



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF STAFF POLICY



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1. Policy Statement

Hollinswood Primary School & Nursery is committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all employees. We recognise that mental health is as important as physical health and that a healthy, supported workforce is essential to providing high-quality education and care.

We are committed to creating a culture in which all staff feel safe, valued, respected and supported. We recognise that wellbeing, inclusion and safeguarding are closely linked and that early identification and support for mental health concerns can help prevent difficulties from escalating.

The school adopts a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, reflecting current Department for Education guidance and the principles of the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter. This approach recognises the importance of leadership, organisational culture, workload management, professional relationships and staff voice in promoting wellbeing.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Attendance Management Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Flexible Working Policy
 - Suicide Intervention and Safety Planning Procedures
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2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing across the school.
- Foster a supportive, inclusive and psychologically safe working environment.
- Reduce stigma associated with mental ill-health.
- Support early identification and intervention.
- Ensure staff know how and where to access support.
- Promote anti-discriminatory practice and equality of opportunity.
- Recognise the impact of trauma, adversity and workplace stressors on wellbeing.
- Support managers in responding appropriately to wellbeing concerns.

- Ensure mental health concerns are appropriately considered within safeguarding responsibilities.
 - Promote resilience, positive working relationships and professional support networks.
 - Monitor and improve staff wellbeing through regular evaluation and consultation.
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3. Principles

At Hollinswood Primary School & Nursery we believe:

- Mental health exists on a continuum and can fluctuate throughout life.
 - Everyone has responsibility for promoting a positive workplace culture.
 - Seeking support is a sign of strength.
 - Early intervention is more effective than crisis intervention.
 - Staff should be treated with dignity, compassion and respect.
 - Wellbeing support should be equitable and accessible.
 - Leadership decisions should consider their impact on staff wellbeing.
 - A culture of professional curiosity supports early identification of concerns.
 - The school has responsibilities under health and safety legislation to assess and manage risks to employee wellbeing, including work-related stress.
 - Positive mental health is supported by healthy working practices, effective leadership, manageable workload and a culture of openness, trust and psychological safety.
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4. Whole-School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing

The school is committed to a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Leadership and Management

Leaders will:

- Champion staff wellbeing.
- Promote open conversations about mental health.
- Model healthy work-life balance wherever possible.
- Consider wellbeing implications during organisational change.
- Regularly review workload and work practices.
- Support staff participation in decision-making.
- Promote reasonable expectations regarding communication outside working hours.
- Encourage healthy professional boundaries that support work-life balance.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns regarding wellbeing.

Staff Development

The school will:

- Provide mental health and wellbeing awareness opportunities.
- Support managers to hold effective wellbeing conversations.
- Promote reflective practice.
- Develop staff understanding of mental health, wellbeing and safeguarding.

Staff Voice

The school will:

- Gather feedback through surveys and consultation.
- Encourage open and constructive discussion.
- Respond to identified themes where practicable.

This approach reflects the Department for Education's whole-school approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing.

5. Mental Health and Safeguarding

The school recognises that mental health and safeguarding are closely linked.

Poor mental health is not a safeguarding issue in itself; however, mental health concerns may sometimes be associated with:

- Abuse or neglect.
- Domestic abuse.
- Bullying.
- Harassment.
- Discrimination.
- Trauma.
- Exploitation.
- Self-harm.
- Suicidal ideation.
- Significant personal risk.

Where concerns indicate that an individual may be at risk of harm, appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Where concerns indicate that a member of staff may present a risk to themselves, another adult or a child, safeguarding procedures, risk assessment processes and information-sharing arrangements will be followed as appropriate.

The school recognises the importance of:

- Early intervention.
- Professional curiosity.
- Appropriate information sharing.
- Timely referral to specialist services.
- Accurate and proportionate record keeping.

The school recognises that domestic abuse may significantly affect mental health and wellbeing. Staff experiencing domestic abuse will be supported sensitively and safeguarding procedures will be followed where there are concerns regarding the safety of children or adults. Current safeguarding guidance emphasises early help, prompt action and appropriate information sharing where risks are identified.

6. Trauma-Informed Practice

The school is committed to a trauma-informed approach to wellbeing.

