



'Doing our best to achieve our best'

Clarendon Primary School & Nursery

Staff Wellbeing and Professional Development Policy

Introduction

At Clarendon Primary School we believe that the emotional and physical well-being of all staff is fundamental to the running of an effective organisation, to pupil achievement and the school's performance as well as to ensuring the good emotional and mental health of all staff. As a result we aim to ensure that all staff feel valued and supported, are encouraged to develop both personally and professionally, and maintain an appropriate work life balance.

The purpose of this policy is to help maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and wellbeing as well as the ongoing professional development of all staff by making sure all employees are treated fairly and consistently, and feel valued and supported in their role.

Aims

Through this policy the school aims to:

- Minimise the harmful effects of stress.
- Provide effective support and ongoing training and professional development for all staff.
- Help each individual staff member achieve an appropriate work-life balance.
- Take a positive and understanding approach to the management of stress, in line with current good practice.
- Develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to its pupils.
- Improve staff development, co-operation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- Make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and wellbeing issues.
- Respect confidentiality.

As a school, we promote the importance of having an appropriate work-life balance. To support this aim we seek advice from outside support agencies such as Occupational Health Service, the Department for education and Local Authority leads, and communicate/promote the importance of maintaining an appropriate work-life balance to all staff. We also ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly to ensure staff have a clear understanding of the school's ongoing policies and procedures.

Useful definitions

Pressure – Pressure is a positive aspect of life and work for most people. Many of us need to have standards, targets and deadlines to push us towards good performance. Everyone has an optimum level of pressure that brings about their best performance.

Stress – Stress occurs when we no longer feel in control. This is what happens when what is being demanded of us is not manageable no matter how organised, effective or efficient one becomes. This can relate to both work and home life.

Roles

Within Clarendon Primary School every member of staff is given adequate and achievable tasks which suit the agreed hours of work.

Individuals have a job description which details the job demands and forms part of the initial recruitment process. Appointments are made to match the skills of the person with the job, with adjustments made after the agreement of all involved.

No member of staff will be expected to carry out duties which are beyond their capabilities unless these are agreed as part of a professional development strategy. (Under these circumstances the member of staff concerned will be supported/mentored by a colleague and/or provided with the required training needed in order to develop the required skills as quickly, as effectively and as efficiently as possible.)

Any concerns identified about the work environment and its impact upon an employee's ability to satisfactorily complete duties will be shared with either a line manager or senior member of staff. Every attempt will then be subsequently made to rectify these issues.

As a school we are open to the changing face of employment structure & the relationship between home and work life. As a result, we make every effort to ensure that an employee's working pattern suits their needs, whilst still enabling the school to maintain an effective educational learning environment for both the children and staff.

Access to ongoing professional development

Every member of staff has an defined role which, due to the nature of a school, often has a fixed timescale for completion. Initiative is actively encouraged and as a school we welcome staff to be free thinkers and extend practice beyond that expected.

The school encourages 'Continuing Professional Development' (CPD), where staff are encouraged to extend their knowledge and skills. As a result formal access to courses and training are identified through individual performance reviews; ongoing discussions with staff, both as a staff group and as individuals; and through ongoing audits of school, staff and subject needs.

Within Clarendon access to ongoing professional development aims to:

- Provide staff with the required experiences and guidance they require in order to undertake their role effectively, access opportunities that will contribute to their ongoing career development and help increase their morale and job satisfaction as a result of feeling empowered and valued.
- Enhance the quality of education for all children at the school through the provision of improved development opportunities for all staff.
- Ensure staff recognise and are able to employ their strengths when seeking and supporting the best teaching practices possible.
- Ensure the priorities in the school development plan are effectively implemented and developed in a sustainable and timely manner.

