A place to learn where everyone feels welcome;
based on love, wisdom, and respect.

Lower Peover C of E Primary School

Love Wisdom Respect

Let your light shine, so that others may see the good you do.

Inspired by MATTHEW 5:16.

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Review Date:	**September 2027**

Statement of intent

Lower Peover C.E Primary School is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of our employees. Preventing stress is a major factor in maintaining the wellbeing of the school's staff, which remains a key priority. Considering this, the school understands the importance of trying to reduce and deal with stress, and the factors that may cause our employees to become stressed.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the school and staff members in supporting wellbeing and promoting mental health, and to advise employees on how to deal with mental health issues and prevent stress.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's ethos reflects its commitment to reducing workload and creating a working environment that is focussed, purposeful and considers individuals' wellbeing.
- Ensuring staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and monitored.
- Ensuring that all school policies are assessed for workload impact.
- Encouraging stress awareness throughout the school – promoting stress as a serious issue rather than a weakness.
- Consulting the headteacher on managing staff stress and promoting wellbeing, including them in any decisions that need to be made.
- Ensuring the headteacher puts measures in place to support staff wellbeing.
- Actively trying to eliminate stressors in the school, e.g. by considering the format and quantity of information it requests from the SLT.
- Ensuring monitoring visits are strategic, focussed, and reflective of its monitoring plan, and being clear with staff ahead of the visit about what the focus will be and the information that will be required from them.
- Recognising mental health issues and appointing a mental health and wellbeing governor who will oversee managing and supporting staff mental health.
- Ensuring all committee meetings are purposeful, focussed, structured and relevant to the school development priorities.
- Developing an annual schedule of work and ensuring work is not duplicated between meetings of committees and the full governing board.

The mental health and wellbeing governor is responsible for:

- Influencing the setting of a school vision which creates a positive wellbeing culture and is underpinned by equality values, a system of accountability, and robust policies and procedures.
- Ensuring the school's strategic plan includes objectives linked to improving, supporting, and responding to the mental health of staff.
- Ensuring there is a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing embedded within leadership practice, the curriculum, the school's values and ethos, and the social and physical environment.
- Ensuring there is a staff well-being ambassador.
- Ensuring two senior members of staff are identified as wellbeing officers to oversee the provision and support of mental health and wellbeing in school, and to ensure effective links exist with local mental health support.
- Meeting with wellbeing officers on a regular basis to monitor and review the impact of provision and interventions.
- Working with the headteacher to ensure that appropriate training is put in place to support staff.
- Reporting to the governing board on the successes and areas of improvement in planned interventions, and the resources that are in place.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Creating and promoting a positive and supportive atmosphere throughout the school.
- Implementing CPD which equips staff with the tools needed to effectively manage stress.
- Developing a sensitive performance management process that is linked to clear job specifications.
- Including all staff in the school's decision-making processes, where possible.
- Organising extra support for staff at times of increased stress, e.g. during Ofsted inspections.
- Encouraging staff to take advantage of any initiatives introduced to promote wellbeing and effective working, e.g. an employee assistance programme.
- Ensuring that all policies that affect staff wellbeing are properly adhered to and reviewed.
- Authorising any staff absences related to stress and/or mental health issues, as well as granting extended leave.
- Monitoring employees' workloads and holiday entitlement, ensuring they are not overworked, and providing regular updates regarding absence to the governing board whilst maintaining staff confidentiality in line with the Data Protection Policy.
- Attending all necessary training, keeping skills current and setting a good example for staff.
- Regularly communicating with staff, encouraging them to be open when discussing stress.
- Conducting and implementing the recommendations of risk assessments, considering the causes of stress.
- Ensuring all staff have read and understood this policy.
- Organising thorough inductions for new employees, explaining the school's policies and code of conduct.
- Making reasonable adjustments for members of staff who are struggling with long-term mental health issues.

The SBM is responsible for:

- Providing information that helps staff to manage stress effectively.
- Ensuring that regular contact is maintained with members of staff who are absent for long periods of time.
- Ensuring new members of staff have received all the relevant information they require, including the procedures for raising concerns about wellbeing.
- Monitoring all staff absences and reporting this information to the headteacher.

The staff wellbeing ambassador and all staff members are responsible for:

- Being able to recognise the early signs of stress or mental health issues in themselves and their colleagues.
- Supporting co-workers if they become stressed, which may include practical assistance or emotional reassurance.
- Maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
- Promoting a positive, supportive atmosphere throughout the school.
- Being open to discussing stress.
- Reporting honestly about their wellbeing and any incidents of stress, e.g. being overworked.
- Where possible, asking for help when they feel under pressure or stressed.
- Attending events and training opportunities which promote wellbeing and health.
- Not acting in a manner which endangers themselves or others.
- Undertaking additional training and personal development opportunities.
- Reporting any concerns, they have about their co-workers' stress and/or mental health to the headteacher.

