


# Staff Mental Health Policy

Oak Hill CE Primary School



*'Jesus said, 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness'  
(John 10:10)*

**FAITH – VALUES – ACTION**

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<b>Signed by:</b>		Victoria Leather, Chair of Governors

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### 1) Policy statement

At our school....

- 1 We value the core foundations of faith and community
  1. We nurture and support each other as curious, brave and kind individuals
  2. We inspire a lifelong love of varied learning and experience.

At *Oak Hill CE Primary School*, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families and members of staff and governors. A staff wellbeing policy explains and sets out the school's commitment to the wellbeing of all staff. It outlines how the school will support its staff, its ongoing commitment to staff training and ensuring all staff are treated fairly and professionally at all times. Oak Hill C of E Primary School wants to ensure that staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally.

We recognise that staff are our most important resource and we seek to value our staff through personal and professional support, involvement in school decisions and access to professional development. The school has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It is also 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.

## **2. Scope**

- Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school.
- Inform staff about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing.

The school recognise the statutory responsibilities related to employment and staff have the primary responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. This policy should also be viewed alongside other policies and procedures in relation to duty of care as an employer to all members of staff. These include:

- Health and safety policy
- Attendance and absence management policy
- Anti-bullying policy/procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Whistleblowing procedure.

## **3. Policy aims**

The aims of this policy is:

- 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.
- Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through regular communication and consultation with staff.
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and to support members of staff 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.
- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where all staff feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly.
- To comply with all statutory requirements.
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues.

- Provide support to staff working with mental health issues and provide them with access to resources and other adults who work alongside them.
- To provide staff with a clear pathway of how to access mental health and wellbeing support.

#### **4. Definition of mental health and wellbeing**

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing " a state of well-being in which every individual realises 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".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all members of staff to:

- feel confident in themselves.
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
  - cope with the stresses of everyday life and deal with change.
- To feel that they can openly discuss any mental health or wellbeing concerns.
- To be able to access support.

#### **5. Legal basis**

Legislation that will be considered when promoting positive mental, physical and emotional health include:

- The health and safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010
- Working time regulations
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999

#### **6. Roles and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a member of staff's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Adam Greaves (designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and Jacqui Edwards (mental health lead). If any member of staff have concerns about the head teachers mental health or wellbeing they should contact the Chair of Governors

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

Role	Name	Email
Headteacher	Adam Greaves	<a href="mailto:head@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">head@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Adam Greaves	<a href="mailto:head@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">head@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Jacqui Edwards	<a href="mailto:jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
	Jason Avars	<a href="mailto:javards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">javards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Mental Health Lead	Jacqui Edwards	<a href="mailto:jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Mental Health First Aider	Jacqui Edwards	<a href="mailto:jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">jedwards@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
	Corinne Chilton	<a href="mailto:cchilton@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">cchilton@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Chair of governors	Victoria Leather	<a href="mailto:Chair@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk">Chair@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk</a>

### 6.1 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-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Will make themselves aware of all the relevant school policies.
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

### 6.2 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
- 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

### **6.3 Role of The headteacher and SLT**

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 regular surveys and structured conversations
- 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 a clear policy 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

Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress or other mental health problems, ensuring that a return to work policy is established in workplace that is supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work,

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

#### **6.4 Role of the governing board**

The school governor responsible for staff wellbeing is Katy Beattie ([kbeattie@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:kbeattie@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk)), overseen by the chair of governors Victoria Leather ([chair@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:chair@oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk))

##### **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 head teacher

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 what information will be required from them.

#### **7. Warning signs**

Be on the lookout for signs that a staff's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Tearfulness
- Feeling less interested in day-to-day activities
- Talking more or talking very fast, jumping between topics and ideas
- Finding it difficult to control your emotions
- Irritability and short temper
- Aggression

## **8. Support Mechanisms**

- The Senior Leadership Team must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The Senior Leadership Team should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.
- Where additional advice is needed, the staff can seek support from the schools mental health first aiders (Jacqui Edwards and Corinne Chilton).
- If professional advice is required, then Occupational Health Professionals and other avenues should be utilised.
- Where necessary, staff should be encouraged to use the free confidential counselling service from Education Support Partnership 0800562561.
- On joining the school and also moving to new roles the following support will also be offered:
  - All new staff will be given a school orientation and ensure that they receive the staff induction pack/staff handbook
  - All new staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as possible.
  - There will be reviews for new staff after the first 3 months of commencing employment.
  - Discussion of new roles and expectations alongside support for new role and related tasks.

### **8.1. Managing specific mental health and wellbeing issues**

If a member of staff is identified as having a mental health need, the Head teacher (Adam Greaves) and the mental health lead (Mrs Edwards) will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support. 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:

Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis

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.

## **9. Arrangements for implementing the mental health and wellbeing policy.**



Arrangements for wellbeing and stress prevention through good management practices.

