

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury

Staff Well-Being Policy



“Walking in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together”

Staff Well-being Policy Statement

1. Background

This policy and guidance covers the management of the health, safety and welfare of all staff in school as far as is reasonably practicable. This includes the psychological and emotional well-being of staff in school as well as their physical good health. The guidance aims to help school secure the well-being and effectiveness of their staff in order to create the best possible conditions for the development and achievement of children and young people.

Every governing body has a statutory duty to ensure staff have an appropriate work/life balance. This is underpinned by legislation such as Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Working Time Directive 1998 and the Employment Relations Act 1999. There are also clear guidelines on work/life balance in the national agreement on raising standards and tackling workload and the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

Headteacher's, managers and Governors should read this staff well-being policy and guidance and apply it in meeting their collective and separate responsibilities. Consistent and proper application of the policy and guidance will enhance the working life of every member of staff and contribute to school success.

2. The Policy

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its staff as far as is reasonably practicable. This includes the psychological and emotional well-being of staff as well as their physical good health.

The Governing Body also believes that having a management ethos committed, within operational constraints, to addressing the needs and expectations of staff, is likely to

contribute towards optimum business effectiveness. Healthy, fit staff with a strong sense of well-being will perform better and be less likely to be absent from work or to seek other employment.

This policy will, therefore, establish the ways in which the Headteacher, Governors and other staff can contribute to their own well-being and to that of their colleagues. It will also identify the procedures that can be used by the Headteacher and line managers to help alleviate the detrimental effects that an individual may be suffering as a result of circumstances within the manager's control. It will do this by:

- Providing a clear policy statement;
- Setting out the roles and responsibilities of particular people and services;
- Emphasising the mutual charter of expectation between St Joseph's and its staff;
- Setting out the practices and procedures that contribute to staff well-being;
- Explaining the support structure in place should these practices and procedures fail.

3. General policy statement

All staff should have the benefit of a working environment that positively contributes to their own sense of well-being and security. The working environment includes the way in which the workload and the workplace are managed as well as the physical conditions in which the work takes place.

The Governing Body, Headteacher and line managers within St Joseph's accept their responsibility to work towards attaining this and to instigate and maintain the cultural environment necessary to achieve it.

Fundamental to this is the need for fair and effective management by the Headteacher, the leadership team and line managers that are competent in the range of skills needed for that role. Good leadership, by managing staff appropriately will be the single biggest factor in reducing the possibility of the harmful effects of any stress being experienced.

The Headteacher, the leadership team and line managers need to be competent in all areas of their management function and effort to establish and maintain competencies should be a key feature of the appraisal and development of those in such posts.

The Headteacher, the leadership team and line managers will be expected to continually assess the working environment for significant sources of stress and to be aware of, and alert to, the symptoms of stress in the people that they manage. They must also monitor through team meetings, supervision sessions and appraisals the levels of staff well-being.

Having said this, the Headteacher, the leadership team and line managers' diligence cannot be expected to be failsafe and all staff must be responsible for bringing attention, at the earliest opportunity, to any situation or factor that may be a source of stress or poor well-being either to themselves or to others.

All issues will be treated with sensitivity and, if necessary, confidentiality in seeking to reduce or eliminate the source of the concern and in providing support to the individual member of staff to minimise any adverse effect and hasten their recovery.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body has formally adopted this guidance and has agreed that it should be actively promoted among staff at the school and be available to everyone.

The Governing Body and the Headteacher will seek to cultivate and promote a culture in which staff have a positive sense of well-being and where work-related stress is treated as any other form of ill-health would be. The Headteacher will also ensure that all cases, where individual or collective staff well-being is an issue, are managed appropriately with reference, where necessary, to the specialist roles set out below.

The Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers have the largest role in achieving the aims of this guidance not only because it is they who have the greatest daily influence upon the working environment but also because it is this group which is primarily expected to recognise the potential or actual symptoms of stress and to monitor levels of well-being.

The Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers have the specific responsibility for:

- making themselves aware of this policy and guidance and how it affects their role;
- making themselves aware of, and operating within, all of St Joseph's policies and procedures
- carrying out risk assessments in relation to staff well-being (see Toolkit 2);
- prioritising management and leadership development within their own personal development plans;
- monitoring work performance and absences;
- informing staff of support available to them;
- ensuring that new staff or staff in new posts or with new responsibilities are assessed as being capable of fulfilling their roles without detriment to their health or safety;
- recognising the symptoms of stress in those they manage and work with;
- seeking to resolve, mitigate or remove any causes of stress using advice from this guidance where relevant;
- referring those with on-going symptoms of stress to the Occupational Health Service and, if appropriate, supporting access to external specialist counselling services or own provider if necessary;
- dealing with all instances professionally, sensitively and, if necessary, confidentially.

