

# The Meadows School



## Staff Wellbeing Policy

# Policy Statement and Guidelines

## Policy Statement – Staff Wellbeing

The wellbeing of staff at The Meadows School is paramount to maintaining a successful and forward thinking school. The welfare of students is fundamental to all school policies and procedures which are underpinned by moral and ethical values. It is our belief that the best asset in school for students are staff who are happy, motivated and focused. The Meadows School recognises that staff are their most important resource and are to be valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. The school believes that staff wellbeing support programmes need to be personalised and bespoke to meet the specific needs of staff. How staff feel on an everyday basis is likely to affect their performance and therefore impact on the ethos and atmosphere of the school which in turn affects students. If staff are happy, motivated and are purposeful in their approach this will have a huge positive impact on the wellbeing of students resulting in happier students who achieve more.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a document that embraces the many school practices that support staff health and wellbeing. Where possible to diminish the harm from stress a proactive approach should be implemented where wellbeing support programmes are used to stop the effects of stress from escalating into ongoing anxiety issues. Whilst the school will do everything to support staff in ensuring their wellbeing needs are met, ultimately staff need to take responsibility to work through issues of concern with a view to reaching a resolution.

## Guidelines for Implementation

The Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body will:

- Be open and ethical in their approach to ensure that staff are listened to and treated with the utmost respect.
- Work towards a school ethos where all staff are valued and where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships.
- Provide personal and professional development programmes that meet the specific needs of staff and at the same time fulfil school priorities.
- Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes.
- Operate sensitive Performance Management linked to clear job specifications and school priorities.
- Provide professional support for the Senior Leadership Team to assist coaching supervision and to update their skills in supporting staff wellbeing.
- Provide non-judgemental and confidential care procedures through, for instance, providing bespoke holistic support programmes for staff
- Promote information about accessing appropriate support both within the school and externally.
- Ensure that, as part of the risk assessment processes and Health and Safety procedures, staff are kept safe from harm.
- Provide staff with appropriate training programmes, to deal safely, positively and with a sense of confidence with behaviour incidents that could lead to raised anxiety levels.

- Constantly review the demands on teachers and support staff, e.g. the time spent on paperwork, and strive towards seeking out alternative solutions wherever possible through having open communication channels with staff
- Provide training in Moving & Handling for those staff involved in caring for students who require physical assistance
- Respond sensitively and flexibly to external pressures that impact on staff lives and offer support whilst at the same time ensuring the efficient running of the school.

In addition to supporting the wellbeing of staff in school, the school will maintain contact with staff when they are absent for long periods in line with Local Authority policy.

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

- Leadership philosophy is evident and a positive role model ethos is prevalent at all levels of leadership.
- School development priorities involve staff and are clearly understood.
- A values driven culture is evident and fully supported by the whole school community
- The autonomy of staff is apparent throughout the school and impact on decision making processes
- The aspirations of staff are fully realised through CPD and in turn this supports change and progress as set out in the School Improvement Plan.
- Opportunities are provided for all staff to reflect and voice their view in arenas they feel comfortable with.
- New staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction in line with school policy.
- An open listening management system that responds quickly to problems.
- The quality of staff facilities, resources and accommodation e.g. a welcoming, well-resourced and tidy staff room and the provision of water machines
- A whole school culture of praise and encouragement is evident where success is celebrated and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities
- Individuality, innovation, imagination, originality of thought and creativity are welcomed, supported and embedded in the culture of the school
- The quality of the school grounds providing the school community with a connection with nature.
- The supportive and robust monitoring of staff absences, staff/pupil/parent relationships and the recruitment and retention of staff.

## **Staff workload: the work life/fulfilment balance**

The staff at The Meadows School are all dedicated and committed individuals who work hard, at times in challenging situations, to ensure the very best care and learning outcomes for all students. The school is aware of the time and energy required to support students and for the wellbeing of staff and for students the importance of staff taking breaks according to their job roles. Everyone is aware of the tremendous workload involved in running an outstanding school and therefore the senior and middle leadership teams will overview the delegation of duties to ensure that there is a fair workload for all staff. Should a member of staff feel that their workload is becoming or has become unmanageable they should discuss this matter with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Studies indicate that being in work is generally good for the health of an individual. In addition to financial reward work provides increased self-esteem, companionship, purpose and status. It is therefore imperative that the school support a healthy work life/fulfilment philosophy to ensure efficiency and the best outcomes for both staff and students alike.

The Meadows supports the outcomes of the MacLeod Review on employment engagement, published in July 2009, which maintains that a 'feel good' factor in the workplace is strongly influenced by:

- Leaders who help employees see where they fit into the bigger organisational picture
- Effective line managers who respect, develop and reward their staff
- Consultation that values the voice of employees and listens to their views and concerns
- Relationships based on trust and shared values

External support is available to help staff deal with personal problems and issues that may impact their work performance, health and wellbeing through the Employee Counselling Service (ECS). ECS generally include assessment, short term counselling and referral service for employees of the school and their immediate family. Contact details: 0808 168 2143.