

Approved by:	Will Sharpe (Headteacher)
Last reviewed on:	September 2024
Next review due by:	July 2025 by SLT

Changes since last review	
Item	
Wellbeing team changed to to following people from September 2022	Helen Williams, Jess O'Neill, Emma Gibson
January 2025	Removed Natalie Watson from Wellbeing team
September 2024	Wellbeing team changed to Helen Williams, Jess O'Neill, , Emma Gibson

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Statement of intent

The Quinta 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. In light of 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.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- DfE (2018) 'Workload reduction toolkit'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Staff Attendance Management Policy**
- **Induction of New Staff Policy**
- **Data Protection Policy**
- **Grievance Policy**

1. Roles and responsibilities

1.3. 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.

- Developing an annual schedule of work and ensuring work is not duplicated between meetings of committees and the full **governing board**.

1.4. The **Senior Leadership Team** is responsible for:

- Creating a positive and supportive atmosphere throughout the school.
- Developing a performance management process that is linked to clear job specifications.
- Encouraging staff to take advantage of any initiatives introduced to promote wellbeing and effective working, e.g. an employee assistance programme.
- Considering staff absence requests and making decisions regarding these.
- Being mindful of employees' workloads and holiday entitlement, and providing regular updates regarding absence to the **governing board** whilst maintaining staff confidentiality in line with the **Data Protection Policy**.
- 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.
- Organising thorough inductions for new employees, explaining the school's policies and code of conduct.
- Ensuring that regular contact is maintained with members of staff who are absent for long periods of time.
- Gathering information in any cases that allow monitoring of this policy, such as, but not limited to, the following:
 - Sickness and absence data
 - Staff turnover
 - Exit interviews
 - Referrals to the counselling service
 - Referrals to other mental health services
 - Grievance cases
 - Harassment cases

1.5. 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.
- 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.

2. Identifying warning signs

- 1.6. 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.
- 1.7. 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
- 1.8. 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.
- 1.9. The school will strive to identify and deal with symptoms of stress quickly in order to maintain a healthy workplace.

- 1.10. All members of staff will be aware of the warning signs that can indicate that a person may be having trouble managing stress.
- 1.11. All members of staff will 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

3. Actions to support staff

- 1.12. To help manage stress, 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 relationships, as feeling comfortable amongst colleagues will make discussing stress easier.
- 1.13. A **wellbeing team** will also be appointed by the headteacher to ensure all staff are supported in their roles and that actions are implemented to mitigate stress in the workplace.
- 1.14. All new members of staff will be provided with a comprehensive induction and their duties will be made clear.
- 1.15. The **governing board** will be allocated funds for a wellbeing budget – all members of staff are welcome to make suggestions for the use of this fund. The **headteacher** will have the final say as to how the fund is spent.
- 1.16. 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
 - Promotion and reward procedures
 - 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

2. Self-management

- 2.1. Staff can make changes to avoid and prevent stress, as it is a problem that should be tackled and not ignored.
- 2.2. Staff should be prepared to speak to their colleagues and senior staff if they are feeling stressed in their personal lives or at work.
- 2.3. Staff are encouraged to take action to manage their own stress, 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 work, 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 and support offered by the school.

3. Reporting procedures

- 3.1. The following **two** 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:
 - **Sara Burggy**
 - **Sophia Stones**
- 3.2. If any member of staff wishes to raise a concern about wellbeing, one of the **two wellbeing officers** will be notified.
- 3.3. The **wellbeing officers** will provide the member of staff with information about the support that is available to them; this includes both within the school and outside sources. These resources include:
 - **Access to Occupational Health**
 - **Bupa support line**
- 3.4. The **wellbeing officers** will treat all cases confidentially. Real names of staff will not be used when the **wellbeing officers** are reporting to the **headteacher**.
- 3.5. In some cases, such as those that directly impact day-to-day activities, confidentiality will not be guaranteed. If this is the case, staff will be made aware of the situation.
- 3.6. The **wellbeing officer** in receipt of the complaint will investigate and report this to the **headteacher**.
- 3.7. The **headteacher** will decide whether any further action will be taken.

4. Response actions

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. The school will continue to support staff when external services are involved.
- 4.3. 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.

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

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1. This policy will be reviewed biannually by the **governing board** and the **headteacher**.
- 5.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.
- 5.3. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.
- 5.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **July 2025**.