dates, Events and Deadlines document (in All Staff – Important Information) so staff can plan workload in advance.
- Provide a weekly briefing note too all staff as well as cover information and deadlines are made clear on specific boards within the staffroom.

- Facilitate network opportunities within school team approach and across cluster/PASS group/lab school to share workload, practice and expertise.
- operate a team culture in school for support and streamlining of workload (phase meetings).
- Planning and data capture streamlining to remove duplication of tasks.
- Providing PPA time which may be taken off site.
- Twilights and after school events, replace staff development meetings, rather than being in addition.
- One to one lpad across years 1 to 6 to minimise need for administrative tasks such as photocopying, resource preparation etc.
- Employee benefit of Employee Assistance programmes through HR – details in the staffroom.
- Gifts awarded following draw from the Staff Shoutout raffle which are nominated by staff for those who have supported/done a great job – growing a culture of collegiate positivity, respect and gratitude.
- Nightly school closure bell at 5.30pm, no staff expected to be on site after this time.
- Transparency around Teachers' Standards expectations.
- Health and Wellbeing events plotted across the year.
- Health and Wellbeing committee scrutinise the actions of school leaders to ensure policy is being implemented.
- A refurbished staff room for all members of staff to relax, work and support colleagues.
- Pupil progress meetings take place during school hours.

Definitions

One of the main concerns in promoting the wellbeing of staff is to encourage positive mental health. By doing this, it is recognised that positive action must be taken to reduce the occurrence of workplace stress. The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as being “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”. However, it is important that the difference between “pressure” and “stress” be acknowledged: pressure does not necessarily give rise to stress and pressure can sometimes motivate. While acknowledging that pressure and stress may also be caused by a range of issues external to the workplace, the Governing Board's prime responsibility in this is to address work-related stress.

Communication Protocols

Communication in school takes many forms and the Governing Board acknowledges schools are very busy places with timetables which must constantly be altered to meet the changing priorities and commitments of staff in the school. Every effort is made by the leadership team to facilitate effective communication. This is done in the following ways;

- A weekly briefing note is sent out every Friday by 5pm with an overview of the events and upcoming deadlines for the following week. The majority of staff use this for reference whilst leaders in school may use Google Calendar for more detailed overviews for the whole school.

- Use of a deadlines board in the staffroom ensures all deadlines are communicated clearly to all staff.
- Use of a cover board in the staffroom ensures if staff cover is needed at any point, all staff are aware of the arrangements made. This is completed/updated by 8:15 am each morning and all staff are expected to consult the board before the start of the day.
- Professional Development Meetings take place weekly. The overview of these meetings is on the DEDs document and in Google Calendar. This gives an overview of the meeting focus. All meetings are begun with a housekeeping section where key messages are communicated, and all staff are free to raise issues within AOB. We also ensure to focus on positive messages that we share.
- E-mail communication is used widely throughout the school and staff are expected to check their emails at the start and end of the school day as a minimum. Whilst emails may be sent at any point, there is no expectation that responses should be received other than at the next checking interval. **It is not expected that staff respond to email outside school operating hours unless in an emergency situation, i.e. safeguarding or emergency school closure protocols.**
- The 'All staff' drive has key documents within the Important Information folder so all staff may access key policies and reference documents if they need to refer to specific detail at any point. Key documents are on Google Drive for ease of remote access.
- CPOMS. As our key incident recording system, CPOMS alerts are another way of communicating key messages efficiently. These will arrive in email alerts, and as such, the expectation is they will be seen twice daily. If an urgent response is needed, face to face communication should also be used.
- Face to face communication is clearly vitally important. Other communication does not seek to remove the need for face-to-face communication but make in school communication efficient and effective.
- Text messages. It is not a school expectation that text messages are used between staff. Staff may report their absence to the Executive Head on the morning of absence **before 8am** to allow the necessary cover arrangements to be made.
- At Pikes Lane, we agree to be aware that text communication should not operate outside the normal working hours of the school day except for emergency communication, i.e., in the event of a school closure. Email is the communication method to be used out of school hours. Important safeguarding information can be inputted into CPOMS to use the alert system built into the system.
- Staff are encouraged to turn notifications linked to their school email/Showbie off on their personal devices such as mobile phones. There is no expectation for staff to

respond to received communications outside the working hours.

