

WORK-LIFE BALANCE POLICY



St. Michael's C of E Primary School

Approved by ¹	
Name:	
Position:	
Signed:	
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Scope of Policy

This document sets out our policy on encouraging and enabling all staff to maintain a healthy balance between their work and other interests and responsibilities in their life.

Rationale

- A good work-life balance is central to staff effectiveness and satisfaction, and pupil learning.
- Work-life balance is about helping staff combine work with their personal interests and commitments.
- The governing body has a statutory responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees.

Work-Life Balance

St. Michael's School has a responsibility for the well-being of all our staff. Everyone must take responsibility for their own work-life balance and be aware of the role model they are setting for others.

An important element within the wider remodelling agenda is the statutory responsibility governors have with regard to the work-life balance of all employees.

Workforce Remodelling has become a key strategy in delivering certain aspects of a work-life balance for both teaching and support staff. This school, in compliance with the legislative framework, will actively consider flexible working patterns in line with the LA guidance where available. Work-life balance includes better communication within the workplace, clearer job roles and workplace support.

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

- To improve the school's effectiveness by actively reducing staff absenteeism and turnover;
- To develop a more motivated workforce, with high morale, even more able to deliver a better education for our children;
- To improve team work, staff development and co-operation by effectively distributing leadership and creating new leaders;
- To recognise that excessive hours of work do not equal commitment but might reduce staff effectiveness;
- To recognise that improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the whole school workforce.

Key Aims of the policy

- To benefit our school and its staff in order to raise standards;
- To acknowledge that the needs of both our school and staff are not static, but change over time;
- To acknowledge the need for school leadership (including the governing body), unions/staff representatives and staff to discuss workable work-life balance solutions;
- To encourage a partnership approach to meeting the needs of both our school and the staff;
- To operate in a fair and consistent manner;
- To value staff for their contribution to our school, not their working pattern;
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible;
- To take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced;
- To communicate work-life balance practices to all staff in our school. Developments and changes to policies should also be communicated on a regular basis;
- To include a monitoring, evaluation and review mechanism, linked to performance management and the school improvement plan, for work-life balance initiatives and strategies.
- To provide value for money.

Policy

All staff within the school will be supported in attaining a balanced lifestyle where they can achieve their best at work and manage other areas of their life effectively. This supports the LA health and well being programme.

Our strategies to support a balanced lifestyle will include:

- Clear identification of duties and responsibilities relating to individual staff roles, reviewed annually through performance management interviews, to aid them in the delivery of their work and managing the expectations of the job;
- Regular review, discussed at staff meetings, of how effectively the school is taking into account the work-life balance of all staff;
- Continually looking at existing and new practices to make systems as efficient and time saving as possible;
- Working with staff to agree and provide appropriate training to enable them to do their jobs competently and effectively and within normal hours;
- Involving staff in agreeing and setting realistic work-related targets for the staff and the school;
- Providing a system for and encouraging efficient and effective working practices, and discouraging staff from working excessively long hours;
- Involving, encouraging and enabling staff to actively manage their own careers and personal development;
- All new initiatives be examined in the light of work-life balance, e.g. extended services and the care offer;
- Consulting with staff on decisions relating to their employment, encouraging them to seek third party advice, e.g. to confer with their Union representatives, where appropriate;
- Granting special leave, as appropriate, when staff are faced with an emergency outside work;
- Providing opportunities, where possible, for flexible working practices;
- Providing suitable workplace facilities for breaks and relaxation (as is reasonable and practicable);
- Providing suitable equipment (such as personal laptops for teachers) to enable them to work as effectively as budgetary constraints allow;
- Considering support for childcare facilities and services where possible;
- Communicating with parents and the wider community the benefits of our work-life policy.

PPA

Planning, preparation and assessment are an entitlement for all staff. This constitutes approximately one half day per week for full time staff of non contact time. Part time staff are entitled to receive this as a percentage of 10% of their working time. Staff also recognise that there may be occasions when due to school organisation and management concerns this can not take place, however this may be backdated. **The school now has a good working environment and therefore staff are able to complete PPA tasks within the school building.**

Monitoring & evaluation

The Governors will be informed of all matters relating to this policy by discussion at Governor's staffing sub-committee and also full Governors when appropriate. Staff will be asked to regularly monitor their own work-life balance and will be encouraged to report any arising concerns to the Head Teacher or Assistant.

Other Governing Body Responsibilities.

The governing body will review work-life strategies annually:

- By monitoring the effectiveness of the statutory Performance Management policy in which the Head Teacher will be asked to comment about strategies the school is adopting with regard to staff work-life balance;
- By ensuring that the Head Teacher's workload is kept at a manageable level, enabling a healthy work-life balance and lifestyle. This should lead to a review of the Governing Body's own practices with relation to their own workload (alongside the Head Teacher's) with the aim of maximised efficiency;

- By reviewing this policy in conjunction with other Health and Safety policies.

Flexible Working Practices

From April 2003 new flexible working legislation gives all parents with children under the age of 6 (or age 18 if a child is disabled) the right to apply to work flexibly. This does not provide an automatic right to flexible working but employers now have a statutory duty to consider such requests seriously.

A flexible arrangement should be applied for by the employee in writing to the Head Teacher, clearly stating the type of arrangement under consideration and how ideally it would work in the context of the school and the needs of the job. All requests will be considered taking account of the needs of the employee, the school, the LA and any legal requirements and will assess how best to accommodate the employee's needs without impairing the needs of others and the school.

Types of Flexible Working

Not all types of flexible working will be appropriate for all roles within the context of the school (recognising that teachers and support staff have different contracts of employment nationally). However, all requests must be given fair consideration.

The types of flexible working include:

- Flexi-working
- Job Share
- Home working
- Annualised Hours
- Part-time work
- Special leave arrangements
- Employment breaks

This list is not exhaustive.

Home Working

The Governors recognise that in order to effectively implement PPA, Dedicated Headship Time and Leadership and Management Time, in some circumstances it may be more efficient for staff to work at home. Staff will only be permitted to work at home by prior agreement with the Head Teacher.

Workforce Agreement

The statutory requirements of the Workforce Agreement are to be found in the 2006 STPCD and "Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement" (DfES 2003)

Resources

www.intouch.ccc/healthandsafety/stress.asp

www.remodelling.org Further guidance on all aspects of remodelling, work-life balance and individual schools' case studies.

www.hse.gov.uk Information on work-related stress. Details of publications available from the Health and Safety Executive, e.g. Work Related Stress : A Short Guide, Tackling Work Related Stress : A Guide for Employees. Latest guidelines for employers and lots of case studies, also risk assessment forms for home working.

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk for the Investors in People guide to helping organisations manage a work-life balance. Follow links to the Government's Work-Life Balance campaign.

www.worklifesupport.com managed in conjunction with the Teacher Support Line, provides details of the Well Being Programme (an example of good practice in schools, detailed in HSE documents and Healthy Schools Initiative).

www.teacherline.org.uk Information about the Teacher Support Line and on-line stress audit and work-life balance questionnaire. Additional useful tools to help schools improve staff well-being.

www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=782 Stress at work guide with links to disciplinary and grievance and bullying and harassment procedures.

www.naht.org.uk A variety of references and policies.

www.lg-employers.gov.uk "Finding the Balance" for work-life policies specifically related to teaching and support staff.

www.teachernet.gov.uk A wide range of resources and downloadable documents

www.governornet.co.uk Key information and links useful to governors.

www.cipd.co.uk Chartered Institute of Personnel Development for guidance on work-life balance, absence management, professional development and training.