**OSWALDTWISTLE SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY 2019-2020**

**Policy Statement**

At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff.

Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful. We encourage students to be open and we want each student to have their voice heard.

At our school we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody’s responsibility – we all have a role to play.

**Policy Scope**

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

**Policy Aims**

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and students.

**At our school, we will always:**

* Help our students to understand their emotions and experiences better.
* Ensure our students feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.
* Help our students to form and maintain friendships.
* Encourage our students to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
* Help our students to develop resilience and ways of coping with stress and setbacks.

**We will always promote a healthy environment by:**

* Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff.
* Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
* Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
* Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
* Promoting our students’ voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
* Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected.
* Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any student that needs it.
* Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
* Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students.
* Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health

**KEY STAFF MEMBERS**

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and each other.

However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

* **Our Designated Safeguarding Officers**: Julie Walker, Anne Kyle, Sandra McKenna
* **Pastoral Staff:** Julie Padden, Angela Catlow
* **SENCO:** Sarah Barton

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to Julie Walker.

If a student presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

**IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS**

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems.

This means that they will be able to offer help and support to students who need it, when they need it.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer Julie Walker.

**Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:**

* Physical signs of harm
* Changes in eating and sleeping habits
* Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
* Changes in mood.
* Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide – staff have been trained in Suicide Awareness
* Drug and alcohol abuse.
* Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
* Secretive behaviour
* Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, eg. A large winter coat in Summer.
* Negative behaviour patterns, eg. Disruption.

**Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:**

* Attendance and absenteeism
* Punctuality and lateness
* Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education
* Family and relationship problems
* Staff will be able to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child’s mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

**MANAGING DISCLOSURES**

If a student discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner.

All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it’s necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

If a member of staff thinks it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside of it, then this will first be discussed with the student. They will be told:

* Who the staff member is going to tell.
* What the staff member is going to disclose.
* Why it’s necessary for somebody else to be told.
* When the contact will be.

It may not be possible to gain the student’s consent first, such as in the case of students who are at immediate risk. Protecting a student’s safety is our main priority so we would share disclosure if we judged a child to be at risk.

**WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

**WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. To support parents we will:

* Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
* Share and allow parents to access further support
* Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
* Give parents guidance about how they can support their child’s/ children’s positive mental health.
* Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.

**WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND PARTNERS**

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students’ emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

* The school nurse
* Paediatricians
* ELCAS
* Counselling services
* Therapists
* Child Action North West
* Lancashire County Council Family and Child Wellbeing Service
* Family Support Workers/Children’s Social Care

**WELLBEING and WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR TEACHERS AND ALL STAFF Policy**

**INTRODUCTION and RATIONALE**

**The Oswaldtwistle School recognises that teacher working hours are widely acknowledged, including by Government, to be excessive, unsustainable and not supportive of children’s learning. This school will, therefore, take positive steps to reverse this trend and ensure that all TEACHERS and all staff are able to balance their working lives with their other commitments. All TEACHERS and all staff, including head TEACHERS and all staff are entitled to enjoy a reasonable work/life balance.**

 This is acknowledged in the School TEACHERS Pay and Conditions Document

(STPCD), which states that:

“Governing Bodies and head TEACHERS and all staff , in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the head teacher and TEACHERS and all staff 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. In having regard to this, Governing

Bodies and head TEACHERS should ensure that they adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations.”

(2018 STPCD, Section 2, Part 7, paragraph 52.4)

One of the key professional duties of head TEACHERS to:

“Lead and manage the staff with a proper regard for their well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments”.

(2018 STPCD, Section 2, Part 7, paragraph 46.13)

In recognition of these statutory provisions, the Governing Body of The Oswaldtwistle School has adopted the following work/life balance policy following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

Work/life balance is about ensuring that this school’s/trust’s TEACHERS are able to combine work with their personal interests and commitments outside work. Good work/life balance is an essential factor in staff effectiveness and satisfaction, which in turn supports pupil learning. It can help to recruit and retain better motivated staff through giving them greater control of their working lives.

As part of its commitment to work/life balance The Oswaldtwistle School:

• recognises that effective practices to promote work/life balance benefit both TEACHERS and all staff and pupils;

• will promote the development of workable solutions and encourage a partnership between individual TEACHERS and all staff and their line managers;

• will reform accountability systems so that they are based on trust, respectful professional dialogue and proportionality;

• will develop, monitor and evaluate appropriate policies and practical responses that meet the specific needs of the school, having regard to fairness and consistency, and valuing TEACHERS and all staff for their professional skills not their working pattern;

• will re-emphasise its commitment to work/life balance to its staff on a regular basis; and

• will encourage senior managers to lead by example.

**POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this policy is to:

• enable employees to balance their working lives with their personal needs, interests and caring responsibilities;

• safeguard the health, safety and welfare of staff;

• assist the head teacher/s in carrying out his/her professional duties;

**The Governing Body agrees to:**

• ensure that the contents of this policy are communicated to staff on a regular basis;

• consult regularly with staff and their trade unions to ensure that the policy is effective in achieving a reasonable work/life balance for all staff; and ensure that the policy operates in a fair and consistent manner.

**POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

**Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body will nominate a work/life balance Governor with responsibility for promoting and monitoring work/life balance in the school.

**Staff Consultation**

The involvement of staff is key to the success of this policy. Trade union representatives and staff will be consulted over the introduction, monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the policy and its impact.

**Individual Monitoring**

As well as consultation with staff and unions as a whole, the following measures will be adopted by the Governing Body to monitor work/life balance and individual workload concerns.