Whilst a range of professional development courses are available, many training opportunities are closely related to budget availability as well as priorities outlined in the school development plan and recognised staffing needs identified through performance management meetings and ongoing professional development discussions. Training opportunities are considered to include:

- Ongoing staff training and discussion sessions undertaken during weekly staff meetings. (These are often led by specific staff/subject leaders and, on occasions, external professionals/trainers.)
- Peer to peer professional development support activities. (This can include professional mentoring meetings and sharing/peer observation of best practice.)
- Opportunities to visit other schools to observe or discuss a specific area of practice.
- School INSET training days. (These days generally relate to things identified in the SDP and can be led by specific staff in school, undertaken with other schools or led by an external trainer.)
- Network meetings. (These can be school, locally or Surrey wide and relate to a specific subject, year group, skill or aspect of school life.)
- Specific training sessions relating to, e.g. an aspect of school life, an aspect of professional development/practice, cross school moderation, the completion of end of KS assessments & SATs.)
- Specific training courses/sessions identified for individual staff. (Some of these are also accredited, e.g. the NPQH, the NPQML and the NPQSL)

Support

There is a support structure for staff – initially with their line manager or a member of the SLT. However, should this structure break down, a member of the SLT is always available to support staff and attempt to rectify situations.

The school encourages staff to discuss work and provide each other with constructive feedback. To this end, informal observations and feedback is part of the school's culture. Clarendon Primary is a supportive school and this is reflected in the special leave of absence policy and the informal support arrangements in place, e.g. time out of school to attend 'special assemblies' staff's own children are involved in.

All staff have confidential support available to them through the Employee Assistance Service (help) which Clarendon provides to all its staff. This service can be contacted on 0800 028 5147, with further information available at <https://strictlyeducation.optimise.health>. Furthermore, their leaflet/contact details are given as part of the induction process and posters are displayed around the school. There is also access to the Education Support Partnership which offers a free confidential helpline and can be contacted on 08000 562 561.

Practical actions to support new staff

- All new staff will be encouraged to visit the school before starting work to familiarise themselves with the school, the other staff and the children.
- All new staff will receive a program of staff induction delivered by the Deputy Headteacher.
- All new staff will be provided with key documentation, which includes the staff handbook and the school's Child Protection Policy.
- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required.

Procedures to promote staff wellbeing

- Weekly communication via staff meetings & the weekly information board displayed in the staffroom.
- Continuing professional development for staff, see section above.

Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

- The Senior Leadership Team will encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable about asking for help or raising concerns.
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues, which are having/have the potential to have a negative impact on the staff member's health and wellbeing.
- In the event of a member of staff being away from school for longer periods of time, (where required and employee permission is obtained) a referral will be made to Occupational Health service in order to provide the employee with advice and support as well as the identification of appropriate work related adjustments and, if necessary, a phased return to work plan.

Relationships

Within the school we promote positive relationships within the staff and we adhere to the principles of 'growth mindset', which is applicable to adults and children alike. We encourage everyone to report any incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour in line with our 'Staff Code of Conduct' and 'Whistle Blowing Policy'. These will then be fully investigated by an appropriate member of the SLT and a governor, if required.

Within Clarendon we actively ensure that staff never have conflicting roles. This is achieved through our staffing structure and careful planning of appointments. Upon appointment, staff have a job description, which outlines the key roles and expectations of their role. New staff are also provided with an appropriate mentor. The staff mentors may or may not be the line manager or performance review manager. Should there be any doubts about the role, or role expectations, the Headteacher should be consulted.

As a school, we have many influences which impact upon our working structure. This may result in short notice changes. During periods of role change, staff will be kept up to date through staff and individual meetings.

Change

Clarendon Primary School seek to involve all appropriate staff in consultations regarding significant change. We provide information as soon as possible through staff meetings, if they are relevant, which may be called at short notice if necessary. Staff are always aware that consultations are a means by which we gather views and are not always a mechanism for changing policy or decision.

When changes do take place, timescales will be published and details will be available showing the impact upon the working lives of the staff.

Support will be provided during the process and outside support agencies will be signposted to where necessary.

Emails/communication

Through our promotion of a work-life balance, staff often communicate via internal and external emails. The school understands and supports the need for staff not to be directed during non-standard working hours. As a result there is no expectation for staff to reply to emails which extend beyond reasonable working hours. If this email has been sent outside of normal working hours, there is no expectation for you to provide an immediate response.

Policy monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the School Leadership Team (SLT).

Date reviewed by governing body: Summer term 2020

Date due for review: Summer term 2023