



# SIR THOMAS RICH'S Staff Wellbeing Policy

This Policy is drawn up by the School's Senior Leadership Team after consultation with the school staff. The Governing Body of Sir Thomas Rich's takes its duty of care as an employer to all employees very seriously and this staff wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health such as the staff sickness absence policy, the staff leave of absence policy, the staff bullying and harassment policy, the staff grievance procedure and the staff whistleblowing procedure. A number of policies and procedures may also be relevant such as the Health and Safety Policy, the continuing professional development policy and the Appraisal policy.

All policies are published on the school's website.

**Date last reviewed:** July 2023

**Status:** Good practice

**Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the Governors' Personnel Committee to review the policy and monitor its implementation and execution.

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## 1. Introduction

The Governing Body of Sir Thomas Rich's School recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and understands that wellbeing and performance are linked.

The Governing Body of Sir Thomas Rich's School is committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

This Staff Wellbeing Policy sets out the Sir Thomas Rich's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, physical health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

The Governing Body of Sir Thomas Rich's recognises that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' wellbeing and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

The Governing Body of Sir Thomas Rich's is committed to balancing the needs of employees and the School's educational, business and operational needs.

## 2. Responsibilities

### The Governing Body

The Governing Body has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The Governing Body will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

In addition to reducing safety risks, the School will operate the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are reasonable and having practices in place to support employees experiencing mental ill health at work.

The Governing Body will:

- a) Adopt the appropriate practices in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of flexible working arrangements, part-time working, etc. where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the School
- b) Ensure clear procedures are in place that will minimise levels of stress caused to employees when following formal procedures such as the capability, disciplinary or sickness absence management procedures
- c) Ensure that employees roles and responsibilities area clearly defined
- d) Put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support
- e) Seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work

## **The Headmaster**

The Headmaster will:

- a) Create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, and enable employees to do so in a supportive environment for example, through line management meetings.
- b) Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress
- c) Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems
- d) Ensure that contact is maintained with staff who are absent for long periods of time and that, where appropriate, a return-to-work plan is established that is supportive of employees
- e) Carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate
- f) Endeavour to ensure that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications
- g) Manage pressures which may affect employees, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible
- h) Provide opportunities for staff to give their views on their wellbeing, for example through staff surveys.

## **Line Managers**

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards, and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job.

In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- a) Creating reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns
- b) Paying attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress

- c) Following agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems
- d) Carrying out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible
- e) Seeking agreement from the employee for a referral to Occupational Health if this is required and/or appropriate in the circumstances
- f) Attending regular training on health and wellbeing in schools
- g) Keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload
- h) Ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management

## **Employees**

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, exercise, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the organisation if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers or the occupational health service will be treated in confidence.

Employees should:

- a) Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem at the earliest opportunity to ensure effective strategies can be implemented
- b) Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace
- c) Ensure awareness of the School's policies and procedures relevant to employee wellbeing
- d) Assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or colleagues
- e) Treat colleagues and all other persons whom they interact with during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity
- f) Contribute positively towards the School's ethos, morale and team spirit

## **3. Support Mechanisms**

### **Training and Communication**

Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and organisation-wide methods. The School will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance.

The School will consider special communication media during periods of organisational change.

### **Occupational Health Support**

Line managers can contact the organisation's occupational health service for advice on managing issues regarding work-related stress and wellbeing. The occupational health provider delivers a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems.

A referral to the occupational health team will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their line manager. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team is likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the School

### **Access to further support outside the School**

The School will consider providing independent support to colleagues experiencing difficulties. This will be a confidential, independent service using qualified professionals

Employees can discuss accessing this support through speaking to their line manager.

### **Mediation**

A mediation service could also be supportive in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.

### **Peer Support**

A number of staff have agreed to offer confidential peer-to-peer support. They have undertaken a two-day mental health first aid course and are keen to help. A list of staff peers available to support will be communicated to staff regularly.

### **Other Resources**

From time to time, the School will communicate with staff via email outlining particular resources or strategies to help with their mental wellbeing. This may include information on the five steps to mental well-being, webinars and e resources as well on line sessions and resources produced by Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL)

Education Support has a confidential 24-hour helpline with trained counsellors available to listen to teachers and support staff without judgement and help us find a way forward, whatever our worries or concerns are. The helpline telephone number is 08000 562 561.

### **NHS**

The NHS has a number of useful links to support mental health and well-being:  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines).

The NHS has further advice available at:  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing).