STAFF WELLBEING POLICY

Valuing staff. Supporting wellbeing. Sustaining positive practice.



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

This policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures and guidance.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

OUR COMMITMENT

At Riverside Bridge School, every policy reflects our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and ambitious school community in which every pupil is valued, every voice matters and every family is respected and supported.

Our policies translate our values into consistent practice. They support high expectations, clear responsibilities, effective partnership and informed decision-making, ensuring that the needs, rights, wellbeing and future outcomes of our pupils remain at the heart of our work.

We work collaboratively, act with integrity and continually reflect upon and improve our practice to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our Policy Principles underpin how we work together and guide the decisions and actions we take to support every pupil and their families.



POLICY PURPOSE & FRAMEWORK

Riverside Bridge School policies set out the expectations, responsibilities and approaches that support safe, consistent and high-quality practice across the school. They translate our values, statutory responsibilities and professional expectations into clear guidance for everyday decision-making and practice.

Each policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures, statutory guidance and school frameworks referenced within the document.

Policies apply to the members of the school community identified within each document, including staff, governors, parents and carers, volunteers, contractors and other professionals where relevant. Everyone is expected to understand and apply the requirements appropriate to their role and to seek further guidance where clarification is required.

CURRICULUM DRIVERS



Our Drivers provide a shared golden thread across curriculum, school life, policy and leadership, helping ensure that our decisions and practice remain focused on the experiences and futures we want for every pupil.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy sets out Riverside Bridge School's approach to promoting and supporting staff wellbeing. It explains the principles, responsibilities and arrangements through which the school seeks to create a positive, respectful and sustainable working environment where staff feel valued, supported and able to fulfil their professional responsibilities effectively.

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise that staff wellbeing is fundamental to the quality, consistency and sustainability of the education, care and support we provide for pupils. Staff who feel respected, supported and professionally fulfilled are better placed to build positive relationships, work collaboratively and contribute to high-quality practice across the school.

Working within a specialist setting can be both rewarding and demanding. Supporting pupils with complex special educational needs requires professional expertise, emotional resilience, teamwork and the ability to respond flexibly to changing needs. The school therefore has a responsibility to consider staff wellbeing through its leadership, culture, communication, workload management, working practices and access to appropriate support.

Staff wellbeing is not solely about responding when difficulties arise. It also depends upon the everyday conditions in which people work: clear expectations, respectful professional relationships, fair and proportionate workload, effective communication, appropriate development opportunities, supportive leadership and a sense that staff views are heard and considered.

The school will seek to identify and reduce avoidable workplace pressures wherever reasonably practicable while recognising that some aspects of work within a specialist school are inherently demanding. We will aim to manage these demands through effective organisation, workforce planning, appropriate resources, clear priorities and professional support.

Where an individual member of staff experiences wellbeing concerns, the school will encourage early discussion so that appropriate support can be considered. Depending on individual circumstances, this may include line-management support, workload review, workplace adjustments, risk assessment, Occupational Health advice, Employee Assistance Programme support or other appropriate services.

The school also recognises that wellbeing is a shared responsibility. Leaders and managers have particular responsibilities for creating healthy and supportive working conditions, while all staff contribute to the culture of the school through professional relationships, communication, collaboration and consideration for colleagues.

Our approach to staff wellbeing will be inclusive and responsive to individual circumstances. Where health conditions or disabilities affect an employee at work, the school will consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Sickness Absence Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy and other relevant employment procedures. Staff wellbeing concerns that require formal employment, grievance, safeguarding or health and safety action will be managed through the appropriate policy or procedure.

Our responsibilities to staff

Riverside Bridge School will:

- promote a respectful, inclusive and supportive working environment;
- consider staff wellbeing when making organisational and workforce decisions;
- manage workload as fairly and proportionately as reasonably practicable;
- communicate priorities, responsibilities and expectations clearly;
- provide appropriate opportunities for staff voice and consultation;
- support staff to raise wellbeing concerns at an early stage;
- provide access to appropriate internal and external support;
- consider workplace adjustments, risk assessments and Occupational Health advice where appropriate;
- promote positive professional relationships, collaboration and teamwork;
- support reasonable work-life balance within the requirements of the school;
- recognise staff contribution and professional development;
- monitor and review the school's approach to staff wellbeing.