To promote high attendance managers will:

- Carry out risk assessments to identify health and wellbeing issues related to work.
- Implement appropriate control measures to minimise risks to health and wellbeing.
- Raise awareness of the causes, signs and symptoms of stress and stress-related illness, and of the ways in which the school supports individuals.
- Ensure they are equipped to respond to staff well-being concerns.
- Educate employees in techniques for recognising and coping with potentially stressful situations.
- Provide information about appropriate welfare services to all employees, including the availability of any employee assistance programme.

The following have been identified as appropriate measures of employee performance and wellbeing for the purposes of managing health and well-being:

- Absences will be recorded and monitored for data analysis.
- Meetings will be called with the Business Manager to discuss support and improvements if a pattern of absence is detected and triggers are hit; i.e. 3 absences in 6 months or 4 in 12 months.
- Return to Work interviews will be held for staff following a longer period of absence, these will seek to address support in place for wellbeing
- Exit questionnaires will be used and followed up with appropriate exit interviews when staff leave employment;
- Use of Occupational Health and counselling services will be monitored without breaching confidentiality.
- School will keep in contact with any member of staff who is absent for longer periods

Wellbeing Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring:

- The engagement of line managers at all levels in the importance of managing staff wellbeing.
- Allocation of appropriate resources to enable line managers to deliver the agreed strategy proactively, including (where appropriate) the use of occupational health referrals for expert opinion.
- Active implementation of the principles and behaviours contributing to positive staff wellbeing.

- Alertness to employees' personal circumstances and offering additional support where appropriate to members of staff experiencing risks to their wellbeing which derive from outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation.
- Ensuring effective communication between leaders and staff.
- In particular, ensuring effective communication where there are organisational and/or procedural changes which give rise to increased levels of stress in the workplace.
- Ensuring that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not tolerated and promote a positive culture of collaboration and support.
- Assistance is requested from HR with stress risk assessments, if required, when it is identified that an employee is suffering from stress or where there is a perceived risk of stress and ensure that any reasonable measures identified are implemented.
- That employees are consulted over aspects of their employment that may cause stress or impact on their health and well-being when changes affecting them are planned.
- That employees receive appropriate training and resources to carry out their duties.
- That staff are provided with appropriate development opportunities to manage absence in accordance with the Absence Management Strategy.
- Workloads are considered to ensure jobs are realistic and manageable.
- Working hours are monitored, overtime and holidays to encourage individuals to take breaks as required by legislation (i.e., site staff).
- Familiarise themselves with the impact of bullying and harassment and ensure that employees are aware that this is not tolerated in the workplace.
- Recognise that employees may have experiences in their personal lives that may make them vulnerable to pressures at work, and which may have a temporary influence on their work performance e.g., health issues or personal circumstances.
- Treat all discussions with employees around personal issues as confidential unless it is necessary to involve others to deal with the issue.
- That unreasonable working hours are not conducive to wellbeing and employees are supported in smart working.

Employees will:

- Take appropriate steps to ensure their own health and safety at work and cooperate with the leadership team in any measures taken to reduce stress through their actions.
- Work with leaders in working smart to limit the hours worked over the week.
- Be considerate of their co-workers' wellbeing engaging in the promotion of a collaborative, supportive workplace.
- Adhere to the communication protocols to consider wellbeing of others.
- Report any concerns regarding wellbeing to leaders so support may be offered.
- Be proactive in identifying occasions when they may be suffering from health and wellbeing problems, either work-related, or due to external factors, and alert their line manager to these where appropriate.
- Make use of support avenues offered to them, i.e., OH or EAP
- Be mindful of their own workload and alert line managers to potential worries before a crisis is reached.
- Actively engage in reflection dialogue and coaching conversations.
- Employ the principles shared in NLP and other training to reframe, consider cause and effect and the power of language.

Examples of Good Practice

- One INSET day is given each year to teachers to write reports.
- Time is provided for Subject Leaders and Phase Leaders to complete major tasks every term.
- Positive comments made about the school and staff are recorded on Staff Shoutout Padlet.
- Staff have opportunities to enjoy socialising together through events organised.
- Communication problems are tackled through texting services, weekly briefing note, DEDs and regular TA meetings.
- Continuous CPD needs are addressed.

