



Staff Wellbeing and Work Life Balance Policy

Adopted by Trustees: 1st December 2022

Next Review Date: 1st December 2024

Person responsible for overseeing the implementation: CEO & HR Manager

Chair of Trustees signature: *C. L. Chevassut*

NB: All references to legislation and guidance are as updated, amended or replaced from time to time.

1. Purpose and Principles

The Trust recognises the importance of ensuring that all their staff enjoy a reasonable balance between their working life and the demands of home, family and other interests and commitments. Whilst this policy makes reference to the specific arrangements for teachers, the principles of a healthy work-life balance (and systems to monitor this) apply to all employees of the Trust. 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 Trust or the individual member of staff to work to the detriment of their 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 Trust recognises that employees are not obliged to work in school beyond their contracted hours, although teachers are expected to complete duties and activities to enable teachers to discharge their job effectively and all other reasonable duties delegated to them by the CEO/ Headteacher/Head of School beyond the school day subject to the 1265 hours' rule.

In order for our staff to be at their most effective they need to have a healthy work-life balance to:

- attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for an outstanding education system.
- improve the Trust's effectiveness by actively reducing staff absenteeism and turnover.
- develop a more motivated workforce, with high morale, even more able to deliver a better education for our children
- improve team work, staff development and co-operation by effectively distributing leadership and creating new leaders;
- recognise that excessive hours of work can reduce staff effectiveness.
- recognise that improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the whole workforce.

2. Key Aims of the policy

The key aims of this policy are to:

- support staff in their work.
- acknowledge that the needs of both the Trust and its staff are not static, but change over time.
- acknowledge the need for the Trust's leadership (including the LGB's), unions/staff representatives and staff to discuss workable work-life balance solutions;
- encourage a partnership approach to meeting the needs of both the Trust and the staff; □ operate in a fair and consistent manner.
- carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate without damaging the opportunities for students to succeed. take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced.
- communicate work-life balance practices to all staff within the Trust. Developments and changes to policies should also be communicated on a regular basis;
- include a monitoring, evaluation and review mechanism, linked to performance management and the school improvement plan, for work-life balance initiatives and strategies.

3. School Context

Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust is evolving. Many new staff, teaching and non-teaching, have been appointed in recent years to ensure that all curriculum requirements can be met and to support teaching staff with workforce remodelling issues.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that positive steps are taken to promote a healthy work-life balance for all employees. For teachers the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document requires that all teachers and Headteachers/Head of School enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.

Governing Bodies and Headteachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the Headteacher and teachers at the school being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties.

This same principle will be extended to all support staff who work within the Trust. The Trust Board/CEO and Headteacher/Head of School will make this policy available to all employees at the Trust.

4. Health, Safety and Welfare

The Trust recognises its duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees. This policy will be implemented and will incorporate all aspects of welfare, which the Trust Board/CEO and Headteacher/Head of School has put in place to prevent and deal with workplace stress. The wellbeing of the staff will be supported wherever possible.

5. Implementation

The CEO takes overall responsibility for implementing this policy and for ensuring the Headteacher/Head of School and the Leadership Team enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. The Headteacher/Head of School and Leadership Team will ensure the staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and provide them with an example of good practice. All employees will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.

6. Commitment

The following issues will be reviewed for inclusion in a programme of committing to and improving employees' work life balance and their well-being;

6.1 Unmeasured Working Time

Where employees are contracted to work unmeasured time, for example the Leadership Team, the Trust undertakes to ensure that the schools' requirements and expectations are reasonable.

6.2 Employment Policies and Practice

The Trust undertakes to adopt and apply the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part time working, flexible working patterns etc where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school. The Trust will adopt policies and provide clear guidance on time off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons – refer to Absence Management Policy.

6.3 Individual and Team Workloads

We aim for the school's timetable to reflect a fair and reasonable balance of work between different members of staff. School management will ensure that new and emerging priorities are discussed with the employees affected and that ways of managing the implications for individual workloads are addressed.

We are conscious in our allocation of non-teaching time for teaching staff. We employ cover supervisors to meet the "rarely cover" requirements.

6.4 Planning and Policies

We aim to ensure that preparing documentation should be no more elaborate than is necessary and consistent with its purpose.

6.5 Meetings

School managers aim to ensure that patterns of meetings are appropriate to the requirements of the whole school, faculties and departments etc. and that they are agreed in advance and that the 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.

6.6 Administration

Administrative work has been delegated to appropriate support staff.

6.7 Individual support and training

Individual support, including confidential counselling is available to employees so that they may raise concerns about problems and difficulties, which affect them either in their work or their family/personal life.

7. Responsibilities

The Trust are responsible for the welfare of all staff and will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through the CEO/Headteacher/Head of School responsible for staffing. The policy will be reviewed annually.

The CEO/Headteacher/Head of School and staff are responsible for dealing with issues and incidents where the safety and welfare of staff is compromised. It will be each individual member of staff's responsibility to raise awareness when issues arise. Where staff are concerned, it is their responsibility to let the leadership team know so that we can attempt to resolve the issue.

8. Support at Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust

The Trust has a number of strategies/policies and structures in place to support all staff at Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust.

Examples of these measures are;

- Performance reviews offer the opportunity for staff to discuss with their reviewers, any concerns which they may have about their workload or ability to balance work with other aspects of their life.
- There is a Line management system in place for all staff.
- Trade Union representation is good and encouraged
- There is access to the CEO/ Headteacher/Head of School.
- Staff rooms at each Trust school
- Regular staff briefings.
- Team rooms for each faculty to relax, work and support colleagues.
- Weekly bulletins to all staff.
- Regular professional development sessions to support all staff.
- Human Resources Manager across the Trust
- CEO/Headteacher/Head of School are very supportive of planning and preparation time and staff colleagues support this.
- Full and sustained use of Cover Supervisors to reduce cover undertaken by teaching staff.
- Effective timing of Inset Days.
- Annual staff questionnaires which include questions on staff working conditions and wherever possible, we take action on the results.