



# Godalming Junior School

*This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. If you have any concerns you should contact our Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) Adam Samson or the Deputy Designated Safeguard Leads (DDSL) Nick Maclver, Kate Wilkinson, Louise Munz and Nancy Kirby*

## **STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY**

**This policy will be reviewed next: Autumn 2025**

**This policy will be reviewed by: The Resources Committee**

**The Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead is: Miss Erin Coleman**

### **Purpose**

Today, every UK workplace has a duty of care requirement to look after the health and safety of employees, including their wellbeing. Yet 3 in 5 people have had mental health issues due to work (Mental Health at Work Report 2017). In light of this, promoting and protecting staff wellbeing in the workplace is important for every work place. Supporting the policy is the [School Approach to Workload and Wellbeing](#) document for staff and the [HSE Talking Toolkit for Schools](#).

### **Aims**

- To create a workplace culture that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of staff at all levels
- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver highly effective education to pupils.
- To promote healthy lifestyle choices and the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- To communicate the importance of work-life balance to all staff.
- To ensure that staff are aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and wellbeing issues.
- To ensure all staff are provided with a safe, healthy and positive physical environment within which to work and rest by carrying out annual staff surveys on the demands of their various roles (at all levels) and mitigate the risk of work-related stress using the HSE Schools Toolkit
- To ensure SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and leaders create, monitor and have oversight of annual action plan to prevent work-related stress - to be carried out in line with SIP (School Improvement Plan) process
- To support staff in suggesting strategies to manage both work related and home related health and wellbeing issues in confidence to their line manager, which may result in an individual stress risk assessment, which will be kept under review
- To support staff suffering from work-related stress by implementing an individual risk assessment in consultation with them and reviewed. This will also be created by consulting the individuals job description, appraisal targets including performance, leadership responsibilities, school code of conduct and seeking external HR support, if required
- To ensure a sensitive approach is taken in response to external pressures that affect the lives of all staff members
- To promote cooperative and respectful relationships throughout the school
- To align the school approach to mental health and wellbeing with the [DFE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter](#) (2024)

## Our school wellbeing aims and values - Love, Live, Learn

At Godalming Junior School we are committed to providing a setting where all members of staff are supported and are able to fulfil their roles in a thriving setting in order to promote the highest possible standards.

At Godalming Junior School, our mental health and wellbeing policy covers the following areas:

### Mental Wellbeing

Promoting mental wellbeing by:

- Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the work place
- Equipping staff with the skills to support their own mental health
- Promoting the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

### Physical Wellbeing

Encouraging physical health by:

- Promoting physical activity across the school
- Promoting the importance of a healthy, balanced diet
- Encouraging staff to undertake physical exercise

### Management and Leadership

- Respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- Equipping school leaders with the skills to identify and assist those with mental ill health e.g. signposting them to engage with the Employee Assistance Programme
- Ensure that those with line management responsibilities are suitably skilled to support those that they manage in an empathetic and constructive way, with due regard to mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues.
- Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the school
- Ensuring that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life

### Support for employees

Offering support to staff by:

- Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of all staff
- Offering help, support and guidance to those who are struggling with their mental or physical health and wellbeing
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health

### Employment for those with mental health issues

- Making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment, with possible support from the local authority
- Establishing agreed recruitment practices and protocols
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health e.g. signposting them to occupational health or the Surrey Employee Assistance Programme

## Roles and responsibilities

### **School leadership and governors are responsible for:**

- Support measures taken to encourage an open and supportive culture throughout the school.
- Champion good management practices and appropriate policies which encourage an effective work-life balance.
- Role model healthy behaviours, treating others in a caring and respectful way and seeking support for themselves or others when experiencing difficulties which may be impacting on mental or physical health.
- Promote effective communication channels and clear procedures for staff to follow.
- Create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, and will enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness
- Respond with sensitivity and flexibility to external pressures that may impact on the lives of staff members whilst still ensuring the efficient running of the school.