No matter how vigilant the Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers are, it is inevitable that individual staff will often be the first to identify circumstances which are affecting well-being or could induce stress. They will almost certainly be the first to recognise that they are starting to experience some of the early signs of stress.

All staff will therefore be encouraged to take responsibility for alerting a suitable person to any concern they may have in respect of stress, their general ability to carry out their work duties without detriment to their health or safety or any other sense of discontent.

A suitable person means either the immediate supervisor or line manager or, if this is not possible, the Headteacher, or in his/her absence a member of the leadership team or a nominated Governor or any of the Local Authority's specialist services listed later in this guidance.

The source of the concern may not be wholly work-related and staff should be encouraged to share details of circumstances in their personal lives which could be significantly affecting their health or work performance. All such information is to be treated with complete confidence to the extent that St Joseph's and school procedures allow (ultimately some information may need to be disclosed to allow others to make decisions).

5. Mutual Charter

St Joseph's has indicated its commitment to staff well-being and seeks to operate fair and equitable employment practices; to have appropriate levels of leadership and management; to have reasonable working conditions and workplaces; and to be responsive and flexible to the needs and demands of its staff.

Staff must likewise commit to playing their part in achieving this policy's objectives. This means attending for work; working to the best of one's abilities; adhering to the guidelines and codes of conduct/ Staff Behaviours Policy that are set; and to working collaboratively with their manager and colleagues.

Compliance with this simple charter will go a long way to avoiding conflicts, sources of stress and impediments to staff well-being.

6. Preventative Measures – a) Policies and Procedures

St Joseph's has a number of policies and procedures to assist the Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers to manage effectively and to ensure that all staff are given a fair and consistent quality of leadership and management.

As a minimum, relevant documents should be available on request from the school's administration office. The Headteacher needing further advice on what HR policies and procedures they should have in place are advised to contact their HR Advisor (Schools) or own HR provider.

No-one is expected to have an encyclopaedic recall of all the policies and procedures available however, everyone should be able to find them readily when they are needed. The Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers in particular should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the main principles and of the triggers for applying them.

The Headteacher, the leadership team and line-managers should also be aware of other procedures and measures which should be used to contribute towards staff well-being and to counter stress.

These include:

Induction process	to introduce new staff to the working environment and the work methods (including safe working practices for staff who work with children and young people in education settings). Special arrangements apply to Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)
Skills training	to enable new staff to work efficiently, effectively and safely and maintain continuous professional development (CPD).
Management training	to develop and maintain managerial skills
Refresher Training	to update and up-skill and maintain continuous professional development (CPD).
Performance Appraisal and Regular supervision Sessions	to allow for work to be discussed and evaluated and for mutually agreed workloads and targets to be established.
Risk Assessments	to identify areas in which staff health or safety is vulnerable and provide a means to introduce more adequate control measures. Schools can use risk assessments pro-actively to analyse potential causes of stress and potentially stressful situations, for example when new initiatives are introduced, so that appropriate control mechanisms can be developed and adopted. A generic broad risk assessment of well-being for schools has been produced and can be accessed at www.wcc.emanate.co.uk and a more detailed assessment procedure is given in Toolkit 1.

Staff meetings and other means of communicating information

help to ensure that all staff are kept abreast of issues in the school which may affect them.

7. Preventative Measures – b) Specialist LA Services

In addition to normal line management, the local authority has specialist staff that can provide support for staff well-being issues.

Human Resources can provide guidance on the scope and range of options available to the Headteacher or Governors in particular situations. This helps to ensure fair and consistent management standards, which in turn provides reassurances to staff.

The **Occupational Health (OH) Service** also provides support and advice to the Headteacher through two important functions.

- i) By pre-employment health screening they will ensure that prospective staff are fit to undertake the range of duties being offered, or identify the type of support that a person may need to perform effectively in the job.
- ii) At any later date should there be any early indication of stress or concern about sickness absence, the Service can investigate and give advice.

The OH Service also screens calls to the LA's Employee Well-Being Helpline and can fast-track access to specialist counselling services if appropriate. This would be at the expense of the school.

The **Health and Safety Service** will provide advice and support to all staff to enhance the physical working environment and develop safe systems of work. They will also contribute to the risk assessment process and help determine what measures can best counter particular risks.

Trade Union Appointed Representatives can provide members with information and support on a wide range of staff well-being issues and any member may seek their advice at any time.

8. Preventative Measures – c) Schemes and Benefits

Healthy eating – We provide healthy options on menus. A Water cooler is situated in the staffroom.

Smoking – smoking is prohibited in all school premises. This is to ensure a smoke-free environment for all staff.

Childcare – staff who pay for child care may be entitled to receive childcare vouchers which can be used as part payment for nursery, childminder, playgroup or after-school club costs.

