



Staff Wellbeing: Guidance and Principles

Mental Health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (*World Health Organisation definition*).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 23.

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24.

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.



Purpose and Principles

Wandsworth HHTS recognise that the staff are their most important resource. Therefore, the school is committed to doing the utmost to value, support and encourage the staff, developing them personally and professionally within a learning and caring community.

The school recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff in school enjoy a reasonable balance between their working life and the demands of home, family and other interests and commitments. An acceptable work-life balance will be different for each employee and will be different at different times in careers. It is not in the interest of either the school or the individual member of staff to work to the detriment of his/her health. Excessive work without rest and recreation is not conducive to efficient or effective working. Staff well-being is important in maintaining a positive atmosphere in the workplace.

The school recognises that employees are not obliged to work in school beyond their contracted hours, although teachers are expected to complete preparation, planning and assessment beyond the school day.

The school recognise that staff work with children who are often highly vulnerable, complex and mentally or physically unwell, and therefore the need for robust wellbeing policies and practices is crucial to maintain the well-being of our staff.

Key aims of the guidance:

- To support staff at WHHTS in their work.
- To acknowledge that the needs of both the service and the staff are not static, but change over time.
- To operate in a fair and consistent manner.
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate without damaging the opportunities for students to succeed.
- To provide extra support from the leadership team at certain times of particular stress and/or difficulty (both for the service, and for personal staff stress/difficulty).
- To take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced.
- To communicate work-life balance practices to all staff at WHHTS. Developments and changes to policies should also be communicated on a regular basis.
- To include a monitoring, evaluation and review mechanism, linked to performance management and the School Improvement Plan for work-life balance initiatives and strategies.

Practical actions from the school leadership

- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system e.g. supervision.
- Promote information about and access to supportive services.
- Provide staff, through training and support, with a sense of safety and the confidence to deal positively with stressful incidents involving students.
- Act as positive role models.
- Ensure decision making processes are clearly understood by staff.
- Aim to ensure that teacher planning/recording/paperwork should be no more elaborate than is necessary and consistent with its purpose.
- Provide opportunities are provided for all staff to socialise and relax with each other.
- Provide at least one 'team building' day during the academic year.
- Ensure new staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction.
- Ensure staff in new roles are supported through initial discussion, mentoring and supervision.
- Provide an open, listening management system that responds quickly to problems.
- To provide good quality staff facilities and accommodation, such as access to refreshments, adequate seating and toilets, which are sensitive to any disability needs.
- Ensure staff receive clear guidance and advice on what rest times and PPA times are available during the working day.
- Provide regular opportunities for staff to have their opinions heard, through means of performance reviews, questionnaires, discussions, supervision and other such support.
- The leadership team aim to ensure that patterns of meetings are appropriate to the requirements of the whole school and individual teams or working groups. Meetings are agreed in advance and that pattern is adhered to. Leaders convening meetings should specify a target finishing time and adhere to it. Outcomes from meetings will be clear and concise.

Support at WHHTS

- We are recognised by UNICEF as a Silver Level Rights Respecting School, and this is reflected in our supportive ethos throughout the school.
- We are working toward attaining the CARNEGIE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS: SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AWARD. This award takes a community approach to mental health providing a framework to evidence policies and initiatives that work towards improving mental health and wellbeing for both staff and pupils within the wider school community, building an emotionally healthy community for all.
- Teaching observations have moved away from attributing a 'lesson judgement' to focus on each teacher's strengths and abilities. Teacher and support staff strengths from the lesson observations are recorded together and peer-matched to address any additional support needs.
- Extended break-time and lunchtime to allow for PPA and any informal meetings to allow staff to leave on time.
- Scheduled meetings often include time for staff to complete mandatory tasks.
- Flexibility in regards to cover lessons, including the option for students to undertake Guided Independent Study, swapping lessons on the timetable as needed.
- Class teachers and the leadership team are available to organise informal meetings with all staff, as required.
- Introduction of a Wellbeing Week once a term, where well-being of staff is prioritised and celebrated through a range of positive interventions.
- Introduction of a wellbeing scheme referred to as 'Lifesaver Days'. This scheme enables staff to request one day per academic year, or two half days, in order to attend an event which may not fall into special leave. This is intended to avoid team members missing out on trips or events which are important to them. Days must be requested, and are therefore not guaranteed, but we will try our best to facilitate each request. Lifesaver Days cannot be taken the day before or after a half term or end of term break.
- Annual Team Wellbeing INSET off-site, where staff cohesiveness and well-being is prioritised.
- Christmas Term: optional working from home report-writing morning.
- Summer Term: Wellbeing morning for all staff.
- One day flexible working allowance to be arranged with a minimum of three weeks' notice and not to be taken on the last or first day of term.
- Trade union representation is encouraged and there is access to the Headteacher.
- Daily morning meetings for all staff.
- Culture of collaborative practice where staff teach in front of each other, supporting each other.
- All staff contribute to the Service Development Plan, and the Headteacher's external reports to the Management Committee specifically reference staff by name so that individual work is recognised.
- A large number of support staff to support teachers and students.
- Generous directed hours: 8.45am start, finish 4pm Monday-Thursday and 3.30pm on Fridays. *Within this staff have a maximum of appx 63% contact time (within which no more than 75% would be leading a lesson) and receive a minimum of appx 23% PPA (rather than the 10% suggested in the STPCD guidance) and 14% organised meeting times.* As a service our teacher pupil ratios are high across the service. Each of these measures allow us to carefully plan to meet the needs of an ever changing cohort while ensuring our own life work balance.