Identifying warning signs

The school recognises that individuals will react differently to stressful situations and become stressed by different situations and stimuli throughout their working lives. Because of this, it is important that staff understand the different factors that may cause themselves or their colleagues' stress.

The following sources of stress can often be attributed to work:

- Overworking or undertaking work that does not match the employee's skills and abilities.
- Fear of change and trying to cope with change, e.g. advancements in technology.
- Insufficient workload or not being able to use skills.
- Lack of job security.
- Poor relationships with colleagues and a lack of involvement.
- Harassment or bullying.
- Crisis management.
- Not having a long-term plan in place.

The school recognises that home and personal lives can also prove stressful for staff; bereavement, separation, financial and family problems make people more vulnerable to stress at work. It is common that a combination of stress at home and work can make people particularly stressed.

The school will strive to identify and deal with symptoms of stress quickly in order to maintain a healthy workplace.

The school has a legal requirement to actively respond where any employee displays symptoms of work-related stress.

All members of staff will be aware of the warning signs that can indicate that a person may be having trouble managing stress, and look out for the following indicators when identifying stress in themselves or others:

Behavioural indicators

- Difficulty sleeping
- Changes in eating habits
- Increased smoking or drinking
- Isolation from friends and family

Physical indicators

- Tiredness
- Indigestion and nausea
- Headaches
- Aching muscles
- Heart palpitations

Mental indicators

- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Memory loss
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Low self-esteem

Emotional indicators

- Anger or irritability
- Anxiety
- Hypersensitivity
- Feeling drained and lethargic

Actions to support staff

To positively impact wellbeing in the school, the headteacher and governing board will ensure that a whole-school approach is taken.

To help manage wellbeing, the headteacher will:

- Lead by example and encourage staff to be open if they feel stressed, to take breaks and to have a full life outside of work.
- Make the most of team bonding; using INSET days to build positive relationships, as feeling comfortable amongst colleagues will make discussing wellbeing easier.
- Assist with work and help to manage employees' workloads.
- Reach out to staff during difficult points in their personal lives, e.g. bereavement, allowing sufficient time off and supporting them when they return to work.
- Arrange a meeting with all members of staff in which the current working times and practices will be discussed.
- Research and implement an employee assistance programme relevant to the needs of all staff, regularly monitoring its effectiveness and impact on wellbeing.

To effectively address workload issues and support staff wellbeing, the headteacher, working with the SLT, will take the following actions:

Measure staff wellbeing and identify workload issues by:

- Commissioning staff workload and wellbeing surveys regularly and organising structured conversations about workload with staff.
- Arranging workshops and drawing together a summary of outcomes from staff surveys and questionnaires.
- Analysing staff diaries and identifying which members of staff are spending too much time on certain aspects of the job.

The headteacher will ensure that all changes proposed as a result of the actions outlined above are communicated to all members of staff.

A mental health and wellbeing governor will be appointed by the governing board who will be responsible for monitoring the wellbeing of staff.

All new members of staff will be provided with a comprehensive induction and their duties regarding their own and their colleagues' wellbeing will be made clear.

The school will adopt a sickness plan which will promote a positive, caring strategy for staff who are returning to work following sick leave.

The school will ensure wellbeing is promoted and stress is prevented through good management practices, including the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure the right candidates are recruited
- CPD procedures to ensure all members of staff have the necessary skills and abilities to undertake the duties required
- Performance management procedures
- Capability and absence management – return to work procedures will ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness
- Suitable adaptations for disability
- Annual surveys to better understand the areas of work that have a negative effect on staff wellbeing

Self-management

Staff can make changes to avoid and prevent stress and/or poor mental wellbeing, as it is a problem that should be tackled and not ignored.

Staff should be prepared to speak to their colleagues and senior staff if they are struggling with their mental wellbeing or feeling stressed in their personal lives or at work.

Staff are encouraged to take action to manage their own mental wellbeing. These actions will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Keeping active as a way of releasing emotional intensity and any negative feelings; exercise will also help to clear thoughts and deal with problems more calmly
- Managing their workload, and establishing and maintaining a healthy balance between work and life
- Prioritising their workload throughout the workday, leaving the least important tasks until the end of the day and concentrating on the work that will make the biggest difference
- Avoiding unhealthy habits, such as drinking and smoking
- Taking advantage of the wellbeing initiatives, training and support offered by the school
- Speaking to the headteacher about any concerns they may have regarding their workload, stress, or mental wellbeing

Reporting procedures
The staff wellbeing ambassador is **Caroline Slater**

The following senior members of staff will be designated as wellbeing officers; this is in the event that one of the wellbeing officers is the subject of the complaint:

- Mrs Jo Tinker
- Mrs Sharon Dean

Response actions
Where problems with wellbeing arise, the necessary support and appropriate actions will be considered.

This may include support from HR advisers and/or external services, e.g. occupational health.

The school will continue to support staff when external services are involved.

Support will be provided to staff who are experiencing challenging circumstances outside of the workplace.