We recognise that experiences such as:

- Bereavement.
- Domestic abuse.
- Caring responsibilities.
- Financial hardship.
- Serious illness.
- Relationship breakdown.
- Adverse life experiences.
- Exposure to traumatic events.

can affect emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The school also recognises the impact that supporting vulnerable children and families may have on staff.

Staff working with vulnerable children, families and safeguarding concerns may experience vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress or compassion fatigue. The school will seek to provide opportunities for supervision, reflection and support where appropriate.

Where possible, leaders will demonstrate understanding, flexibility and support while maintaining operational requirements.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Promote a culture that values staff wellbeing.
- Monitor wellbeing trends and risks.
- Ensure appropriate policies are in place.
- Receive annual wellbeing updates.
- Consider wellbeing when making strategic decisions.
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for staff wellbeing where appropriate.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Lead implementation of this policy.
- Promote a positive organisational culture.
- Ensure appropriate wellbeing support mechanisms are available.
- Monitor workload and wellbeing risks.
- Ensure appropriate stress risk assessments are undertaken where workplace stress presents a significant risk to staff wellbeing.

Senior Mental Health Lead

The Senior Mental Health Lead will:

- Promote wellbeing initiatives.
- Coordinate wellbeing support and signposting.
- Support managers with wellbeing concerns.
- Monitor wellbeing trends.
- Contribute to policy development and review.
- Report annually to governors on wellbeing priorities, risks and outcomes.

Line Managers

Line managers will:

- Promote positive wellbeing within their teams.
- Hold supportive and regular wellbeing conversations.
- Identify concerns at an early stage.
- Signpost available support.
- Consider workplace adjustments where appropriate.
- Escalate concerns where safeguarding or safety risks are identified.

All Staff

Staff are encouraged to:

- Seek support when required.
 - Support colleagues appropriately.
 - Raise concerns at an early stage.
 - Participate in wellbeing activities.
 - Contribute to a supportive workplace culture.
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8. Support Available

Managers and leaders are not expected to provide counselling or therapeutic interventions. Their role is to listen, provide support within their competence, facilitate workplace adjustments where appropriate, and signpost staff to professional support services.

Internal Support

- Line manager support.
- Senior leadership support.
- Senior Mental Health Lead support.
- Peer support.
- Wellbeing initiatives.
- Workplace adjustments where appropriate.
- Wellbeing and Recovery Plans.

External Support

- Occupational Health.
- Employee Assistance Programme.
- General Practitioner (GP).
- NHS Talking Therapies.
- Mental health charities and voluntary services.
- Specialist mental health services.

Occupational Health referrals will normally be discussed with the employee in advance. Recommendations from Occupational Health will be considered carefully but may not always be implemented where operational, legal or organisational factors require an alternative approach.

9. Wellbeing and Recovery Plans (WRAP)

Where appropriate, staff may develop an individual Wellbeing and Recovery Plan.

These plans may include:

- Early warning signs.
- Known triggers.
- Coping strategies.
- Workplace adjustments.
- Support contacts.
- Emergency contacts.
- Professional services involved.
- Agreed review arrangements.

Plans will be developed collaboratively, reviewed regularly and amended as required.

10. Suicide Awareness and Immediate Risk Concerns

The school recognises that some individuals may experience suicidal thoughts or engage in self-harming behaviours.

Any disclosure or concern relating to:

- Suicidal thoughts.
- Suicide plans.
- Serious self-harm.
- Immediate risk to self.
- Immediate risk to others.

will be treated seriously and responded to without delay.

Where immediate risk exists:

- Safety will be prioritised.
- Senior leaders will be informed.
- Appropriate procedures will be followed.
- Emergency services or crisis intervention services will be contacted where required.
- Actions taken will be recorded appropriately.

Managers should not attempt specialist risk assessment beyond their competence and should seek appropriate professional advice.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that wellbeing support is inclusive, accessible and equitable.

We recognise that mental health and wellbeing may be affected by:

- Disability.
- Neurodiversity.
- Racism.
- Sexism.
- Homophobia.
- Transphobia.
- Religious discrimination.
- Harassment.
- Bullying.
- Menopause-related challenges.
- Other forms of discrimination or disadvantage.

The school recognises that some mental health conditions may constitute a disability under the Equality Act 2010 where they have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Where appropriate, the school will consider reasonable adjustments and seek specialist advice to ensure compliance with equality legislation.

