

Diocesan Education Team

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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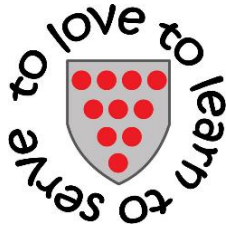
DIOCESE OF  
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# **Guidance from the Diocesan Board of Education**

## **Model Policy for Wellbeing in Schools**

**April 2021**

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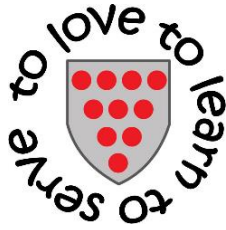
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### Introduction

This policy has been written in response to the changing mental health and wellbeing pressures on all staff working within schools, in order to provide a framework for schools to help and support the flourishing of the adults within their care.

*Text in red is for guidance purposes and should not be included in the policy.*

**Name of School:**

**Vision:** *[Insert your school's distinctively Christian Vision here, making reference to it as you write this policy]*

### Statement of Intent

*[Name of school / academy]* recognises that staff are our most important resource, and they are to be valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring and nurturing community. We accept that there is a strong correlation between healthier, more positive staff, pupil achievement and school improvement.<sup>1</sup>

*[Name of school / academy]* is committed to making sure that this *Staff Wellbeing Policy* is implemented so that each individual is assisted in coping successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress. We understand, through our Christian Vision, that supporting staff in their mental health is part of enabling adults and then pupils to flourish.

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

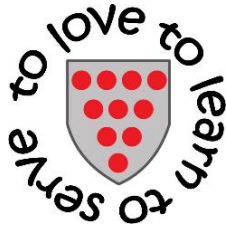
### Legal Framework<sup>2</sup>

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- *Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974*
- *Employment Rights Act, 1996*
- *Employment Relations Act, 1999*
- *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999*
- *Equality Act, 2010*
- The Department for Education's '*Workload reduction toolkit*', 2018

<sup>1</sup> Briner, R. & Dewberry, C. (2007). Staff wellbeing is key to school success. A research study into the links between staff wellbeing and school performance. London: Worklife Support

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I for summary of Legal Frameworks.



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This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies [*amend as appropriate*]:

- *Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staff Attendance Management Policy*
- *Induction of New Staff Policy*
- *Data Protection Policy*
- *Grievance Policy*
- *Flexible Working Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy*
- *Anti-bullying Policy*

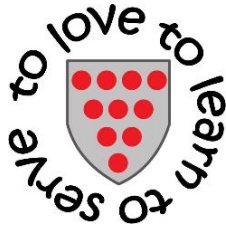
### Aims of the policy

- 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.
- 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 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.

### Roles

The Governing Body will: [*amend as appropriate*]

- take overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the impact of this policy and ensuring that staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance
- 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
- ensure that clear procedures are in place which will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as the *Capability / Disciplinary Policy* [*amend as appropriate*]
- provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision-making processes
- review the demands on staff, particularly in relation to marking and feedback as well and seek practical solutions wherever possible
- provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building, etc.



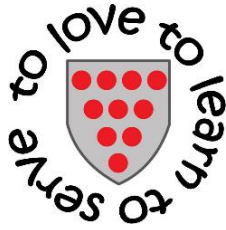
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The Headteacher supported by the Senior Leadership Team will: *[amend as appropriate]*

- ensure that all staff have the opportunity to enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard
- support the Governing Body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce causes of employee stress. This includes preventing unnecessary stress and ensuring that any work-based stress employees experience is at a productive, healthy level
- adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons. For further information, refer to our school's *Absence Management Policy* *[amend as appropriate]*
- ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life
- 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
- ensure that all staff are aware of and trained in-line with the school's priorities and offered opportunities for development
- monitor and review any measures that are planned and assess their effectiveness
- conduct risk assessments for work-related stress in consultation with senior staff
- appoint a staff wellbeing co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that the good health and wellbeing of all staff members is supported, promoted, and valued by the school. The co-ordinator will also ensure that school policies and procedures reflect this aim. The Staff Wellbeing co-ordinator is *[name]*
- make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer-term reasonable adjustments to work.

Staff members will: *[amend as appropriate]*

- make themselves aware of the school's policies on Capability, Bullying and Harassment, Staff Attendance etc.
- 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
- ask their Line Manager for help or support if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads
- identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school
- apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance and be honest about sickness absence leaves
- share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.



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### Actions to support new staff *[amend as appropriate]*

We will take supportive, practical action to ensure:

- all staff will be given a school orientation by the Headteacher
- all new staff will receive the staff induction pack / staff handbook. This will continue to include all important policies, or their location, and will include this *Staff Wellbeing Policy*
- all staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required
- all staff are to be issued with a name badge on arrival on their first day
- at the end of the first week of employment, new staff will have a review with a senior member of staff
- all new staff will have a 3-month *[amend as appropriate]* review interview with their Line Manager. Additional reviews may be scheduled at 6 months of service *[amend as appropriate]* and / or 12 months *[amend as appropriate]*.

