



WALTHAMSTOW HALL
SEVENOAKS

STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

This policy has been drawn up with reference to the Health and Safety Executive guidelines for best practice.

1. 'HSE Stress Web pages: www.hse.gov.uk/stress
2. 'Tackling Work Related Stress using the Management Standards Approach' WBK01 (03/19) <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wbk01.pdf>
3. 'Working together to reduce stress at work: a guide for employees'. HSE Leaflet INDG424 (11/08) <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg424.pdf>

At Walthamstow Hall we are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of the staff. We recognise that workplace stress is a health issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing the causes of stress in the workplace.

This policy applies to all staff. The Headmistress and all senior staff who manage other staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

The Headmistress, in conjunction with the Governing Body, will work to ensure that all employees also play their part in creating a healthy workplace ethos, and that there are clear guidelines for staff who may feel adverse stress levels.

The Governing Body considers that managing stress is best tackled by staff and Governors working together to identify stress at source and agreeing realistic and workable ways of tackling the issue.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of its policies, the Governing Body has adopted the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards and guidelines on work-related stress. The Headmistress will be responsible for monitoring the arrangements.

Definition

The School recognises that there is a difference between 'stress' and 'pressure'. All staff experience pressure in their day's work. This policy is concerned with too much pressure without the opportunity to recover – this is what the School means by 'stress'.

The HSE's definition of stress is:

"The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them."

Aims

1. The School aims to create a situation at work where the good health of all employees is promoted positively, and where adverse stress on all staff is reduced to a minimum as far as is reasonably possible.

2. The School aims to help staff to identify and address the causes of stress themselves and to have clear lines and methods of support.

HSE Management Standards

Six areas or 'risk factors' have been identified by the HSE that can be a cause of work-related stress:

1. The demands of the job.
2. The employee's control over the job.
3. The support received by employees from managers and colleagues.
4. Relationships at work.
5. The role of the employee in the School.
6. Change and how it is managed.

There is a HSE 'Standard' for each risk.

The Headmistress and Governors will seek to assess the risks and potential causes and they will determine any improvement targets in consultation with staff/staff representatives.

Procedures

Stress-related issues will be regularly discussed at Senior Management Group (SMG) meetings as well as the School's Health and Safety Committee and the Governor level Risk, Compliance and Wellbeing (RCW) Committee. The SMG has a responsibility to identify factors causing workplace stress and to eliminate or control the risks. The Deputy Head (Senior School) will ensure the topic is included in the agenda for the Staff Wellbeing Committee meeting.

The Headmistress will, as far as possible, on behalf of the Governing Body, provide information to all staff about any actions to combat work-related stress.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will agree the policy and monitor the effectiveness of the measures introduced and will review progress regularly. It will ensure the provision of adequate resources to enable the policy to be implemented.

The Headmistress

The Headmistress will implement the Governing Body policy and will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the management standards.
- Reviewing the risk factors for stress on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that the School's systems for dealing with potentially stressful issues are sound, and understood by all staff (e.g. discipline, capability, absence, anti-bullying, pupil behaviour, staff cover and staff duties policies/procedures).
- Ensuring that access to a counselling service is provided and known to all staff.
- Hold meetings as appropriate with staff representatives over health and safety issues, including proposed action relating to the prevention of work-related stress.
- Reporting regularly on progress to the Governing Body.
- Ensuring that any training needed by responsible staff is provided.

Heads of Department/Staff with Managerial Responsibilities will:

- Ensure that all staff have meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads and working hours.
- Inform the Headmistress of any concerns that cannot be dealt with at their level.
- Support individuals who have been off work with stress.
- Encourage referral to occupational counselling where appropriate.
- Monitor and review in their area the effectiveness of the measures to reduce stress.
- Be aware of the behavioural patterns related to stress and any significant changes to staff behaviour.

All Staff

Staff are expected to:

- Have care for their own health and safety, and raise any concerns with their line manager.
- Recognise the part that each member of staff can play in achieving a healthy, stress-free ethos.
- Familiarise themselves with the HSE risk factors and Management Standards.
- Read the information supplied by the management and staff representatives.
- Inform the Headmistress of any adverse stress symptoms that they might have at the earliest opportunity.
- Take part in the promotion of good, stress-free health for themselves and colleagues.
- Help the senior staff, e.g. the Head of Department, to put effective plans into place.
- Attend any training that might be relevant.

The Health and Safety Representatives.

- Co-operate with the Headmistress and Governors in achieving good management standards and the promotion of effective policies to achieve a positive health ethos.
- Inform the Headmistress of any concerns that are drawn to their attention.

Procedure for meeting stress-related concerns (teaching and non-teaching staff)

If a member of staff feels adverse stress symptoms they should:

- In the first instance the individual concerned should try to identify the causes, and what they might do to make things better.
- Tell the line manager or the Headmistress as soon as possible. Discuss any causes that might have been identified and consider possible strategies to improve matters and alleviate the stress. Set up further support meetings as relevant and appropriate. This can be with a member of SMG/JMT identified in consultation with the individual.
- Seek advice on where to go to access confidential counselling.
- All staff can consult the School Medical Team who will offer advice on how to access counselling.

In addition, the support line of the Charity Education Support (formerly Teacherline) – 0800 0562 561 – provides practical and emotional support to staff in the education sector. In addition, all staff may make use of the 24-hour legal and counselling telephone service provided by DAS, provided by the School's Insurers. Call: **01 179330687 (quote policy number 202604)** for:

- **Telephone counselling support** – a confidential counselling service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year available for all staff and members of your immediate family (providing they live with you and are over the age of 18).

- **Personal legal and tax information** – Support from fully qualified professionals with any personal finance or legal matters.
- **24hr Health and Medical Information Line** – provides information for you and your family members on general health issues and advice on a wide variety of medical matters and can provide direct access to qualified GPs and is available Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

Stress Management – Strategies for Monitoring and Review

The RCW Committee on behalf of the full Governing Body will monitor the following criteria to obtain an indication of organisational stress levels.

- Staff absence due to sickness.
- Staff turnover rates.
- Early retirement on medical grounds.
- The accuracy of job descriptions, having considered changing roles and requirements of that role.

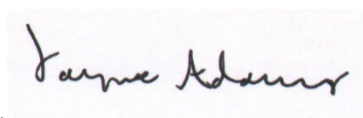
In addition, any relevant feedback from ISI inspections.

These criteria may be used as possible indicators of levels of organisational stress which may merit further scrutiny.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed: November 2023
Next Review: November 2024



Signed: Date: 17 November 2023....

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body