

Staff wellbeing policy

North Ridge High School



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| Reviewed by: | Shauna Johnson | Date: February 2025 |
| Agreed by governors: | [Date] | |
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Under the public sector equality duty, all schools/academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

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Introduction

North Ridge School recognises that the staff are their most important resource and are to be valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a learning and caring community. There is a relationship between healthier more positive staff, pupil achievement and school improvement. There are employer duties to staff that require sensitive staff policies and practice. The purpose of this policy is to provide a document that embraces the many school practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harm from stress and ensure that there is cohesion and progress in working towards the health and wellbeing of all staff.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- ✚ Support the wellbeing of all staff to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- ✚ Provide a supportive work environment for all staff
- ✚ Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time
- ✚ Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- ✚ Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience
- ✚ Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims

2. Promoting wellbeing at all times

2.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- ✚ Treat each other with empathy and respect
- ✚ Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- ✚ Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- ✚ Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- ✚ Follow the school's policy on out-of-hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- ✚ Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- ✚ Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- ✚ Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing
- ✚ Utilise wellbeing opportunities detailed in the policy to support their physical and mental health.
- ✚ Reach out to a range of pastoral support interventions which can be accessed including counselling (Health Assured) and risk assessments.
- ✚ For staff who believe they could be suffering from a mental illness, such as depression or anxiety, will visit their GP as soon as possible, advise the school lead for H&S or speak to one of the schools Mental Health First Aiders.

As expected from all, staff will also take responsibility for their own wellbeing. This can be supported by:

- Time management
- Healthy lifestyle

- Knowing personal limitations
 - Identifying personal stressors
 - Avoiding unnecessary conflict
 - Acceptance
 - Taking 'time out'
 - Finding time for friends and family
 - Maintaining a positive mental attitude
 - Avoiding excessive alcohol, nicotine, caffeine etc
 - Utilising 'mindfulness' techniques (1 minute breathing/mindful observation and/or listening/game of 5s)
- [6 Proven Mindfulness Exercises You Can Try Today](#)

2.2 Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- ✚ Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- ✚ Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- ✚ Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- ✚ Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- ✚ Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- ✚ Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- ✚ Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- ✚ Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate

2.3 Role of senior staff

Senior staff are expected to:

- ✚ Work towards a school ethos where all staff are valued, where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships.
- ✚ Provide personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness, communications etc.
- ✚ Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes.
- ✚ Promote information about and access to supportive services
- ✚ Provide staff, through training and building security, with a sense of safety and the confidence to deal positively with stressful incidents
- ✚ Respond sensitively and flexibly to external pressures that impact on staff lives whilst at the same time ensuring the efficient running of the school.
- ✚ Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- ✚ Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- ✚ Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- ✚ Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- ✚ Review the demands on teachers, support staff and administrative staff in the time spent on paperwork and seek practical alternative solutions wherever possible through the School Improvement Plan process.
- ✚ Make sure job descriptions are kept up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made

- ✚ Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- ✚ Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- ✚ Establish a clear policy on out-of-hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders
- ✚ Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- ✚ Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- ✚ Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- ✚ Promote 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
- ✚ Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections
- ✚ Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- ✚ Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- ✚ Conduct return-to-work interviews to support staff back into work
- ✚ Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

2.4 Role of the governing board

The governing board is expected to:

- ✚ Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- ✚ Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- ✚ Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- ✚ Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regard to workload
- ✚ Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- ✚ Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

3. Managing specific wellbeing issues

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

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- ✚ Arranging external support, such as counselling, occupational health services, Health Assist, teacher helpline
- ✚ The outcome of stressful or violent incidents from pupils will be considered in the school's response
- ✚ Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- ✚ Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise
- ✚ Managing Absence due to Ill Health – The school follows procedures for managing absence due to ill health (see attendance policy). The school will implement the use of risk assessments regarding health needs, when required. The school will work with One Education HR and People team in all cases.

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

4. Monitoring and assessing impact of this policy

The schools will use the following to assess the impact of the staff wellbeing policy:

- Leaders are positive role models.
- Decision making processes are clearly understood and supported by staff.
- Opportunities are provided for all staff to socialise and relax with each other.
- New staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction.
- An open listening management system that responds quickly to problems.
- A welcoming and tidy staff room that is sensitive to issues of race, gender, homophobia, culture and disability.
- The quality of staff facilities and accommodation e.g. access to refreshment, adequate seating and toilet facilities.
- The regular and systematic monitoring of staff absences, staff/pupil/parent/carer relationships and the recruitment and retention of staff.