Staff should feel able to raise concerns relating to workload, wellbeing, professional conduct, safeguarding or organisational culture without fear of detriment. Concerns may be raised through management channels, wellbeing processes, trade union representation or the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

12. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Records relating to staff wellbeing will:

- Be factual and proportionate.
- Be stored securely.
- Comply with data protection legislation.
- Be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Records should include, where appropriate:

- Nature of the concern.
- Discussions held.
- Actions taken.
- Support offered.
- Decisions made.
- Reasons for decisions.
- Agreed review arrangements.
- Outcomes.

Confidentiality will be respected wherever possible. However, where a safeguarding concern or significant risk is identified, information may be shared appropriately to protect individuals and fulfil legal safeguarding responsibilities. Current safeguarding guidance emphasises accurate recording of concerns, decisions, actions and outcomes.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Staff wellbeing surveys.
- Staff consultation.
- Wellbeing action planning.
- Attendance and absence data.
- Staff retention information.
- Occupational Health referral trends.
- Uptake of wellbeing support services.
- Exit interview themes.

An annual wellbeing report will be provided to the Governing Body or relevant committee, including:

- Emerging wellbeing risks.
- Actions taken.
- Impact of wellbeing initiatives.
- Priorities for improvement.

Following the annual review process, the school will develop a Staff Wellbeing Action Plan identifying priorities, actions, responsibilities and timescales to support continuous improvement.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- National guidance changes.
- Safeguarding requirements change.
- Legislation changes.
- Local circumstances indicate a review is required.

The review process will take account of:

- Staff feedback.

- Wellbeing monitoring information.
 - Updated safeguarding guidance.
 - Department for Education guidance.
 - Education Staff Wellbeing Charter principles.
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Appendix 1: Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Pathway

Stage 1: Universal Support

All staff have access to:

- Positive workplace culture.
- Wellbeing initiatives.
- Professional development.
- Peer support.
- Information and signposting.

Outcome: Positive wellbeing is promoted and maintained.

Stage 2: Emerging Concern

Possible indicators:

- Increased stress.
- Changes in behaviour or mood.
- Reduced confidence.
- Increased absence.
- Workload concerns.
- Personal difficulties.

Action:

- Supportive wellbeing conversation.
- Identification of support needs.
- Signposting to services.
- Agreed review date.

Outcome: Early support is implemented.

Stage 3: Targeted Support

Support may include:

- Wellbeing and Recovery Plan.
- Regular meetings.
- Workplace adjustments.
- Flexible working arrangements where possible.
- Occupational Health referral.
- Employee Assistance Programme.

Outcome: Structured support in place.

Stage 4: Significant Mental Health Concerns

Examples:

- Severe anxiety.
- Depression.
- Burnout.
- Long-term mental health difficulties.

Action:

- Review support arrangements.
- Occupational Health advice.
- Consider reasonable adjustments.
- Review workplace expectations.

Outcome: Coordinated response to significant need.

Stage 5: Immediate Welfare or Safety Concerns

Examples:

- Suicidal thoughts.
- Suicide plans.
- Serious self-harm.
- Immediate risk to self or others.

Action:

- Remain calm and supportive.
- Seek immediate senior leadership support.
- Follow safety planning procedures.

- Contact emergency services where necessary.
- Record all actions.

Outcome: Immediate safety prioritised.

Stage 6: Safeguarding Response

Safeguarding procedures will be followed where concerns involve:

- Risk of significant harm.
- Domestic abuse.
- Abuse or neglect.
- Exploitation.
- Risks affecting children.
- Statutory safeguarding intervention.

Outcome: Appropriate safeguarding action taken.

Appendix 2: Sources of Support

Emergency Support

- Emergency Services: 999
- NHS: 111
- Local Mental Health Crisis Service

School-Based Support

- Line Manager
- Senior Mental Health Lead
- Senior Leadership Team
- Occupational Health
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Trade Union Representatives

National Support

- Samaritans: 116 123
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Education Support: www.educationsupport.org.uk

Key School Contacts

Headteacher	Katherine Osborne
Senior Mental Health Lead	Katherine Osborne
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Katherine Osborne
Deputy DSL	Samantha Jones Rebecca Thomas Sue Newbrook
Occupational Health Contact	See Donna O'Reilly
Employee Assistance Programme	