



NOWER HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Title:	Staff Well-being and Work-Life Balance Policy
Date of Policy:	February 2020
Date of Ratification by Governing Body	5 th March 2020
Status:	Best Practice
Approval Authority:	Governing Body
Staff Lead:	Assistant Headteacher (Development and Well-being)
Governor Lead:	Chair of Staffing Committee
Review Frequency:	Every 3 years
Location:	G-Suite: Staff Landing Page; Website
Date of Next Review:	February 2021

Staff Well-being and Work-Life Balance Policy:

1. Purpose and Principles

The Governing body recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff in school enjoy a reasonable balance between the demands of their working life and the demands of home, family and other interests and commitments. An acceptable work-life balance will be different for each employee and will be different at different times in careers. It is not in the interest of either the school or the individual member of staff to work to the detriment of his/her health. Staff well-being is crucial in maintaining a positive atmosphere in the workplace. Excessive work without rest and recreation is not conducive either to a healthy outlook or to efficient or effective working.

The Governing Body recognises that employees are not obliged to work in school beyond their contracted hours, although teachers are expected to complete preparation, planning and assessment beyond the school day.

In order for our staff to be most successful they need to have a beneficial work-life balance. We know that:

- attracting and retaining a high calibre of staff is needed for an outstanding education system and benefits all members of the school community;
- improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the whole school workforce;
- encouraging compassionate, distributed leadership and staff autonomy will improve teamwork, staff development and co-operation;
- excessive hours of work can adversely affect both physical and mental health and reduce staff effectiveness;
- a more motivated workforce, with high morale, is even more able to deliver a better education for our children;
- reducing unnecessary workload and workplace stress will actively help to reduce staff absenteeism and turnover.

2. Key Aims of the policy

- To support staff at Nower Hill High School in their work.
- To encourage a partnership approach to meeting the needs of both Nower Hill High School and its staff.
- To operate in a fair and consistent manner.
- To take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced.
- To communicate developments and changes to policies and practice effectively and on a regular basis.
- To acknowledge the importance of regular communication between Nower Hill High School's leadership (including the governing body), unions/staff representatives and staff about workable work-life balance solutions.

- To acknowledge that the needs of both Nower Hill High School and its staff are not static, but change over time.
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible, equitable and appropriate without damaging the opportunities for students to succeed.
- To regularly refine our monitoring, evaluation and review mechanism, linked to the PAD (Progress and Development) process and the school improvement plan, for work-life balance initiatives and strategies.

3. School Context

Nower Hill High School is a large academy that has grown considerably over time. The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that positive steps are taken in school to promote a healthy work-life balance for all employees. For teachers the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document requires that all teachers and Headteacher enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.

‘Governing Bodies and head teachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the head teacher and teachers at the school being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties...’

This same principle is extended to all support staff who work at Nower Hill High School. The Governing Body and Headteacher will make this policy available to all employees at the school.

4. Health, Safety and Welfare

The Governing Body recognises its duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees at the school. This policy will be implemented and incorporates all aspects of welfare which the governing body and Headteacher has put in place to prevent and deal with workplace stress. The well-being of the staff will be supported wherever possible.

5. Implementation

The Governing Body takes overall responsibility for implementing this policy and for ensuring the Headteacher and the Leadership Team enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. The Headteacher and Leadership Team in turn will ensure the staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and provide them with an example of good practice. All employees will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.

6. Commitment

The following issues will be reviewed for inclusion in a programme of committing to and improving employees' work life balance and their well-being.

- **Unmeasured Working Time**

Where employees such as the Leadership Team are contracted to work unmeasured time, the Governing Body undertakes to ensure that the school's requirements and expectations are reasonable.

- **Employment Policies and Practice**

Recognising how exhausting it can be to work with young people and their families the Governing Body undertakes to adopt and apply the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part time working, flexible working patterns, etc. where this can be accommodated without detriment to the operational requirements of the school. The Headteacher and Leadership Team will adopt policies and provide clear guidance on time off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons (refer to Leave of Absence Policy within the school's HR policy suite). If any members of staff need clarity on pursuing grievance procedures Nower Hill High School's Whistleblowing and Grievance Procedure within the school's HR policy suite should be referred to.

We encourage a collaborative approach to positive behaviour management which includes consistent use of our Ladders of Consequences (LoC) and Rewards (LoR) as well as faculty shadow timetables. Regular training on how to manage challenging behaviour through effective use of whole school systems ensures a calm and purposeful learning environment which enables all staff and students to achieve and model a positive sense of well-being.