The vouchers are exempt from tax and national insurance contributions and represent significant savings.

9. Preventative measures – d) Work / Life Balance

St Joseph's expects everyone to be able to enjoy a comfortable balance between the time spent at work or thinking about work and the time devoted to the other parts of their life. Governing Bodies and the Headteacher, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the Headteacher and teachers at the school being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties including the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work. In having regard to this, Governing Bodies and the Headteacher should ensure that they adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations.

The safeguards of the Working Time Regulations should avoid anyone from working excessive hours over a prolonged period. No-one should exceed an average of 48 hours worked per week over any 17 week period. The headteacher should have regard to the provisions of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document in respect of teaching staff in particular the sections on working time. It is important that school leadership management teams make and communicate plans for the forthcoming school year in respect of curriculum delivery and teaching timetables. Teachers employed full-time are available to perform their duties at such times and such places as may be specified by the Headteacher for 1,265 hours (directed time), those hours to be allocated reasonably throughout those days in the school year on which the teacher is required to be available for work. Paragraph 52.23 of STPCD states that in addition to the 1,265 hours of directed time, a teacher "must work such reasonable additional hours as may be necessary to enable the effective discharge of the teacher's professional duties", particularly:

- Planning and preparing courses and lessons
- Assessing, monitoring, recording and reporting on the learning needs, progress and achievements of assigned pupils.

The provisions detailed in the School Teachers Terms and Conditions in relation to working time and working days for teachers must be observed with the exception of the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, or teachers in receipt of an acting allowance for carrying out the duties of a Headteacher, or Assistant Headteacher who are not covered by those arrangements. The STPCD sets out the following working arrangements for teachers:

- Working time / Working days for teachers
- Specified working hours for teachers
- Overarching rights
- Daily break
- Work/life balance
- Guaranteed planning and preparation time
- Management time

- Cover
- Administration and external examinations
- Training and development
- Leadership and management time

NB: Under Induction regulations NQTs are also restricted to working no more than 90% of the time a qualified teacher would be expected to teach.

Support staff roles

Working additional hours at home and during ‘out-of-hours periods’ should not be a regular feature of a support staff job unless a role specifically requires it and nor should support staff be routinely disturbed at home by colleagues trying to contact them about work issues.

Rest breaks should be taken away from work during working periods in excess of six hours. All staff are encouraged to take advantage of natural and structured breaks to take refreshments and rest or to use the time for their own purposes.

School staff should not take up any other employment which may affect their well-being; adversely impact upon their performance for St Joseph’s; or contravene The Working Time Regulations without discussion with their Headteacher.

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School also has a further range of policies which promote flexibility for staff to manage their work duties alongside their personal life. These include maternity and paternity leave, family emergency leave, leave of absence and compassionate leave.

Conversely, whilst staff are at work, they are expected to fully devote their attention and time to their work. Any issue from their personal life which may impact upon work performance or attendance should be discussed with their Headteacher/line manager.

11. Support Structure

Despite all of the policies, procedures and measures outlined above, there may be occasions when staff experience feelings and physical symptoms of ill-health, stress or general discontent which may be linked to their work or working environment.

In addition to capable and sensitive management, a range of support services and procedures are available to reduce the harmful effects and facilitate full and speedy recovery. The headteacher, the leadership team and line managers should carefully consider which combination of these (if any) may be suitable to deal with a particular situation.

The Schools HR Advisory team can advise on the application of policies which will enable the Headteacher or Governors to investigate issues which are resulting in conflict, stress or other discontent. Mediation can often be the best way to find resolutions.

The **Occupational Health Service** can provide advice and medical opinion about an individual’s current and future fitness for work. This service is accessed by line management through your HR Advisor (Schools) or own HR provider.

A confidential **Employee Well-Being Helpline** (01225 713147) is available to all staff. Calls are screened and assessed by an Occupational Health Adviser. Callers may be signposted to relevant external providers or specialist counselling services.

12. The monitoring and review of this guidance

By the very nature of the subject it is difficult to measure the degree of staff well-being but there are some indicators which will be used by St Joseph’s catholic Primary School to assess the effect of the measures set out in this guidance and to influence its review.

These can include analysis of anonymised data on:

- sickness absence
- occupational health referrals
- ill-health retirement figures
- staff attitude surveys
- exit questionnaire/interviews
- compliance with HSE management standards

13. Further information and advice

Anyone who wants more information related to this guidance can contact any of the specialist staff mentioned in the document on the numbers below:

Human Resources Contact your usual Schools HR Advisor – Wiltshire Council

Health & Safety - 01225 713185
healthandsafety@wiltshire.gov.uk

Occupational Health - 01225 713185
occhealth@wiltshire.gov.uk

Arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and review

Responsible committee for monitoring & evaluation:	Mission and Vision Committee
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