Through these commitments, we aim to create a working environment in which staff can contribute effectively, feel appropriately supported and sustain the professional practice required to achieve strong outcomes for Riverside Bridge School pupils.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Meeting duties. Supporting safe and healthy work.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to promoting staff wellbeing in accordance with its statutory duties as an employer and through the development of positive working practices that support the health, safety and welfare of all employees.

This policy should be read alongside the Trust's employment policies and relevant school policies, including those relating to health and safety, sickness absence equality, safeguarding, professional conduct and workforce management.

The school will have due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Working Time Regulations 1998

The school will also have regard to guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Department for Education and other recognised professional bodies where appropriate.

The promotion of staff wellbeing forms part of Riverside Bridge School's wider commitment to providing a safe, healthy and supportive working environment in which staff are able to perform their roles effectively whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing.

Section 02

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sharing responsibility. Supporting staff. Maintaining accountability.

Promoting staff wellbeing is a shared responsibility. Whilst the Governing Board and senior leaders have statutory duties as employers, every member of staff contributes to creating a positive, respectful and supportive working environment.

The Governing Board will:

- ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place to promote staff wellbeing;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy through regular review;
- ensure appropriate resources are available to support staff wellbeing;
- consider the impact of school policies and organisational decisions on staff workload and wellbeing;
- fulfil its legal responsibilities as an employer.

The Headteacher will:

- promote a positive culture where staff wellbeing is valued;
- lead by example through supportive and effective leadership;
- ensure appropriate support is available for staff experiencing difficulties;
- promote fair workload management and effective communication;
- ensure appropriate referrals are made to Occupational Health or other support services where required;
- oversee risk assessments relating to work-related stress where appropriate;
- monitor the overall effectiveness of the school's approach to staff wellbeing.

Senior leaders and line managers will:

- create supportive and respectful working environments;
- maintain regular communication with staff;
- identify and respond appropriately to concerns relating to workload or wellbeing;
- ensure work is planned and delegated fairly;
- support staff returning from periods of absence;
- encourage professional development and work-life balance;
- seek advice from Trust Human Resources or Occupational Health where appropriate.

Trust Human Resources will provide professional advice to leaders and staff, support the implementation of employment policies, facilitate referrals to Occupational Health where appropriate and monitor workforce information to support the school's continuous improvement of staff wellbeing.

The Wellbeing Team will promote positive wellbeing across the school by supporting staff initiatives, gathering feedback, co-ordinating activities and contributing to the ongoing review of this policy and associated practice.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to:

- contribute to a respectful and supportive working environment;
- take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing;
- raise concerns at an early stage where work-related issues are affecting their wellbeing;
- engage positively with wellbeing initiatives;
- support colleagues through professional, respectful and collaborative working relationships.

Section 03

CREATING A POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Building trust. Strengthening relationships. Supporting positive culture.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to creating a working environment in which staff feel valued, respected and supported to perform their roles effectively. We recognise that positive staff wellbeing is influenced not only by individual support but also by organisational culture, leadership, communication and professional relationships.

The school will promote staff wellbeing by:

- fostering a culture built on trust, respect and collaboration;
- promoting positive professional relationships across all teams;
- ensuring staff understand their roles, responsibilities and expectations;
- communicating openly and consulting staff on matters that affect their work;
- providing opportunities for professional development and career progression;
- recognising and celebrating staff achievements and contributions;
- encouraging supportive leadership and effective line management;
- ensuring equality, dignity and inclusion underpin all aspects of employment;
- maintaining safe, healthy and well-managed working environments.

The school recognises that a positive workplace culture contributes to improved morale, staff retention, professional fulfilment and ultimately better outcomes for pupils.