- CPD is highly personalised. Individual, tailored support is offered to help staff achieve their CPD.
- All staff contribute to the creation of the School Vision and Values, and School Charter.

Staff Responsibility to promote well-being

It is each individual member of staff's responsibility to raise awareness when issues arise and to let the leadership team know so that they can attempt to resolve the issue at the earliest given opportunity. Staff are encouraged to take up suggestions and opportunities such as support by hospital psychologists and support by EAP as needed.

All staff are to adhere to the service policies for professional conduct, whistleblowing, anti-bullying and other such policies designed to protect and safeguard staff and children.

Special Leave

The leadership team will consider all requests for Special Leave, following the Local Authority procedure. However in addition to this WHHTS is committed to:

Facilitating up to 3 days of paid annual special leave for reasons stipulated in the Wandsworth Special leave guidance

Facilitating up to 2 days of paid special leave for a member of staff caring for a family member or close friend.

Carers

We recognise and support wherever possible the high number of our staff who are also carers in their personal lives. There is a mutual trust between staff, where staff who need time off for carers duties will do their utmost to prioritise the service and in turn will be equally supported by the Senior Management.

Absence due to ill health, both physical and mental health

The school follows the Local Authority procedure for managing absence due to ill health (see Wandsworth Sickness and Absence Codes for teachers and Support Staff). The school will work with Wandsworth Council HR team in all cases. The school will implement the use of risk assessments regarding health needs, when required.

Support includes:

- Welfare meetings,
- Return to work support,
- Phased returns,
- Occupational Health referrals
- Risk assessments.

The leadership team will maintain contact with staff when they are absent for long periods through an agreed named person. The school will seek at all times to maintain the confidentiality, rights and dignity of all staff involved.

The leadership team will ensure staff are aware of and have access to external professional support through the EAP:

All core staff have access to a programme offering professional support, details below:

The EAP has a lot of information in relation to many issues which can affect health including: healthy eating, debt management mental health, housing, retirement, bereavement, caring for elderly parents and much more. However, the main benefits are:

1. 24/7 'emergency' phone service (telephone support)
2. 6 sessions of counselling in a rolling year. These can be taken over the phone or arranged with a therapist either near the employee's home or workplace.

The contact person at Occupational Health is Diana Stovell (Diana.Stovell@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

Self-referral:

<http://www.workplaceoptions.com/member-login-2/>

Username: xxxxxxx

Password: xxxxxx

Useful Contacts

Education Support Partnership

Tel: 08000 562 561

Email: support@edsupport.org.uk (live chat also available)

Website: <https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>

The Employee Assistance Programme 'Workplace Options'

Tel: 0800 243 458/ SMS: 07909 341229

Email: assistance@workplaceoptions.com

Website: <http://www.workplaceoptions.com>

Occupational Health

Tel: 020 8871 6201

Email: Diana.Stovell@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

The Counselling Directory

A directory of counsellors; searchable by area

Website: <https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/>

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

Tel: 01455 883300

Email: bacp@bacp.co.uk

Website: <https://www.bacp.co.uk/>

The Samaritans

Tel: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org/

Website: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

Campaign against Living Miserably (CALM)

Tel: 0800 585858/ 0808 8025858 (London)

Website: <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

Anxiety UK

Tel: 0161 226 7727

Email: support@anxietyuk.org.uk

Website: <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Mind

Tel: 0300 123 3393/Text: 86463

Email: supporterrelations@mind.org.uk

Website: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Change Grow Live

Provide further information about a range of other services and organisations to help improve wellbeing

Website: <https://www.changegrowlive.org/>