We will take the following practical actions to support new roles: *[amend as appropriate]*

- Decide who will be the supporting person for the new role.
- Hold an initial discussion of roles.
- Hold visits to school / class or environment of new role.
- Establish a pattern of coaching.
- Hold an end-of-first-week review with supporting person.
- Provide 1:1 support for new tasks.
- Hold a 3-month *[amend as appropriate]* review interview with supporting person.

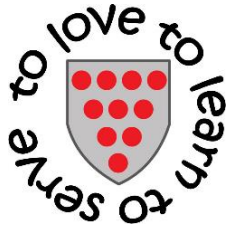
### Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

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, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised. Further details of the mechanisms in place for support can be found in point 7.

The school will provide support to any employees who are facing high levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having / have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or support from the Local Authority, e.g. counselling.

During this time, the school will always ensure that the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights, and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

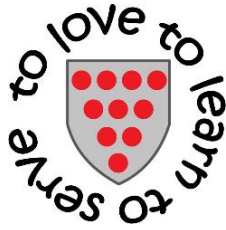


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### Support Mechanisms *[amend to reflect own provision]*

A range of services are available to staff to support their wellbeing:

- **Counselling**
  - Counselling can be provided where appropriate through *[name of school / academy]*'s provider. This will be a confidential, independent service using professionally qualified counsellors.
  - Staff can access the Counselling Service by contacting *[name of counselling service provider]*.
- **Mediation**
  - In addition to the Counselling Service there is also a mediation service in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.
- **Teacher Support Network**
  - The Teacher Support Network is a group of independent charities and a social enterprise that provides practical and emotional support to staff in the education sector and their families. Information, support, and coaching is offered to all staff. The Teacher Support Network provides over 1,000 factsheets covering a wide range of issues including money advice, how to cope with bereavement, mental health, diet, and nutrition and how to manage stress. To access the free support line, staff can call 08000 562 561, or for more information visit: {HYPERLINK "http://teachersupport.info/"}
- **Occupational Health**
  - *[Name of school / academy]* has free access to the *[name of Occupational Health provider]* Occupational Health provider. This will enable an employee to discuss any concerns about their health and wellbeing with a nurse or doctor trained in occupational medicine. This is an opportunity to discuss any health condition and get feedback about managing or improving that condition to help an employee to carry out their duties or return to work. The information given is entirely confidential and will not be shared with the employer / Governing Body or members of staff within *[name of school / academy]*.
- **Diocese of Worcester Education Team**
  - *[Name of school / academy]* has access to support provided by the Diocese of Worcester's Education Team. Support from the diocese includes, but is not limited to the following:
    - a compendium of resources for the development of Wellbeing & Spirituality and all associated training
    - leadership support sessions
    - pastoral / faith-based support offered through Val Turner at *Apples of Silver*.



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### Procedures to promote staff wellbeing *[amend to reflect own provision]*

- Twice weekly communication via morning staff briefings.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) for all staff.
- Quarterly social events.
- Performance management.
- Annual job description meetings.
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan.
- All staff invited to INSET days.
- Recognition on staff birthdays / special occasions.
- Administrative staff are to support the wider workforce.
- Consultative staff meetings held once a term to give staff the opportunity to voice concerns and to have their views sought. The Headteacher responds to these through the morning briefings.
- Meals during twilight sessions.
- Wellbeing sessions in school.
- Staff treats at the end of the week.

### Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body every ..... years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle.

### Approval / review by Governing Body:

**Headteacher signed:**

**Chair of Governors signed:**

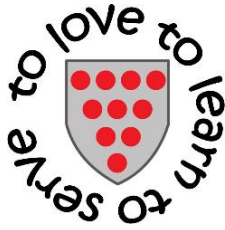
**Date of next review:**

**Date:**

**Date:**

**Date:**





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## Appendix I - Legal Framework Summary

In the UK, the *Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)* requires employers to secure the health (including mental health), safety and welfare of employees whilst at work and, amongst other things, provide a safe place of work; ensure safe systems of work and provide information and training. The Act also requires employees to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others and to co-operate with the employer in discharging their duties under the Act.

The *Employment Rights Act (1996)* states that employees have the right not to be dismissed because they complain about unsafe working conditions or leave work when they believe themselves to be in real and imminent danger. This includes complaints about stress at work.

In addition, under *The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (1999)*, UK employers are required to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the health and safety risks to which their employees are exposed whilst they are at work. This includes the requirement to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities and to take measures to control the identified risk.

An employee who is suffering from stress may have a disability for the purposes of the *Equality Act (2010)*. This means employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments where any arrangements made by them place the disabled employee at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled employees.