Section 04

SUPPORTING STAFF WELLBEING

Providing support. Responding early. Meeting individual needs.

Supporting staff wellbeing is a shared responsibility across Riverside Bridge School. Staff are encouraged to seek support at an early stage where concerns arise so that appropriate advice and reasonable support can be provided.

Support available may include:

- regular supervision and support from line managers;
- advice from senior leaders;
- the Staff Wellbeing Team;
- Trust Human Resources advice;
- Occupational Health referrals where appropriate;
- Employee Assistance Programme (Health Assured);
- Education Support services;
- individual workplace risk assessments where appropriate;
- reasonable workplace adjustments where required;
- phased returns following periods of absence;
- professional development opportunities;
- signposting to appropriate external services.

Where a member of staff experiences health concerns that affect their work, the school will work collaboratively with the individual to consider appropriate support, taking account of medical advice, Occupational Health recommendations and operational requirements.

Support will always be proportionate to individual circumstances and provided in accordance with relevant employment policies and legal responsibilities.

Section 05

WORKLOAD, WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING

Managing demands. Supporting balance. Working flexibly.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that managing workload effectively is essential to promoting positive staff wellbeing and maintaining high-quality educational provision. While the nature of working within a specialist setting can be demanding, the school is committed to ensuring that workload is considered carefully and managed as fairly as reasonably practicable.

Leaders will seek to:

- distribute workload fairly across teams;
- review working practices to improve efficiency where possible;
- minimise unnecessary administrative burdens;
- communicate priorities clearly;
- provide appropriate planning and preparation time where applicable;
- consider flexible working requests in accordance with statutory requirements and operational needs;
- encourage staff to take appropriate breaks and, where applicable, annual leave in accordance with their contractual arrangements;
- support staff returning following periods of absence;
- regularly review workload through staff feedback and consultation.

Staff are encouraged to raise workload concerns promptly with their line manager or senior leader so that appropriate support and solutions can be considered at the earliest opportunity.

The school recognises that achieving a healthy work-life balance benefits both staff and pupils by promoting resilience, improving job satisfaction and supporting staff retention.

Section 06

MANAGING STRESS AND WELLBEING CONCERNS

Recognising concerns. Acting early. Providing appropriate support.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that work-related stress can affect any member of staff and is committed to identifying concerns early, providing appropriate support and taking reasonable steps to reduce workplace stress wherever practicable.

Staff are encouraged to speak to their line manager or a senior leader at the earliest opportunity if work-related pressures or personal circumstances are affecting their health or wellbeing. Early discussion enables supportive measures to be considered before concerns become more significant.

Where concerns are identified, the school will work collaboratively with the member of staff to consider appropriate support. Depending on individual circumstances, this may include:

- informal wellbeing discussions;
- review of workload or working arrangements;
- workplace risk assessment where appropriate;
- reasonable workplace adjustments;
- referral to Occupational Health;
- access to the Employee Assistance Programme or other support services;
- phased return following sickness absence;
- regular review meetings;
- additional support from Trust Human Resources or senior leaders.

Where medical advice is provided, the school will consider recommendations carefully alongside operational requirements and statutory responsibilities to determine appropriate and reasonable support.

The school will also monitor wider organisational factors that may contribute to work-related stress and will seek to reduce avoidable workplace pressures through effective leadership, communication, consultation and workforce planning.

Section 07

COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND STAFF VOICE

Listening actively. Consulting meaningfully. Improving together.

Positive communication and meaningful staff engagement are fundamental to promoting staff wellbeing. Riverside Bridge School is committed to creating an open culture in which staff feel able to share ideas, raise concerns and contribute to the continual improvement of the working environment.

The school will promote effective communication through:

- regular meetings between staff and leaders;
- an open-door approach to raising concerns;
- consultation with recognised trade unions where appropriate;
- staff surveys and wellbeing questionnaires;
- opportunities for staff feedback;
- consultation during organisational change;
- regular communication regarding wellbeing initiatives and available support;
- staff induction and ongoing professional development.