### **Staff Members will:**

- Be responsible for role-modelling healthy behaviours, treating others in a caring and respectful way and seeking support for themselves when experiencing difficulties which may be impacting on mental or physical health.
- Treat all other staff with consideration, respect and kindness to help maintain an open and supportive culture.
- Have the opportunity to share their views, ideas, feelings and concerns relating to the school at formal meetings, informal gatherings or other appropriate channels.
- Make themselves aware of the school's policies and practices, which will assist them to work effectively in their role and as part of a team.
- Identify opportunities for their own professional development and take advantage of those offered by the school.
- Take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and take advantage of any initiatives and advice provided for them by the school.
- Take equal responsibility for the reasonable maintenance of the school physical environment.

### **The Wellbeing Lead will:**

- Ensure that the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is reviewed and updated when required.
- Organise, in response to staff consultation, appropriate events and initiatives to promote health and wellbeing.
- Monitor and review Staff Wellbeing through an annual staff questionnaire and informal discussions.
- Liaise with the HT and SLT to ensure appropriate training/ support is in place to for individuals who may need extra assistance.
- Complete workload audits.
- Provide advisory information and further signposting towards professional bodies.

### **Procedures and Actions to promote Staff Wellbeing:**

- All new staff to receive a staff induction pack and review schedule
- Staff working in new roles to receive coaching, ongoing support and review schedule
- All staff to have awareness and access to additional professional advice that is available to the school, such as Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme

- SLT to promote an Open Door Policy and maintain confidentiality, uphold employees' rights and deal with all employees equally and sensitively
- Regular communication via staff briefings. Class teachers - Friday mornings at 8a.m and LSAs Wednesdays at 10a.m
- Social events - some events, such as Christmas, are subsidised and food provided for Parents' Evenings
- All staff encouraged to contribute to School Improvement Plan
- INSET days - all staff are invited and where possible classroom preparation time is included
- Paid leave for occasions such as graduations, weddings and funerals
- 'Green Ticket' - Day out of class chosen by staff member, subject to conditions
- Regular release time for Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders. This is protected, where possible.
- '10richment' offering creative opportunities for teachers to plan events and activities
- Staff given the option of having PPA away from school
- Work/Life balance weeks when no after school meetings are scheduled. The Head teacher and Wellbeing lead collaborate to provide positive, meaningful social opportunities during some of these weeks.
- Staff encouraged to make links/visit with other schools to further their own development
- CPD for all staff - at least one course paid for in full on request by any member of staff.
- Annual Staff Wellbeing Survey carried out

#### **Practical actions to support new staff:**

- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as they require
- All staff will be given a school orientation and a designated member of the SLT who can be there to support them in their new role either through mentoring or regular 'check-ins'
- Hold an initial discussion of their roles and where needed, further discussions that are related to further roles/duties outside of the classroom. E.g. subject leadership, assemblies or sporting activities
- All new staff will receive a staff handbook and a 'This is the way' guide that includes information relating various parts of to life at GJS

#### **External sources of support:**

Employee Assistance Programme:	Contact us on 0800 028 5147 <a href="https://strictlyeducation.optimise.health/#/employee">https://strictlyeducation.optimise.health/#/employee</a>	If you are experiencing issues either at home or at work, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is on hand to provide you with expert guidance. Our team of wellbeing and counselling practitioners offer confidential, independent and unbiased information and guidance. We provide this in a range of ways - by telephone, on line and through face-to-face appointments. We are available at any time of the night or day, 365 days of the year.
Mentally Healthy Schools	<a href="https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/">https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/</a>	Mentally Healthy Schools is a website for primary schools, offering teachers and school staff information, advice and practical resources to understand and promote pupils' and staff mental health and wellbeing.
Mind	<a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/">https://www.mind.org.uk/</a>	Mind is a charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.
Education support	<a href="https://www.education-support.org.uk/">https://www.education-support.org.uk/</a>	We are the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and education staff in schools, colleges and universities. It provides a free helpline available to all teachers, lecturers and staff in education (primary, secondary, further or higher education) in England, Wales and Scotland.
Action for happiness	<a href="https://actionforhappiness.org/unhappy">https://actionforhappiness.org/unhappy</a>	We are a movement of people taking action to create a happier and kinder world, together. Action for Happiness brings people together and provides practical resources. We help each other learn evidence-based skills for happier living, feel a sense of belonging and commit to personal action to create more happiness, for ourselves and others. If you are

		struggling with your mental health, you don't need to face things alone. You can take action and reach out for support.
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