

# Staff Well-Being Charter

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The Fernwood School





# Foreword

*Improved teacher wellbeing facilitates improved pupil wellbeing  
(Harding et al., 2019; Ramberg et al., 2019),*

*...the negative impact of teachers' poor wellbeing seems to be greater for students who are already disadvantaged  
(Ramberg et al., 2019).*

The most important asset in any school is its staff. For students to be successful they must be supported by a team of staff who have energy, dedication, care, motivation and a willingness to continually develop their practice.

At Fernwood School we recognise the massive role that our staff play in creating an environment that enables all our students to be successful. We are committed to having a common-sense approach to all our expectations, systems and processes so that staff workload is manageable and realistic.

We strive to ensure that our staff can maintain a healthy work life balance so they can be present and energised when working with students. We are always open to staff feedback and willing to listen to ways in which school life can be improved for staff; balanced with providing a high-quality learning experience for all students.

Our commitment to staff is paramount. Action taken to enhance and support staff well-being will always be on our School Improvement Plan to ensure that this area of work remains a priority; this is indicative of our strong ethos, and makes Fernwood a special place in which to work.

Chris Gell  
Headteacher



# Introduction

At The Fernwood School we are committed to the support of the well-being of the staff in school. Education is a challenging sector to work in and ever-increasing accountability has its impact on all of us. We know how important pupil outcomes are but at Fernwood, we also understand the importance of developing resilient, confident and well-rounded individuals.

Our key value is 'High achievement with care and discipline, **for all**' and this includes everyone within our school community. I am reminded of the adage 'you can't pour out of an empty cup' which is so true for teachers and school staff. If our own well-being is suffering, how can we begin to manage student well-being, behaviour, progress and ultimately help them to be the best they can be? Putting support in for staff well-being is a challenge. It is hard to find the balance between our school priorities, external pressure and the need to ensure people find time to look after themselves.

I am aware of trying to ensure that the things that are offered are not 'tokenistic' but also that we have a range of strategies in place from the more light-hearted activities to the more significant mental health support. Therefore, in this document I have laid out some of the practical things that we do to try to make the lives of the staff here a little easier. I hope you will see this as a genuine attempt to try to support you all as we continue to work in what can feel like the crazy and demanding world of education.

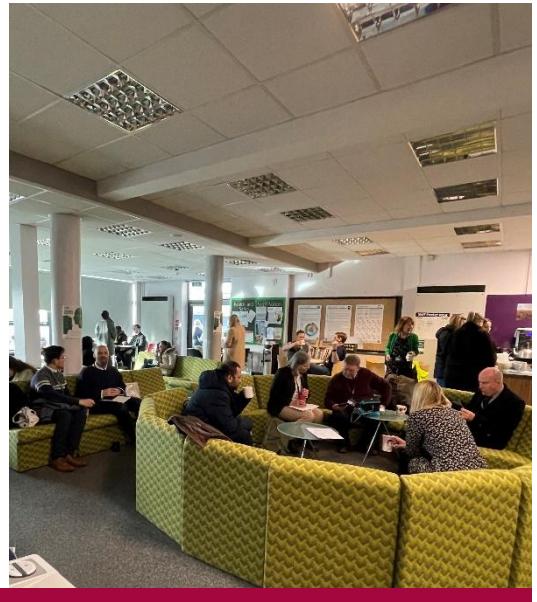
Amy Cannon  
Assistant Headteacher  
Personal Development



European Day of Languages



Staff Yoga



Staffroom

# Our Well-Being Charter

1. Clear allocation of directed time, with time to spare.
2. No emails during the holidays, at the weekend or after 6pm in the evening.
3. School closes at 6pm unless there is an event.
4. Free tea and coffee served in the staffroom every break.
5. Staffroom used for quiet work or breaks. If someone is sitting with their lunch, they are on a break, and you should not disturb them with matters about school.
6. Annual school calendar so staff are aware in advance of deadlines and key dates so they can plan ahead.
7. Marking policy – reduction in marking requirements. E.g. marking codes and one milestone piece to be marked per project.
8. Invigilators for mock exams (unless unavoidable).
9. Staff only occasionally used for cover (unless base cover is on your timetable).
10. PPA time above the expected 10%.
11. Centralised reprographics to support planning.
12. Performance management done with you, not to you.
13. Full CPD programme for all levels in school.
14. Employee Assistance Programme including 24 hours a day / 365 days a year counselling service, legal advice, coaching and more.
15. Members of staff who volunteer to be a listening ear if you need to speak with someone or need advice on how to approach a line manager about mental health difficulties. This includes a half-termly well-being forum for staff to discuss concerns or ideas.
16. HR policy to ensure fairness and equity with regards to staff absence.
17. Menopause Policy.
18. No rules about submitting lesson plans.
19. Staff breakfast club.
20. 'Take a Bow' – Weekly awards for staff members who have gone over and above to help someone.
21. Well-being Secret Santa at Christmas.
22. Staff social events.
23. After school yoga.
24. Support Network for LGBTQ+ Staff
25. Weekly boot camp for staff.
26. Events such as Christmas well-being week and mental health awareness days include staff, for example, staff shout-outs, a visiting coffee van, and a staff raffle.
27. Cycle to work scheme.
28. Early closure at Christmas and in July.
29. Nottingham City's workplace parking levy is paid by the school on behalf of all staff.



