CARWARDEN HOUSE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Author: Tim Stokes (based on The Key model policy)

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Approved: May 2023 by Trustee Wellbeing sub-committee

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Signed: Chris Hamilton Chair of Trustees

1. Aims

Carwarden recognises the importance of supporting the wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community. This is enshrined in our strategic priorities. Specifically, we aim to:

- Support the wellbeing of all staff to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- Improve our staff wellbeing by encouraging debate and accountability
- Provide a supportive and caring work environment for all staff by creating and maintaining a wellbeing-focused culture
- Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time
- Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience
- Improve access to wellbeing & mental health resources
- Break down the stigma around mental health
- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims

2. Why do we need a Wellbeing policy?

We believe that supporting staff wellbeing is important in:

- Maintaining and improving staff morale
- Helping to improve productivity and staff effectiveness to the benefit of our students
- Enabling us to recruit and retain the best possible staff
- Ensuring our school is meeting our legal duty of care

In line with the key principles outlined in the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter we will:

- Measure and respond to changes in staff wellbeing
- Seek to drive down unnecessary workload
- Understanding the needs of staff – what they need to know and do
- Embed wellbeing into the curriculum, training and professional development
- Understand wellbeing is a ‘journey’ not a ‘destination’

3. Promoting wellbeing at all times

Wellbeing is everyone’s responsibility. How the school supports staff wellbeing is outlined in our Wellbeing Strategy.

3.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with kindness, empathy and respect (Carwarden Community Charter)
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their own wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or shared offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote staff wellbeing
- Remember to say thank-you

3.2 Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Build and maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately in line with the school's policies
- Monitor the workload of staff and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff they line manage about their work/life balance
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work following an absence

3.3 Role of school leaders

School leaders are expected to:

- Champion wellbeing and positive mental health (Assistant Headteacher)
- Lead in setting and modelling standards for conduct, including how they treat all other members of staff
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- 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, seeking to reduce unnecessary workload wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and that staff are consulted before any changes are made
- Acknowledge the need for flexible working for some
- Listen to the views of all 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 calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Implement a school wide behaviour and code of conduct policy that supports and maintains a calm & safe learning environment
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge

3.4 Role of the Staff Wellbeing Group

The Staff Wellbeing Group comprises a representative drawn from each of the school's main staff groups and will:

- promote the awareness of staff wellbeing and its importance, while also remembering that it is everybody's responsibility
- work with the Assistant Headteacher on periodic reviews of the Wellbeing Strategy and the development of appropriate action plans
- nominate a representative to attend Trustee Board meetings for relevant agenda items

3.5 Role of the Trustee Board

- To assign a Link Trustee each year to liaise with the Staff Wellbeing Group and attend its meetings whenever possible
- To ensure 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
- To monitor and support the wellbeing of the Headteacher
- To ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- To make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- To be reasonable about the format and quantity of information requested from staff as part of monitoring work
- To ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them
- To conduct exit interviews with staff who are leaving, to help identify any wellbeing issues that may have contributed to them leaving

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. The school offers access to an employee assistance programme (EAP), details for this are distributed as part of the staff induction process. The school also displays these contact details, along with contact numbers for Education Support in staff areas around the school.

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
- Arranging / signposting 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 at least bi-annually by the Staff Wellbeing group. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

6. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Wellbeing strategy
- Appraisal policy
- Behaviour policy
- Capability procedure
- Staff code of conduct
- Managing staff absence policy