The Staff Wellbeing Team will contribute to gathering staff views and supporting the school's ongoing review of staff wellbeing arrangements.

Feedback from staff will be considered alongside workforce information, absence data and other relevant evidence to identify strengths, emerging themes and opportunities for continuous improvement.

Section 08

MONITORING, REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Reviewing impact. Using evidence. Strengthening practice.

The Governing Board and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and remains responsive to the needs of the workforce.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- staff feedback and consultation;
- staff wellbeing surveys;
- absence and workforce data;
- Occupational Health trends, where appropriate;
- staff retention and recruitment information;
- risk assessments relating to staff wellbeing;
- feedback from the Staff Wellbeing Team;
- regular review of school practices and procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, Trust procedures or organisational practice require amendment.

Section 9

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside other Trust and school policies that contribute to staff health, safety and wellbeing, including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Capability Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Continuing Professional Development and Coaching Policy

APPENDICES



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

Staff Well-Being Framework

Our whole-school approach to supporting staff well-being

When our staff feel well, supported and valued, we can be our best for the pupils and families we serve.

Every pupil belongs. Every voice matters.

Building a supportive culture

We value people, relationships and a positive school culture.

- We promote respect, trust and inclusivity in all relationships.
- We value every role and recognise the contribution of everyone.
- We work together, support one another and celebrate achievements.
- We treat everyone with fairness and dignity.
- We create a positive, safe and supportive environment.

A positive, respectful and inclusive culture where everyone belongs.

Supporting staff well-being

We provide meaningful support for our staff when they need it.

- We listen, support and respond to concerns promptly.
- We provide access to advice, guidance and professional support.
- We invest in professional development and personal growth.
- We promote positive physical and mental well-being.
- We signpost to a range of internal and external support services.

Support is accessible, compassionate and tailored to individual needs.

Working well together

We work together to create balance, clarity and connection.

- We manage workload fairly and reasonably.
- We communicate priorities clearly.
- We encourage healthy boundaries, breaks and time away from work.
- We consider flexible working where possible.
- We consult and seek feedback regularly.

A culture of trust, collaboration and balanced working enables us to thrive.

OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to continually improving staff well-being through collaboration, reflection and action. By working together, we create a thriving school community where staff feel valued, supported and empowered.

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

Recognising and Responding to Work-Related Stress

A quick guide for all staff

It's normal to feel pressure at times. Stress can affect anyone, but spotting the signs early and seeking support can help protect your well-being.

You are not alone. Support is available.

1. RECOGNISE THE SIGNS

Stress can show up in different ways. You might notice:

- **PHYSICAL** Headaches, tiredness, aches and pains, changes in appetite or sleep.
- **EMOTIONAL** Feeling overwhelmed, worried, tearful, irritable or low in mood.
- **THINKING** Difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, negative thinking.
- **BEHAVIOURAL** Withdrawing, changes in motivation, feeling less able to cope.
- **WORK-RELATED** Struggling with workload, tight deadlines, difficult situations or change.

Everyone's experience is different. If something doesn't feel right, it's important to take notice.

2. TAKE ACTION

Small steps can make a big difference.

- Talk to someone you trust – a colleague, your line manager or a senior leader.
- Be honest about how you are feeling so we can understand and support you.
- Review your workload and priorities with your manager.
- Take breaks and make time for things that help you recharge.
- Use the support available (see Appendix C) – you don't have to manage things on your own.

Reaching out early can help prevent things from becoming more difficult.

3. HOW WE CAN HELP

Riverside Bridge School is here to support you.

- **Supportive conversations** We will listen and work together to find solutions.
- **Practical support** Workload management, reasonable adjustments and flexible working where possible.
- **Professional support** Access to Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme and other services.
- **Regular check-ins** We will keep in touch and review how things are going.
- **A supportive culture** We value your well-being and are committed to creating a healthy, positive work environment.

We are committed to supporting your well-being so you can thrive in your role.