The school will direct staff to support, both internal and external, and consider a plan of work and duties that can be managed differently during challenging periods.

Support for staff who are experiencing challenging circumstances within the school will be provided following the procedures outlined in the Grievance Policy.

Staff Workload Charter

Our aims
Lower Peover C.E Primary School is committed to considering and supporting the wellbeing of all our staff. As part of this commitment, and through a coordinated effort with school staff and leaders, we aim to ensure workload can be managed and reduced.

We recognise that staff workload can become overwhelming, which in turn affects staff wellbeing and prevents a healthy work-life balance. We believe that we have a collective responsibility to ensure working at the school remains manageable, a positive experience, and, above all, enjoyable.

By providing this support, we hope that we can retain and recruit more staff and meet our core values and ethos for helping and caring for one another.

To protect staff wellbeing, we will:

- Ensure staff have a fair and reasonable workload, including policies on marking, planning and data management.
- Provide high-quality training and CPD opportunities that meet the needs of individual staff members.
- Continue to review staff workload and ensure it always remains manageable.

Our commitments

We have agreed the following commitments and expectations between the governing board, SLT and school staff, to demonstrate our support in helping to manage staff workload.

All staff working at the school can expect:

- To work within a clear code of conduct.
- To receive a robust and high-quality induction.
- To be provided with a mentor as part of their induction process.
- To be provided with training opportunities relevant to their role and responsibilities.
- To be allocated roles and responsibilities that are linked to their skill set and area of expertise or be provided with appropriate training to upskill and broaden areas of expertise.
- The fair and equal distribution of roles, responsibilities, and tasks.
- If required, to collect data using streamlined processes that are beneficial to their work and receive robust training on using the school's data management systems.
- The support of the SLT to provide guidance and advice and simplify school processes where possible.
- A consistent and fair Behaviour Policy which allows staff to work effectively and be provided with support from the SLT to manage behaviour effectively.
- An agreed communication protocol which outlines the expected response times from colleagues and external communications, e.g. from parents.
- The use of technology to ensure effective and efficient communication, document and data management, and access to information.
- To be provided with access to external support, such as an occupational health or a confidential listening service, if needed.
- To work within an environment where their wellbeing is prioritised and valued.
- All changes to school processes to be communicated clearly and the SLT to provide support with implementation.

In addition to the above, teaching staff at the school can expect:

- A clear curriculum planning scheme that provides flexibility, is fully resourced with high-quality materials, and is planned over well-defined blocks of time.
- An agreed policy that ensures all marking undertaken is purposeful and focusses on quality feedback and the impact on pupil outcomes.

The headteacher and the SLT commit to the following:

- Ensuring the staff wellbeing ambassador is given time to fulfil his/ her role effectively.
- Conducting regular activities, e.g. staff surveys, to identify the areas of work that lead to high levels of workload and implementing approaches to reduce this
- Providing staff with opportunities to discuss areas they feel are creating high levels of workload and how these could be managed
- Implementing practices that allow for meaningful and useful communications to reduce workload
- Supporting ECTs and teachers in the early stages of their careers to adopt efficient work practices and keeping this support under regular review
- Encouraging a workplace culture that promotes a healthy work-life balance
- Making every effort to reduce the number of meetings, ensuring that those that take place are planned effectively and flexibly, and always have a key focus
- Providing staff with relevant training or CPD opportunities in school, including on recognising the early signs of stress

- Ensuring staff are clear about the purpose of marking and ensuring it is meaningful, and that they understand feedback can be given in many forms
- Ensuring the school's workload reduction initiative is included within the SDP and that enough resources are dedicated towards achieving this aim
- Monitoring staff absence levels, patterns and reasons, and using return to work meetings consistently and effectively
- Regularly monitoring the progress of work practices, including curriculum planning, communications, marking and feedback, and data collection, and adapting these where necessary
- Considering the impact of any potential changes to the school's practices before they are implemented and creating a clear implementation plan before changes are agreed
- Communicating changes to the school's practices to all staff and the whole school community, to ensure everyone understands the reasons behind the changes

The governing board commits to the following:

- Ensuring the school's ethos reflects its commitments to reducing workload and creating a working environment that is focussed, purposeful and considers individuals' wellbeing through the successful management of workload
- Ensuring it receives regular updates regarding absence levels that are broken down into the cause of absence and role of staff
- Making every effort to ensure committee meetings that school staff are expected to attend are purposeful, focussed, and structured, and relevant to the school development priorities
- Considering the nature of information requests and being clear about the information needed from the SLT and school staff
- Providing staff with advanced notice of all monitoring visits and informing them of what the focus will be and what information is required
- Working within any policy agreements, including those relating to using technology to reduce workload
- Establishing the role of the mental health and wellbeing governor to support the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and pupils
- Regularly seeking views from staff on the impact of workload and working with the headteacher and SLT to improve any identified issues
- Specialist teacher teaching music
- INSET; CPD, class time for planning and preparation, time to write annual reports.
- Relevant risk assessments completed