Practical Actions to Support Existing Staff:

- Class teachers and Department Heads available to organise informal meetings with all staff, if required.
- Teachers to receive advice and guidance from either a member of the Senior Leadership Team if required.
- Teachers receive 10% PPA
- Trained and certified Mental Health First Aiders in place

Practical Actions to Support New Staff :

- An initial discussion of roles.
- Introduction/visit to school/class or environment of new role.
- Induction programme for all new staff
- Regular sessions will be organised with a senior member of staff responsible for coaching.
- 3 month review sessions to be held with the Senior Leadership Team.
- Practical Actions to Support New Roles
- Decide who will be the supporting person for the new role.

- Establish a pattern of coaching.
- 1:1 support for new tasks
- 3 month review interview with supporting person.

5. Incentives to promote staff wellbeing at North Ridge

We continue to look for new incentives to add to those currently on offer, if you hear of any other promotions/ideas which you think may benefit our school team then please let us have the details and we will look into it.

Flexible Working Policy

North Ridge is committed to promoting flexible working in the context of achieving the aim of providing a high quality teaching and learning environment for pupils, whilst also developing working practices and policies that support work-life balance and wellbeing for employees. The school recognises that flexible working can raise staff morale, reduce absenteeism and improve productivity and retention of experienced and skilled employees.

Employee Assistance Programme

This is a 24 hour helpline from Health Assured to support you through any of life's issues or problems. Health Assured provides confidential support services which are available to you and your immediate family.

Call free on 0800 030 5182

- ✚ Family issues
- ✚ Medical information
- ✚ Alcohol or drug issues
- ✚ Gambling issues
- ✚ Consumer issues
- ✚ Financial support
- ✚ Relationship support
- ✚ Childcare advice
- ✚ Domestic abuse
- ✚ Tax information
- ✚ Legal information
- ✚ Housing concerns
- ✚ Stress and anxiety
- ✚ Retirement
- ✚ Bereavement
- ✚ Telephone counselling

Staff rewards and other in-house incentives

- At the end of every term and half term, all staff are rewarded with a small gift
- Staff who have had 100% attendance in the term will be allowed to leave work an hour earlier the following term

- Staff who have had 100% attendance for the whole school year will be rewarded with a gift voucher at the end of the summer term
- The school fitness suite is available for all staff to use outside of school hours
- All staff are invite to attend the annual School Development Plan meeting
- Refreshments and lunch is provided on all inset days for all staff

Mental Health First Aiders

- Sarah Read – Lead for H&S, Mental Health Champion and Mental Health First Aider
- Sarah Fraser – Mental Health First Aider
- Shauna Johnson – Mental Health First Aider, Head Teacher

School counsellor

We have a school counsellor on site. Catherine offers confidential support to colleagues in how to deal with and manage struggles including talking therapy and coping mechanisms. If you would like to access this support, email Sarah Read.

School gym

We know that physical exercise can support our well-being and positive mind set. Staff are welcome to use our school gym situated on the main school site before or after working hours.

Staff rewards and other in-house incentives

- At the end of every term, all staff are rewarded with a small gift
- Staff who have had 100% attendance in the term will be allowed to leave work an hour earlier on a day agreed with SLT the following term.
- Staff who have had 100% attendance for the whole school year will be rewarded with a gift voucher at the end of the summer term
- Refreshments and lunch are provided on all inset days for all staff
- Complimentary tea and coffee in the staffroom
- Vending machine
- Complementary breakfast provided by school each half term

Manchester Credit Union

Manchester Credit Union (MCU) has been working with Manchester City Council and other partners to introduce a way for staff to access savings, affordable loans and a range of insurance products. Manchester Credit Union is a non-profit making, financial co-operative owned and controlled by its members - these are the people who invest their money with MCU - which could be you. You can contact them and see what they offer on their website: www.manchestercreditunion.co.uk

Cycle to work Scheme

The 'Cycle To Work' Scheme is simple; you purchase a bike for you to cycle to work on, hire it for an agreed length of time, then snap it up for a fraction of its original value. It's like a year round sale, with interest free credit available in over 2,000 retailers nationwide.

You can buy a bike and accessories up to £2,000, and pay it back over 2 years, interest free directly from your pay

6. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- ✚ Appraisal policy
- ✚ Behaviour policy
- ✚ Capability procedure
- ✚ Staff code of conduct
- ✚ Attendance management policy
- ✚ Leave Of Absence Policy
- ✚ Maternity/Paternity leave policy
- ✚ Flexible working policy.