REMEMBER

It's okay to ask for help.
You are valued. You matter.
Together we can look after our well-being and support each other.

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS

If you are in immediate danger or need urgent support, contact emergency services on 999 or call one of the 24/7 services listed in Appendix C.

24/7

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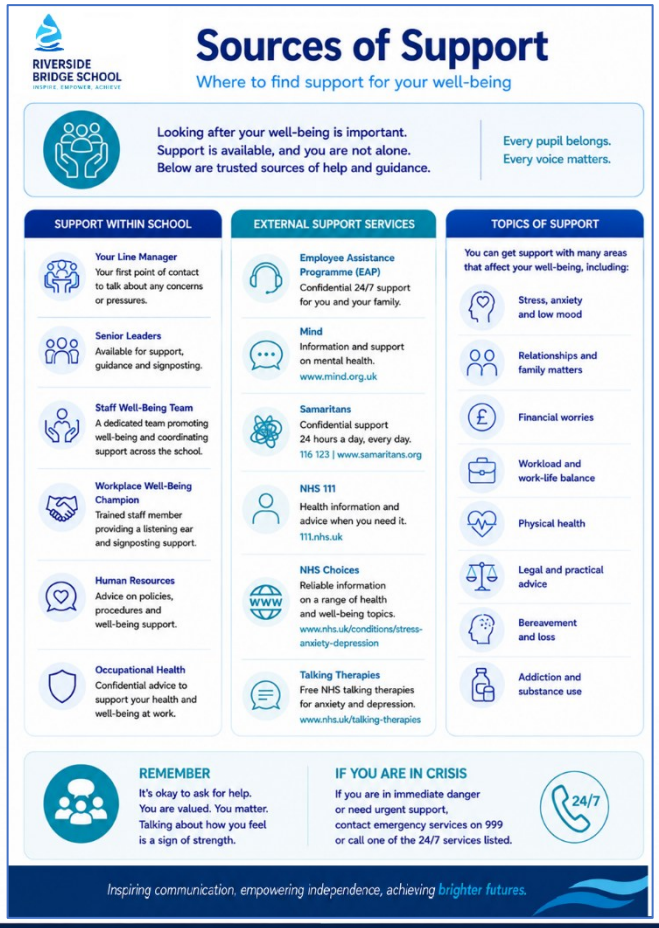

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

Sources of Support

Where to find support for your well-being

Looking after your well-being is important. Support is available, and you are not alone. Below are trusted sources of help and guidance.

Every pupil belongs. Every voice matters.

SUPPORT WITHIN SCHOOL

- **Your Line Manager** Your first point of contact to talk about any concerns or pressures.
- **Senior Leaders** Available for support, guidance and signposting.
- **Staff Well-Being Team** A dedicated team promoting well-being and coordinating support across the school.
- **Workplace Well-Being Champion** Trained staff member providing a listening ear and signposting support.
- **Human Resources** Advice on policies, procedures and well-being support.
- **Occupational Health** Confidential advice to support your health and well-being at work.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** Confidential 24/7 support for you and your family.
- **Mind** Information and support on mental health. www.mind.org.uk
- **Samaritans** Confidential support 24 hours a day, every day. 116 123 | www.samaritans.org
- **NHS 111** Health information and advice when you need it. 111.nhs.uk
- **NHS Choices** Reliable information on a range of health and well-being topics. www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression
- **Talking Therapies** Free NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression. www.nhs.uk/talking-therapies

TOPICS OF SUPPORT

You can get support with many areas that affect your well-being, including:

- Stress, anxiety and low mood
- Relationships and family matters
- Financial worries
- Workload and work-life balance
- Physical health
- Legal and practical advice
- Bereavement and loss
- Addiction and substance use

REMEMBER

It's okay to ask for help.
You are valued. You matter.
Talking about how you feel is a sign of strength.

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS

If you are in immediate danger or need urgent support, contact emergency services on 999 or call one of the 24/7 services listed.

24/7

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