

# Applecroft School



## Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

<b>Person Responsible:</b>	<b>Assistant Headteacher</b>
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>May 2026</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>May 2027</b>

# Staff Wellbeing Policy

## 1) Introduction:

### **School Vision:**

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

### **School Mission Statement:**

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'

### **School Values:**

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

## 2) Policy Statement:

At Applecroft School, we recognise that staff are our most important resource and that there is a relationship between healthier, more positive staff, pupil achievement and school improvement. We want to ensure that staff are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally, within a learning and caring community.

We recognise that we have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees as far as reasonably practicable and that we are required to have in place measures to mitigate as far as practicable factors that could harm employees' physical and mental wellbeing, which includes work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the School's control.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as "the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

This policy recognises that there are many sources of work related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or students.

We are committed to making sure that this Staff Wellbeing Policy is implemented so that each individual is able to cope successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress within a "no-blame" environment.

The purpose of this policy is to describe the school's approach to promoting positive staff wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and trustees. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

### **3) Aims:**

This policy aims:

- 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 develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through regular communication and consultation with staff and their trade union representatives on health and safety matters
- 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 encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- To comply with all statutory requirements
- To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- To provide staff with training to deal positively with incidents that they find stressful and provide them with a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies via training.
- To improve staff development, cooperation 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.

### **4) Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **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 feel 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 guidance on out-of-school hours working, including 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

### **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
- 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
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

### **Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team:**

Senior staff are expected to:

- 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 surveys and the appraisal process
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- 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 clear guidance on out-of-school 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 identified times when pressure on staff may increase, such as Ofsted inspections

### **The Board of Trustees:**

The Board of Trustees 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 regards 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 the information required from them
- Conduct exit interviews with staff to help identify any wellbeing consideration

### **5) Practical actions to support staff:**

#### **New staff:**

- All new staff receive induction training and a copy of the staff handbook.
- Teaching staff are provided with a laptop. Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are offered a Chromebook to use within school
- A hoodie with the school logo is provided for all staff
- All new staff are provided with a staff 'buddy'
- All staff have an ID badge
- 6 week, 13 week and 6 month probation meetings are held with their line manager.

#### **All staff:**

- Designated staff wellbeing team to review and continue to develop staff wellbeing initiatives
- Half termly staff socials and/or staff room treats
- Non-working hours email policy- unless urgent emails are only to be sent between 7.30am-6.00pm Monday-Friday (term time only)
- 5 working day timescale to reply to emails from parents
- Flexible arrangements for PPA to be taken off-site
- Coffee machines in the staff room
- Updating/renovating staffroom to ensure it is fit for purpose and the number of staff
- Staff 'Duvet Day'- all staff members can take one paid day off each academic year (cover arrangements are organised within phases/teams)

- Meetings to be combined where possible to reduce number of meetings and workload e.g. parent consultations and Individual Learning plan meetings
- Dedicated subject leadership time on an ongoing basis for curriculum leaders
- Policies are regularly reviewed to address work-life balance, e.g. Feedback and Marking policy
- Parent consultations take place during school time and in lieu of a staff meeting time to support work/life balance
- Staff social events outside of school e.g. Christmas party, summer party, quiz night...
- Designated Wellbeing Trustee to review school's wellbeing strategy, policy and practices
- A staff survey is conducted annually to monitor staff wellbeing
- Wellbeing board in the staff room
- Professional Development is designed to meet individual needs and to pursue passions or interests in line with School Improvement e.g. Mental Health, other courses/qualifications etc.
- Staff lunch on INSET days
- Half-termly 'dress down' days on the last day of each half-term
- Wellbeing checked 1:1 with line manager, at least termly
- Eligibility, with discussion, to attend their own children's appointments/concerts etc.
- Christmas Dinner is provided and paid for by the school.
- SAS Absence Insurance offers the following wellbeing services:
  - Physiotherapy
  - Counselling
  - Weight Management
  - Nurse Support Service
  - Menopause Support
  - GP Phone & Video Consultations
  - Cancer and Chronic Illness Support
  - Private Medical Operations
  - Health Screening Days
  - Stress Awareness Sessions

This list is continuously being reviewed and added to.

#### **6) Managing specific wellbeing issues sensitively and effectively:**

We encourage an atmosphere in which members of staff feel comfortable asking for help when it is needed. We seek to be sensitive to and recognise early any factors in an employee's life that might precipitate stress-related issues. We strive to act in a timely, supportive and proportionate manner when concerns arise. 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, as appropriate to the circumstances. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis or reaction to a personal event
- 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.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees have delegated responsibility to implement appropriate support for the Headteacher should it become necessary.

## **7) Links to other policies:**

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Staff Appraisal Policy
- Staff Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Staff Capability Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Staff Health & Attendance Policy
- Staff Leave of Absence Policy