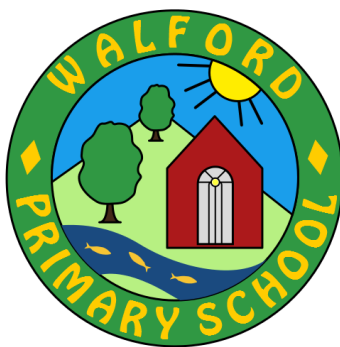


# WALFORD NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



## POLICY

for

## STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR STAFF

Reviewed: Summer 2025

**Date for Review: Summer 2026**

## **Policy for Stress Management for Staff**

### **Policy Statement**

Stress is a complex and stressful issue that occurs when people become mentally, emotionally and/or physically distressed or disturbed, as a result of the ways a person perceives and reacts to pressures and demands. The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as, *the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed upon them.*

The school, in acknowledging that people are our most valuable resource, is committed to promoting a work environment that is safe and healthy, supports an acceptable work-life balance and recognises the mutual responsibilities and rights of employers and employees. Therefore, the school is committed to:

- identifying potential sources of stress in the workplace and taking such action as is reasonably practical to eliminate or reduce their effect on people;
- supporting individuals in managing effectively stress experienced by themselves and others, whatever the cause.

### **Aims**

In order to realise this commitment, the school has identified the following aims for the effective management of stress in the workplace:

- to increase general awareness of stress and methods available to combat its damaging effects;
- to take action to identify and, so far as is reasonable, eliminate or reduce workplace stressors, whether associated with a person's work, or relationships with others, accepting that the effect will be different as to the people involved and over time;
- to assist staff in managing the effects of stress in others, particularly people whose work they supervise, and in themselves, whether the cause is internal or external to their working environment;
- to effectively manage problems that do occur, including the return to work of staff who have had problems with the effect of stress.

### **Organisation**

Any strategy to manage stress effectively needs to be a partnership between management at all levels, individual members of staff, the Local Authority, support services, and the recognised staff associations.

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring a healthy and safe working environment for all staff. The School Business Committee is responsible for monitoring the management of health and safety across the school, for approving and monitoring the effectiveness of general staffing policies and procedure and provides a forum for the consideration and resolution of corporate health and safety matters.

Individual members of staff have a duty to take reasonable care both of their own health and general fitness and of the health and welfare of others who could be affected by their actions. Should individuals find that they are experiencing stress at work they are encouraged strongly to discuss this with their line manager to seek assistance in reducing the stress and/or assisting in its management. It is understandable that individuals may

find this difficult for a number of reasons including their perception that this may be seen as a weakness on their part. In this situation, they can approach another member of the management team or seek assistance from one of the support services referred to in below.

Individual staff are encouraged also to support colleagues showing any signs of stress and to seek assistance in doing this through the routes described above.

## **Monitoring**

The following will be monitored to give an indication of on-going stress levels:

- Levels of sickness absence, frequency and duration
- Voluntary self-certification following all absence to establish any underlying causes in the school
- Turnover rates of staff
- Levels of early/ill-health retirement
- Reported incidents of actual or potential violence
- Class size

## **Sources of Support**

The Local Authority provides an Occupational Health Service. This is a confidential service for staff. If a referral is made by an individual's manager, a report may be made to that manager with the express permission of the individual involved.

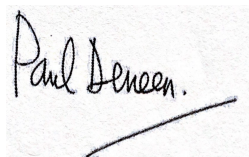
Staff Associations offer support to their members who are experiencing stress which is impacting on their working situation. As well as providing access to specialist services, they are able to assist an individual in raising with their manager the issues that need to be addressed to reduce the stress that they are experiencing.

## **Staff Development**

- New staff will be given a comprehensive induction programme with support available to them when they take up their post.
- Staff will be allocated jobs for which they are suited, supported by clear roles and objectives and appropriate training.
- Job descriptions will be clear and up to date.
- Training needs will be identified through the performance management system.
- All staff have a right to a programme of continuing professional development which will be monitored by the school.
- The views of all workers will be consulted through regular meetings at which all groups are represented.
- Decisions made by the management team will be clearly communicated to all relevant staff.
- There is a grievances procedure to deal with any conflicts and grievances.
- Staff are supported by the school's Policy for Behaviour in dealing with any discipline problems.
- When it is necessary for staff to work alone, appropriate mechanisms to support staff will be made.

This policy was ratified by our Governors and disseminated to all staff. This policy will be reviewed in the Summer Term 2026.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Deneen." followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

**Chair of Governors**

Dated: June 2025

**Review Date: June 2026**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Work Related Stress – Risk Assessment**

Work related stress is defined as, the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them. This distinguishes the beneficial effects of reasonable pressure and challenge, and work-related stress, which is the natural but distressing reaction to demands or pressures that the person perceives they cannot cope with at a given time.

Apart from the ethical and economic arguments that are beyond dispute, the law requires the school to assess risk from stress, to apply the principles of prevention, to ensure employees capability and to provide training.

#### ***Step One: Looking for the hazard – the main types of hazard***

1. **Culture** of the school and how it approaches work related stress
2. **Demands**, such as workload and exposure to physical hazards
3. **Control** - how much say the person has in the way they do their work
4. **Relationships**, covering issues such as bullying and harassment
5. **Change** – how change is managed and communicated in the school
6. **Role** – whether the individual understands their role in the organisation; and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles
7. **Support training** and issues unique to the individual

#### ***Step Two: Decide who might be harmed and how***

Work related stress could affect any member of staff for any of the seven risk factors identified in Step One. For example, at certain busy times of the year, those returning to work after a stress related illness, or those who have a domestic crisis such as bereavement.

#### ***Step Three: Evaluate the risks and decide if enough is being done***

Consider how likely it is that each hazard mentioned in Step One could cause harm in the school. In each case consider:

1. What action is already being taken?
2. Is it sufficient?
3. If not, what more must be done?

Risks should be combated at organisational level at source before considering training needs, in terms of pressure management, or counselling. Action to protect everyone should be taken rather than for just a few.

#### ***Step Four: Record your findings***

The main findings of the risk assessment must be recorded in writing and its contents shared with relevant employees. The document should be used to monitor progress.

***Step Five: Review your assessment and revise where necessary***

Assessments must be reviewed regularly or whenever significant changes occur in the school, or in the way it handles its business. This should be in consultation with employees.