



## Spring Bank Primary School

### Staff Wellbeing Policy

#### **Aims**

The term “wellbeing” can be used to describe our holistic health, including our physical, mental and emotional health. When we have good levels of wellbeing, we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged and are able to show resilience and “bounce back” from life’s challenges.

School staff often juggle multiple tasks and demands, so a focus on staff wellbeing has become increasingly important. Taking good care of staff both emotionally and practically helps them to perform to the best of their ability and ensures that they are better able to support pupils. Workloads, deadlines and challenging behaviours can all impact negatively on the wellbeing of school staff.

Poor mental wellbeing may impact on their ability to manage during key moments of stress in the classroom or at school. Staff who have good mental wellbeing are more likely to have the necessary resources to be able to manage and plan during or after stressful episodes whether with a pupil, a class, a colleague, an inspector or a parent.

Good staff wellbeing can have a number of benefits for schools including:

- Positive impact on pupils, including improved educational outcomes, as both staff and children and young people are more engaged
- Increased productivity of staff members
- Reduced absences from work in relation to sickness (both short term and long term)
- Staff being able to manage stress better and develop healthier coping strategies
- Improved job satisfaction, which can support retention
- Staff feeling valued, supported and invested in

#### **What can impact on staff wellbeing?**

The ethos and environment of the school will have an impact on staff wellbeing. It is important to build a culture of trust where school staff feel valued and know how to access

support. Some things to consider when thinking about the school environment and your staff wellbeing strategy are:

- The physical environment – do staff members have a space which is dedicated to the staff team and where they can go and take some time out? Is the staff space appealing and comfortable?
- Policies and procedures – are there clear policies and procedures around staff wellbeing, and are the same processes and expectations applicable to all staff? Are policies and processes implemented clearly and equitably?
- Is there clear communication to staff about both internal and external pathways to support? Do staff members know how to access support (both personal and professional) and where they can go to find out more information?
- Does the culture and ethos of the school encourage open communication, particularly when it comes to talking about concerns? Are all staff members concerns given equal weight?

### **Leading a school that prioritises wellbeing**

In order to change the culture and ethos of a school it is vital that any strategies to support staff wellbeing are led by the senior leadership team. Below are things to consider when leading a school that prioritises staff wellbeing.

- Model good working practices and self-care to encourage a work/life balance. This can include encouraging and taking regular breaks, finishing on time, regular meetings with line managers, not taking work home and asking for help and support when needed. It is not enough for SLT to talk about doing these things, they need to model that they do them too.
- Communicate clearly with staff, particularly around any changes that might be taking place at school. If possible, consult with staff about changes and offer reassurance. Remember to also feedback on the positive and things that are going well!
- Encourage a sense of community. This can be done by allowing opportunities for all staff to get together (reinforcing that all staff are important) and having non-work-related activities and clubs for staff. Keep staff wellbeing and development on the agenda. Offer resilience-based workshops for staff to help normalise the process of speaking about wellbeing. This can be done via lunch time seminars and inset days and can include topics such as managing stress. It can also be useful to provide opportunities for colleagues to debrief with each other on a regular basis.
- Provide school staff with regular opportunities to feedback on any thoughts or concerns regarding staff wellbeing and how to improve it. This can help to develop a more inclusive culture.

### **Looking after your own wellbeing**

Research indicates that taking the following steps can be important in the promotion and maintenance of mental wellbeing

- Knowing personal limits and having the ability to say 'no' when necessary. This helps you to have more balance in life and will enable you to take better care of others.
- Identifying supportive people that you have in your life. If you would like to increase your support networks then you might consider taking up new hobbies or activities. You can also speak to a professional for more support.

- Talking. There are times when challenging situations affect us emotionally. If you have had a difficult day at school, try to speak to someone before you leave school as this can then help you to process how you are feeling, ask for support and separate your work and home life.
- Being flexible around change. Even with the best plans, sometimes unexpected events or situations occur. Our ability to accept change and plan and adapt can help us to manage any potential feelings of stress and anxiety and cope better overall.
- Self-compassion. If you take some time to stop and reflect on the thoughts in your head, are they more positive or critical? Once you have identified any negative thought, you can begin to introduce more positive thoughts and 'turn the volume down' on the critical voices.

This Staff Wellbeing Policy was adopted by Spring Bank Primary School on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

<b>Chair of the Local Governing Board: Mr L Arnell</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>L Arnell</b>
<b>Frequency of review:</b>	3 years	
<b>To be reviewed by:</b>	SBPS Local Governing Board	
<b>Date of next review:</b>	October 2027	

**REVIEW RECORD**

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Signature:</b>	
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on behalf of SBPS Local Governing Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

<b>Name:</b>			
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