We value the time teachers take marking students' work and reporting on their progress while recognising that these assessment processes 'should not be overwhelming or become too heavy a burden' (Nower Hill High School's Teachers' Handbook). Regular training is provided on how to both maximise the impact of assessment and minimise time taken. Assessment systems that allow due time for effective feedback and which have a positive impact on teaching and learning are regularly reviewed and adapted following consultation and evidence from current research.

- **Individual and Team Workloads**

We aim for the school's timetable to reflect a fair and reasonable balance of work between different members of staff.

Leaders at all levels ensure that new and emerging priorities are discussed with the employees affected and that ways of managing the implications for individual workloads are addressed.

We recognise that staff working in a high attaining school such as Nower Hill High School deliver high

quality teaching and learning activities which can create workload pressures. Using systems such as G-suite to share resources and planning alleviates some of this pressure as well as the encouragement of a collaborative work ethic within and between departments and faculties.

We appreciate the pressures that parents' evenings can add to teachers' working days and commit to providing on-going training as well as regularly reviewing timings and structures to alleviate and better manage these potential barriers to staff well-being.

We are conscious and equitable in our allocation of non-teaching time for teaching staff. We currently employ 5.5 fte cover supervisors to meet the "rarely cover" requirements.

As a school we all work hard to plan effectively to ensure that we have capacity for future events. We also appreciate that there are occasionally unusual and unforeseen circumstances that require teamwork, flexibility and open two-way communication to ensure individual staff do not feel overwhelmed.

- **Planning and Policies**

We aim to ensure that preparing documentation should be no more elaborate than is necessary and consistent with its purpose.

- **Meetings**

School leaders aim to ensure that patterns of meetings are appropriate to the requirements of the whole school, faculties and departments etc. and that they are agreed in advance and that the pattern is adhered to. Leaders convening meetings should specify a target finishing time and adhere to it. Outcomes from meetings will be clear and concise.

- **Administration**

Administrative work has been delegated to appropriate support staff and systems will be regularly reviewed. Requests for information, statistics, policies and similar will be assessed for their importance and benefit to the school and where possible will be collated by support staff.

- **Individual support and training**

Individual support, including confidential counselling through the Education Support Partnership scheme, is made available to employees so that they may raise concerns about problems and difficulties which affect them either in their work or their family/personal life. We work hard to alleviate any work-related problems and encourage an atmosphere of open transparency within which staff are honest about any difficulties they are experiencing so that we can support them.

7. Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for the welfare of all staff and will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through the Assistant Headteacher responsible for staff well-being. Monitoring will include well-being as a standing item on the Staffing Committee Agenda and the link Governor for staff well-being meeting regularly with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for staff well-being. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

The Headteacher and staff are responsible for dealing with issues and incidents where the safety and welfare of staff are affected. It will be each individual member of staff's responsibility to raise awareness when issues arise. Where staff are concerned, it is their responsibility to let the leadership team know so that we can attempt to resolve the issue.

8. Further Support

- There is a line management system in place so that all staff know whom they can initially turn to if they feel burdened. Likewise, line managers should routinely check in with staff they line manage and, if needed, help them to find solutions to work-based stresses. In addition, there is an HR Manager and HR Administrator for both teaching and support staff and an Assistant Headteacher responsible for staff well-being with the Headteacher overseeing all staff.
- Regular PAD reviews offer a more formal opportunity for staff to discuss with their line manager any concerns which they may have about their workload or ability to balance work with other aspects of their life.
- Trade Union representation is strong and there is access to the Headteacher following regular Trade Union meetings.
- Staff room for weekly briefings with weekly am refreshments provided and daily break-time refreshments made available.
- Team rooms supplied with drinking water for each faculty to support effective communication.
- Dedicated silent marking rooms made available for teachers for each period.
- Weekly bulletin for all staff.
- Regular professional development sessions to support all staff.
- Comprehensive support staff structure to support teaching staff with administrative tasks.
- Staff questionnaires which include questions on staff working conditions.
- A Staff Well-being Team has been established with half termly meetings on the school calendar.
- There is a Wellness area within the CPD section on G-Suite.
- We encourage staff to be open about any difficulties they are experiencing and have instituted a weekly well-being 'drop in' during the first 20 minutes of each Tuesday lunchtime in the AHT (Development and Well-being)'s office.
- Introduction of matinee performance of school production
- End of term celebrations at Christmas and the end of the Summer Term.
- Staff children's Easter party.