



Worthing High School Staff Well-Being and Work-Life Balance Policy

Last Reviewed – April 2021

Next Review – Spring Term 2023

Approved by Full Trustees
(SAPC)

Author: CEO

1. Introduction

South Downs Education Trust (SDET) recognise that all staff should enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. It understands the importance of ensuring that all staff in school enjoy a reasonable balance between 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. Excessive work without rest and recreation is not conducive to efficient or effective working. Staff well-being is important in maintaining a positive atmosphere in schools, making SDET an enjoyable place in which to work.

SDET 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.

2. Purpose and Principles

In order for our staff to be at their most effective they need to have a healthy work-life balance:

- To attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for us to continue to improve the outcomes for our students
- To improve SDET's effectiveness by actively reducing staff absenteeism and turnover
- To continue to develop a motivated workforce, with good morale, even more able to deliver a better education for the children and young people in our care
- To improve team work, staff development and co-operation by effectively distributing leadership and creating opportunities for new leaders
- To recognise that excessive workloads can reduce staff effectiveness
- To recognise that improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the whole school workforce

3. Key Aims of the Policy

- To benefit the Trust and its employees
- To acknowledge that the needs of both SDET and its staff are not static, but change over time
- To acknowledge the need for SDET's leadership, unions/staff representatives and staff to discuss workable work-life balance solutions
- To encourage a partnership approach to meeting the needs of both SDET and the staff, ensuring employees feel valued for their contribution to the Trust
- To operate in a fair and consistent manner
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate without damaging the opportunities for students to succeed
- To take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced
- To communicate work-life balance practices to all staff at SDET. Developments and changes to policies should also be communicated on a regular basis
- To include a monitoring, evaluation and review mechanism, linked to appraisal and the school improvement plan, for work-life balance initiatives and strategies

4. Health, Safety and Welfare

SDET recognises its duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees at the Trust. This policy will be implemented and will incorporate all aspects of welfare, which the SDET and CEO has put in place to prevent and deal with workplace stress. The well-being of the staff will be supported wherever possible.

Staff are also responsible for their own wellbeing and need to talk to their line manager or another colleague, if they feel this is being affected.

5. Implementation

SDET takes overall responsibility for implementing this policy and for ensuring the CEO/Headteacher and the Leadership Team enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. The CEO/Headteacher and Leadership Team 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. Strategies

SDET is committed to adhering to the following strategies:

- Clear identification (through regularly reviewed job descriptions) of the duties and responsibilities relating to the employees role to aid them in the delivery of their work and managing the expectations of the job
- Working and supporting staff through training and CPD to enable them to manage their jobs effectively
- To have in place appraisal processes for all staff with realistic and agreed targets for them and related to whole school priorities/targets

- Providing a system (including appraisal training and supervision) to encourage efficient and effective working practices, and actively discourage staff from working excessively long hours
- Involving, encouraging and enabling staff to actively manage their own professional and personal development through offering a flexible CPL programme
- Consulting with staff on decisions relating to their employment, encouraging them to seek third party advice i.e. to confer with their professional and union representatives where appropriate
- Granting special leave, where appropriate and in line with current SDET policies.
- Providing opportunities, where possible, for flexible working practices
- Providing adequate workplace facilities for breaks and relaxation
- Provide an induction programme for staff appropriate to their position
- Prioritise work life balance requirements when preparing annual budgets
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met e.g. National Agreement on Workforce Reform and Health and Safety requirements
- To ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as appropriate
- Keeping school policies under review and with a view to reduce burdens on staff
- Ensure routes of communication are effective and do not add to workloads
- Calendar published at the start of the year
- Limiting numbers of emails, only copying in those who need to be, avoiding sending emails after 6pm as far as possible and expect a reasonable response **within 48 hours** – see separate email protocol
- Using face to face conversations as much as possible to resolve situations rather than using email
- Identify a member of each school within the Trust to link to the wellbeing team

7. 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. School management will ensure that new and emerging priorities are discussed with the employees affected and that ways of managing the implications for individual workloads are addressed.

Line Managers shall:

- Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner
- Pay attention to any indication in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work-related stress
- Communicate work-life balance practices to all staff and manage pressures which may affect staff, anticipating likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible
- Demonstrate commitment to staff by encouraging a good work-life balance
- Have a regular focus upon wellbeing at team meetings and department meetings.

Individual Support and Training

Individual support, including confidential counselling through the Schools Advisory Service (SAS) 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. The Trust is a member of the SAS programme (please see **Appendix A** for details of the school's SAS wellbeing package).

We are generous in our “personal + private” time allowances and appreciate the support all staff give this.

8. Support at SDET

SDET will continue to strive to promote wellbeing and a positive work-life balance in a variety of ways:

- Performance management reviews to provide an opportunity to focus upon wellbeing and workload – ***we should focus upon this as a matter of course***
- A clearly structured line management system in place for support, in addition to a HR manager
- Encouraging staff to join unions
- Staff room
- Regular, flexible CPD programme
- A Trust wide well-being/Staff Forum group meets regularly during the year, with concerns/suggestions put forwarded to CEO and their responses are published to all staff
- Well-being to have a focus on an INSET day
- Access to Trust Fitness Suite
- All new staff given a mentor
- Access to Trust Mental Health First Aider
- Use of SAS- Medical health screening

9. Linked Policies and Procedures

- Email protocol
- Teaching and Learning policy

Appendix A

Schools Advisory Service – Benefits for all staff

Our school Schools Advisory Service package combines both well-being and medical cover.

Summary

The SAS well-being cover includes a range of support services. The 'helplines' for each can be located on the back of the card that has been put into your pigeon hole.

The following are available to all staff:

- Stress Counselling (including home visitation)
- Physiotherapy (up to 5 sessions)
- Cancer Support Service (for all the family, including serious illness)
- 24 Hour GP Helpline (for all the family)
- Emergency Dental Cover (see policy)
- Medical cover for a number of operations