• Provision of up-to-date job descriptions, with duties and responsibilities relating to

individual teacher’s roles clearly identified and staff consulted prior to any changes.

• Consultation between the head teacher (or deputy head teacher) and NQTs, new

appointees and those promoted internally, six weeks after they take up their new post, to explore work/life balance issues and to see if the school can offer further support.

• Properly conducted exit interviews, or use of exit questionnaires, when staff resign to find out if problems with work/life balance played a part in the resignation. The governor with designated responsibility for work/life balance will oversee this.

**PRACTICAL STEPS TO ENSURE A GOOD WORK/LIFE BALANCE FOR TEACHERS AND ALL STAFF**

**AT The Oswaldtwistle School**

**Setting Targets to reduce overall working hours**

The Governing Body will seek to exert downward pressure on working hours by setting an initial target of reducing total working hours to the Working Time Regulations limit of48 per week, with a commitment that no more than 48 hours will be worked in any individual week.

**Reasonable Additional Hours**

A reasonable work/life balance cannot be achieved if the hours worked by TEACHERS and all staff in addition to directed time are excessive.

To ensure that TEACHERS and all staff ’ overall working hours are reasonable the Governing Body will carry out a termly audit to determine the additional hours that TEACHERS and all staff are typically carrying out per week.

Where this audit shows that a particular policy or initiative is contributing to excessive workload, or when it is raised by trade unions on behalf of staff, the school will consult and review the policy or initiative to seek to reduce workload pressures. See also section below on New Initiatives.

**Accountability Systems within the School**

TEACHERS and all staff employed by The Oswaldtwistle School will be trusted and respected. This will be demonstrated by the adoption of the ‘Ofsted Inspections Clarification for Schools’

Document at https[://www.TEACHERS .org.uk/education-policies/ofsted-estyn/clarificationschools](%3A/www.teachers.org.uk/education-policies/ofsted-estyn/clarificationschools) and in particular by adhering to the following good practice:

• TEACHERS and all staff will not be required to provide evidence of the work that they undertake, other than that which arises naturally;

• TEACHERS and all staff will not be required to use marking schemes which generate excessive written dialogue between them and their pupils;

• There will be no requirement to produce detailed lesson plans, or to hand them in for scrutiny;

• Lesson observations will be limited to 3 per year, except in cases of concern and, in accordance with Ofsted advice; such observations will not be graded according to the Ofsted evaluation schedule;

• Peer observations will be positively encouraged; and

• TEACHERS and all staff will be consulted on how data collection demands can be reduced.

**Calendars**

An annual calendar of meetings, deadlines and events will be provided to staff so that

they can plan ahead and manage their workload in such a way as to help maintain a satisfactory work/life balance.

When drawing up a calendar for the following academic year, the head teacher will

consult staff in the summer term on the pattern and number of meetings, to be agreed

within the limits explained below.

Consultation with staff will also include the timings of INSET, report schedules, parents’

evenings, sports days, classroom observations and other activities and events that might

impact on work/life balance.

If, because of unexpected pressures, a member of staff recognises that they may not be

able to meet a particular deadline then they should inform their line manager at the

earliest opportunity to discuss how they can be supported in completing the task.

**New Initiatives**

Before their introduction, all new initiatives will be considered by management and

Teacher and other staff union representatives in terms of their impact on work/life balance. The following questions will be considered.

• What will be the benefit of the new initiative for pupils and for TEACHERS and all staff?

• Will all TEACHERS and all staff be equally affected by any changes to working practices?

• How much time will TEACHERS and all staff need to spend on this new initiative?

• Are additional resources needed and, if so, have they been made available?

• Will it lead to other activities no longer needing to take place, or being undertaken by, for example, support staff?

• What, if any, will be the net increase in working hours?

• Does the policy conflict in any way with TEACHERS and all staff’ contractual entitlements as set out in the STPCD? (If so, the policy TEACHERS and all staff’ entitlements will be protected.) or the equivalent working rights of non-teaching staff.

If it is agreed that the proposed new initiative is beneficial and workload neutral then it will be introduced on a trial basis, but a review process will be put in place to ensure that additional or unanticipated workload burdens do not build up over time.

Where it is clear that the proposed new initiative will lead to a net increase in working hours then something TEACHERS and all staff currently do will be dropped so that overall workload does not increase. Where this is not possible, the new initiative will not be introduced.

**Meetings**

The head teacher will consult teaching staff on the pattern and number of meetings that staff are required to attend. Meetings will last no more than 60 minutes and will be held on no more than an average of one evening per week during a term, with a maximum of two evenings in any one week.

Meetings will be timetabled at the beginning of the academic year or termly if necessary and should have a clear purpose. Only staff whose presence is essential will be required to attend.

Agendas will be prepared and circulated in advance (when possible) and it is the responsibility of those calling and directing meetings to ensure effective time management. Meetings will terminate when their purpose has been achieved, even if this is before the allotted 60 minutes.

Part-time TEACHERS and staff will not be required to attend meetings or come into school for other purposes on days when they are not required to be available for work under their contract of employment.

**The Position of the Head Teacher**

This policy is also intended to ensure that the head teacher and others in management positions also maintain a reasonable work/life balance.

**Equality Monitoring**

To ensure that we are meeting our public sector equality duty we will monitor annually the impact of this policy by reference to the protected characteristics of staff (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). The results will be shared (anonymised where appropriate) with the recognised trade unions.

**POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.

Date 16th October 2019