# Top Tips for Well-Being

- ✓ Set aside time to unwind. Think about what lifts your mood and gets you through stress. Allow yourself time to do the things you love whether it is going for a walk, reading a book, or keeping fit.
- ✓ Plan. Some of the work we do is reactive but where possible, plan your day or week using a notebook or day planner. Set small, achievable goals and plan in breaks.
- ✓ Set boundaries. The work/life balance can be a challenge but make sure you don't spend all your time out of school, thinking about school. Perhaps set a time limit to how much you talk about it when you get home and ensure you aren't constantly checking emails. Have 'tech-free' time. We tell the students to do this, but do we do it ourselves? If you feel others aren't respecting your boundaries, you may need to give a gentle reminder or talk to someone in school that can help you to maintain your personal space.
- ✓ Adjust your expectations. The pressure in education can result in staff that are perfectionists. This adds a lot of pressure. You are unlikely to ever complete everything you would like to in an ideal world so have priorities and don't be too hard on yourself. You are a single professional and you are doing your best.
- ✓ Acquire new skills. This might be work based to support your job in school or they might be linked to an interest out of school. Learning new skills is good for our well-being.
- ✓ Share. If you feel overwhelmed, share this with a trusted colleague, friend, or family member. Speak with your line manager or a senior leader so help and support can be offered, without judgement.
- ✓ Get your body moving. Physical activity is proven to help navigate stress and anxiety. In school there is yoga, boot camp and staff sports but if this isn't for you, even a 10-minute walk can help.
- ✓ Seek mental health support if you need it and especially if there are signs of depression, anxiety, and burnout. Feeling tired and unhappy is not the same as being depressed but without help these feelings can escalate so seek support sooner rather than later. You can seek help from your GP or the Employee Assistance Programme, Education Support.



# Healthcare Services

Becoming an Education Mutual member school doesn't just enhance your absence protection; it opens doors to a wide range of health and wellbeing services, included in the membership at no additional cost.



## Healthcare Services

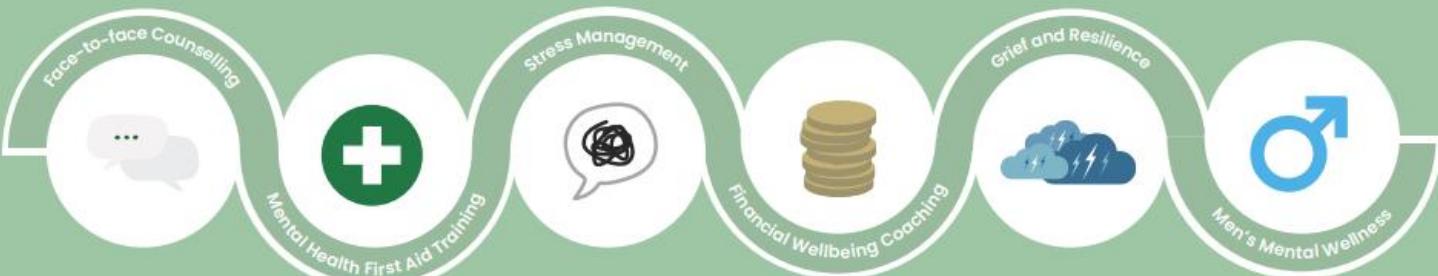


# Mental Health and Wellbeing Services

At Education Mutual we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of colleagues within our member schools.

We've developed a range of services specifically designed to protect your team and their mental wellbeing allowing them to focus on providing the highest standards of education to our next generation.

## Mental Health and Wellbeing services





# The Fernwood School

“High Achievement with Care and Discipline for All”



admin@fernwood.school



Goodwood Road, Wollaton, Nottingham, NG8 2FT



0115 9286326



**World Book Day**