These include the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures.
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Formal accreditation such as workplace charter.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers, to be cascaded through to all levels of management and supervision.
- Training and Development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Promotion and reward procedures.
- Capability and absence management & return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness.
- Suitable adaptations for disability.
- Harassment and anti-bullying procedures.
- Procedures for communicating with employees on the work of the School and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements, and contact days with staff on maternity leave.
- The arrangements will be updated and augmented as required and when deemed necessary by the findings of stress risk assessments.
- Managing performance procedures

## 9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is December 2024.

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility mental health lead.

Links with other policies:

Staff conduct policy -

[http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B390875%5DStaff\\_Conduct\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B390875%5DStaff_Conduct_Policy.pdf)

Whistle blowing policy -

[http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B390882%5DWhistleblowing\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B390882%5DWhistleblowing_Policy.pdf)

Health and safety policy –

[http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B692858%5DHealth\\_and\\_Safety\\_Policy\\_v01-Approved\\_November\\_2021\\_-\\_Review\\_November\\_2022\\_.pdf](http://www.oakhill.gloucs.sch.uk/documents/%5B692858%5DHealth_and_Safety_Policy_v01-Approved_November_2021_-_Review_November_2022_.pdf)

- Other related policies Gloucestershire County Council policies can be accessed via Schoolnet (password can be obtained from the school office).
- School policies can be accessed via the school drive.

- Hard copies of school policies can be accessed via the school office.

**Appendix 1  
National and Local organisations**

Organisation	Information	Contact number
Employment Assistance Programme (EAP)	An EAP is a confidential employee benefit designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health and general wellbeing.	Call: 0800 028 0199  Our helpline is available 24/7, 365 days a year.
Self Talk	If you need advice or support, you should speak to your GP, or you can self-refer to the <u>Let's talk</u> service, which offers cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and support with mental health conditions such as anxiety, low mood or depression.	<a href="https://talk2gether.nhs.uk/">https://talk2gether.nhs.uk/</a>  Call: 0800 073220
Be Well Gloucestershire	Be Well Gloucestershire is a local campaign to help when stress, anxiety, isolation and other challenges become hard to deal with. The <u>Be Well Gloucestershire</u> website is the start of what will be a central hub for anyone who needs help or support for themselves or a loved one. Working alongside local organisations, charities and communities, we will develop resources to enable more people to access mental health and wellbeing support for those who live in the county.	<a href="https://www.bewellglos.org.uk/">https://www.bewellglos.org.uk/</a>  email: <a href="mailto:bewellglos@ghc.nhs.uk">bewellglos@ghc.nhs.uk</a>
Qwell	Anyone over 18 in Gloucestershire can now access free anonymous counselling from qualified counsellors via an online	<a href="https://www.qwell.io/">https://www.qwell.io/</a>  On the website you can access:

	chat-based platform. Chats can be accessed through a drop-in service or booked sessions; there is no referral needed from a health professional, no waiting lists, and no criteria to meet to get support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online messaging</li> <li>- Booked and drop in chat</li> </ul>
Every Mind Matters	Expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/">https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/</a> Email <a href="mailto:emm.enquiries@dhsc.gov.uk">emm.enquiries@dhsc.gov.uk</a>
Gloucestershire self-harm helpline	a safe, supportive, non-judgmental and informative service for people of all ages who self-harm, their friends, families and carers.	Open every day 5pm – 10pm for webchat, phone and text support. Call 0808 816 0606 or text 07537 410 022.
Gloucestershire Crisis Team	If you or someone you know needs help in a mental health crisis, call our crisis teams. The teams work with those aged from 11 upwards.	<a href="https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/crisis/">https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/crisis/</a>  Call: 0800 169 0398  If there is immediate danger call: 999
Winston's Wish (for adults to help support children).	National Childhood bereavement charity, which provides practical and emotional support for children and young people and those who care for them after the death of a parent or sibling.	<a href="https://www.winstonswish.org/">https://www.winstonswish.org/</a>  Call: 08088 020 021 – Monday-Friday 9am-5pm  Winston's Wish crisis Messenger – free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, text WW to 85258
The Samaritans	Are available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.	<a href="https://www.samaritans.org/">https://www.samaritans.org/</a>  Call: 116 123 Email: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a>
MInd	We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health	<a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/">https://www.mind.org.uk/</a>

	problem.	Call: 0300 123 3393
Support at the Cavern	provides listening support, low level interventions such as board games and adult colouring, inclusive activities such as quiz nights and offers a supportive environment for Gloucestershire adults.	<a href="https://www.kftseekers.org.uk/support-at-the-cavern">https://www.kftseekers.org.uk/support-at-the-cavern</a>  Call: 01452 307201
Perinatal Mental Health	<p>Up to 1 in 5 women will suffer with a perinatal mental illness (those which occur during pregnancy or in the first year following the birth of a child).</p> <p>In Gloucestershire, we are working to improve access to services supporting mums and dads mental health around the time of birth.</p>	<a href="https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/perinatal-glos/">https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/perinatal-glos/</a>