Little Ilford School
Staff Wellbeing and Work-life Balance Policy

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Contents **Page**

1. **Principles** **1**
2. **Aims** **2**
3. **Promoting wellbeing and work-life balance at all times** **3**
4. **Managing specific wellbeing issues** **5**
5. **Monitoring arrangements** **5**
6. **Links with other policies** **6**

1. Principles

The staff and governing body recognise the importance of ensuring that all staff in school enjoy a reasonable balance between their working life and the demands of home, family and other interests and commitments. An acceptable work-life balance will be different for each employee and will be different at different times in their careers. It is not in the interest of either the school or the individual member of staff to work to the detriment of their health. Little Ilford School will, therefore, take positive steps to ensure that all staff are able to balance their working lives with their other commitments and home and family life. Staff wellbeing, linked with a healthy work-life balance, and supporting staff in their daily role, is therefore important in maintaining a positive atmosphere in our school; it will dovetail with our school vision and values of commitment, courage and compassion.

1.1 Statutory Guidance

According to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD 2023), all staff - support staff, teachers and headteachers - are entitled to enjoy a reasonable work-life balance, and states, “Governing bodies and headteachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the headteacher and teachers at the school to be able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties… and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work.” (School Teachers Pay and Conditions document, 2025, paragraph 52.4)

This same principle will be extended to all support staff who work at Little Ilford School.

2. Aims of the Policy:

As part of its **commitment** to staff wellbeing and work-life balance, Little Ilford School:

- Prioritises the strategic lead of staff wellbeing and workload, ensuring that it underpins decision-making and communication across the school at all levels;
- Recognises the importance of developing the skill of effective line management in its middle and senior leaders, as this is crucial to staff wellbeing:
    1. The development of workable solutions through the whole school **coaching** programme will be promoted and it will encourage a partnership between individual staff and their line managers;

- Addresses work-life balance and wellbeing through its leadership competencies created for all staff, with a huge emphasis on **compassionate leadership** at all levels within our school, where the following strands are prioritised:
    1. Supporting staff to be **reflective** when managing anxieties and emotions;
    2. Supporting staff to show **humility** when acknowledging and empowering others;
- Creates a LIS 'family' atmosphere through its **celebration and recognition** of staff achievements and through its **social events** and 'treats' (e.g. staff cooked breakfast, end of term whole staff meal, etc.).
- Safeguards the health, safety and welfare of staff:
    1. acknowledging their needs and how these change over time;
    2. Making reasonable adjustments to working practices and working conditions in line with legal requirements set out in equalities legislation;
- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims.

3. Promoting Wellbeing at all times

3.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect, communicating positively and professionally with all colleagues;
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff, by meeting deadlines, for instance, and providing sufficient notice for tasks to be completed;
- 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;
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit;
- Keep themselves informed of all school matters through relevant channels - staff briefings; meetings; school calendar; monitoring schedule, bulletins and other communication methods; (Any changes to these throughout the year should be rare)
- Use shared areas respectfully - positively and professionally - such as the staff room, workrooms, or offices;

- Take part in training opportunities and social events and activities that promote their wellbeing;
- Comply with the email communication protocol.

3.2 Role of line managers
Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills and impact in fulfilling their role;
- Ensure that staff are actively listened to over issues and concerns that occur, whilst recognising that decisions taken in the light of this feedback may be different from what the employee desires;
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff;
- Apply a solution and coaching focused approach when supporting staff to resolve challenges;
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies;
- Monitor workload 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 performance development reviews 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;
- Liaise with HR on the monitoring of staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge;
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work;
- Comply with the email communication protocol.

3.3 Role of senior staff
Senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat members of staff, and adhering to agreed working hours;
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff;
- Model a solution and coaching focused approach when supporting staff to resolve challenges;
- 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;
- 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;
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated;
- Produce a monitoring schedule - calendars of meetings, deadlines and events - so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload; ensure this is updated, and communicated regularly;
- Provide resources and information that promote staff wellbeing;
- Provide training opportunities on resilience, managing emotions, self-care, compassionate leadership, and other relevant areas that would improve wellbeing;
- Create social events to bring staff together in the spirit of the LIS family;
- Provide health and fitness activities and events that promote staff wellbeing;
- Provide wellbeing tips to staff regularly which they can adopt and practise both in school and at home;
- Promote information about and access to external support services;
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation;
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as department reviews and Ofsted inspections;
- Comply with the email communication protocol.

3.4 Role of the governing body

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 and all staff;
- 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 regard 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.

4. Managing specific wellbeing issues

The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis;
- 45 minute lunch time
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services;
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified;
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise.

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed once a year by the designated SLT lead for wellbeing. At every review, it will be approved by SLT, the headteacher and the governing body.

6. Links with other policies & documents

- **Staff Wellbeing Charter**
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j1j1gJJUn-eg0ephoAx5bR7GgRdlkerUAQ4VtIlmTRU/edit?tab=t.0
- **Communication in school**

  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oNv7VIu5JjnJC85JfPMouI2HyI9supfI8B6u0rD09XE/edit?usp=sharing

- **Performance development**
  - Teachers' Standards:

    https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

  - Threshold Standards:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TorzmM76Ufwm9hmNIt695aglqsy4LtW-urUAtqXyvi0/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs

- Support staff competencies:

  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1biElCjc1NxnFRymeH3rNPmfe5kVdaLvFHSXuZ9AUIjI/view#

- **LIS Leadership competencies**
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U-qxc4MUauYtm6qd0rrJWCFoAM_TuX5RWdxeM1y5gY4/edit

- **LIS Coaching Programme**

  https://docs.google.com/document/d/19LBSUHwcF-B8-WBZumefxKjwBb6ChBb7-LFHU9Ro1Bg/edit

- **Staff Code of Conduct**

  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b-gv4d7p76zziCf8OB-SU6w-lN_j6zV1-yr89dX8dnY/edit?usp=sharing

- **Menopause Policy for Newham Council Schools**

  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uc7DUgSzmfdoSGr3rDE0RhRSWNZ0uY7OchK6FIYjbVQ/edit?usp=sharing