

The Blue Tangerine Federation

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS

POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES



St. Luke's School Staff Wellbeing Policy

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Staff Responsibility: Wellbeing Lead

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1.0 Policy statement

At St. Luke's, we are committed to providing a safe, secure and supportive environment for all members of staff. With this in mind, this policy has been created to outline the steps that will be taken by the school to promote the mental and physical wellbeing of our staff.

This policy sets out St. Luke's approach to supporting, encouraging, and enabling all staff to maintain a healthy balance between their work and other interests and responsibilities in their life, so they can achieve their best at work and manage other areas of their life effectively.

All members of staff will be made aware of the warning signs that can indicate whether a person is having trouble managing stress. All members of staff will be vigilant for these signs in their colleagues, as well as themselves.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining St. Luke's School's approach to promoting staff mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

3.0 Policy 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

4.0 Key staff members

Head of School – Jamie Caple

Deputy Head of School – Max Guiney

SENCO – Rachel Andrew

5.0 Promoting wellbeing at all times

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
- 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 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

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
- 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
- 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

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 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

6.0 Warning signs

All members of staff will be aware of the warning signs that can indicate that a person may be having difficulties managing stress or with their mental health.

- Difficulty sleeping
- Changes in eating habits
- Increased smoking or drinking
- Isolation from friends and family
- Tiredness
- Indigestion and nausea
- Headaches
- Aching muscles
- Heart palpitations
- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Memory loss
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Low self-esteem
- Anger or irritability
- Anxiety
- Hypersensitivity
- Feeling drained and listless
- More days off than usual
- Outbursts of emotions

6.0 Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

- The Leadership Team (Head of School, Deputy Head, and Heads of Department) must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The 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.
- Staff voice meetings will be held once a month with the staff voice co-ordinator, this information will then be passed onto the leadership team.
- Where additional, professional advice is required, the school has Education Mutual Health Care. Education Mutual gives staff access to a range of health care benefits that help support all staff in the workplace.
- The Mental Health Support Team can offer support and signposting around staff wellbeing. Examples include staff wellbeing workshops, reflective and mindfulness sessions. Space to Pause – a time to reflect share.
- Where necessary, staff should be encouraged to use the confidential counselling service through Education Mutual. This service provides staff with concerns to obtain advice and support outside of the workplace.
- Staff can contact their Union representative for advice and support.
- Booking in regular supervision with your line manager
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work -related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or support from the Local Authority e.g. counselling.
- During this time, the school will ensure that at all times the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.
- Women's Health - Menopause is a normal part of every woman's life. This policy recognises that the menopause is an equality and occupational health and safety issue and that women may need appropriate flexibility, support and adjustments during the time of change before, during and after the menopause. The school will have a positive attitude towards the menopause and will treat all individuals with dignity and respect during this time and ensure

that the workplace does not make symptoms worse. School is committed to ensuring that women feel confident in discussing menopausal symptoms openly, without embarrassment, and are able to ask for support and adjustments in order to continue to work safely in the school. For this reason, the menopause at work is an issue for men as well as women. Education Mutual offer a Menopause service.

7.0 What works well at St. Luke's

- Continuing professional development for all staff
- Regular social events including End of Year celebration
- Recognition on staff birthdays/special occasions if they wish for this (they must give consent for date to be shared)
- Debriefing
- Open door approach
- Discouraging staying late repeated long days
- Reducing unnecessary reporting and duplication of paper based task
- Reducing number of emails and weekend work
- Communication via staff briefings.
- Regular review of marking policy to ensure no unnecessary workload.
- We all talk to each other and are very good at being 'aware' of each other.
- If someone notices someone isn't 'quite right' but they don't feel they can approach them they'll flag it to their line manager.
- Learning support staff and class teachers know when colleague's 'snowed under time' is here (testing, data, reports etc) and release them or enable dedicated time out of class.
- Inset Days offer a variety of time for collaboration and a time to learn.
- Staff offered time and/or financial support towards professional development.
- We laugh a lot.
- We share a philosophy of education.
- Diverse characters and personalities with a shared dedication and commitment.
- Staff survey.
- Staff ideas for change listened to through staff voice meetings.
- No meetings week at the end of the half term
- Staff nominations to show appreciation of work over the term

- Quiz/ social activity at the end of every term
- 3pm refreshment break
- Men's social group to support the mental health of men in the school – variety of activities such as sports, meals and lunches etc...
- Staff can communicate concerns in person, email or text.
- Staff supported to debrief incidents of violent or aggressive behaviour from pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- We work together towards a school improvement plan, which staff contribute to the formation and the evaluation.

8.0 What would we want to happen to further improve staff wellbeing?

- Introduce wellbeing events.
- Coffee mornings every other Friday.
- Start a wellbeing Newsletter with wellbeing information and updates.
- Offer better furniture for those with back issues.
- Build trust and safe areas for communication that are accessible for all staff.
- Agree a work email free time zone at weekends and in the evenings.
- Develop our debrief procedures for staff where there has been an incident or altercation with another adult (e.g. a parent or neighbour).
- Further improve induction for new staff
- Gather views of all staff to ensure all staff feel they have equal voice.
- Improve access to professional supervision for staff managing child protection.
- Work with the Mental Health support team (Katherine Feander) to develop the school's wellbeing.

9.0 Where can I go for support and guidance?

Education Mutual: The wide ranging services tend to the physical and wellbeing needs of staff, making a contribution to fostering a productive school team. Health care services, mental health and wellbeing and Occupational health educationmutual.co.uk

The Wellbeing Service: Free NHS service offering structured support to adults experiencing stress, sleep difficulties, anxiety, worry, and low mood. Adult IAPT service, which offers free and confidential talking therapy and practical support for Hertfordshire residents experiencing a wide range of mental health problems such as: worry, low mood, insomnia and stress.

Staff can self-refer: www.talkwellbeing.co.uk

Education Support: Sign-up for Free Counselling for Education Staff. Night or day, trained counsellors (BACP Accredited) are here to listen without judgement and help you find a way forward, whatever your worries or concerns and make you feel better. UK-wide: 08000 562 561 day or night Txt: 07909 341229 (answered within 24 hours) The helpline service is free and available to all serving and retired teachers, lecturers and staff in education (primary, secondary, further or higher education) in England, Wales and Scotland 24/7, 365 days a year.

Headspace: Headspace for Educators offers educators access to free mindfulness and meditation exercises and resources for every age group, and a free Headspace Meditation App.

Other useful websites are:

www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk

www.Mindfulteachers.org

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxietydepression/improve-mental-wellbeing/

www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/how-to-manage-and-reduce-stress.pdf

10.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum.

In between reviews, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.