



Work-Life Balance Policy Statement. 12.10

The governing body of Beacon Hill school and Specialist College for Business and Enterprise have agreed the following statement relating to work life balance arrangements for our employees.

Introduction

Governors wish to record our position of supporting, encouraging and enabling all employees to maintain a healthy balance between their work and other interests and responsibilities in their life.

We believe that this can be achieved through ensuring key policies and procedures are in place to provide opportunity and encouragement to maintain an appropriate work life balance. Such systems will allow employees to feel their contribution to school life is valued, encouraging a culture within school that will promote equality and mutual respect.

By acknowledging the need for governors, school leaders, employees and trade unions/professional association representatives to work in partnership to identify realistic work-life balance solutions, we anticipate such a cultural change will become embedded within our school systems.

School Aims

This policy statement helps us meet the agreed aims of Beacon Hill in the following ways.

Beacon Hill is an innovative, creative and enterprising community:

- that has ambitious expectations for individual improvement to achieve excellence for all.

This aim can be best met when staff have an appropriate work life balance and so are able to use their time well to ensure standards improve for young people.

- in which all partners include, involve and inform each other.

This aim looks at ways in which all staff can be involved in decisions made which affect their work life balance. It also allows for better more effective decisions to be made as those involved are those closest to the results of the decisions.

- that values communication and provides the time and opportunity to make it effective.

Effective communication systems which reduce the amount of time unnecessarily spent in meetings will help ensure an appropriate work life balance for staff. Such communication will also ensure the good decisions are made and this too will improve work life balance.

- that promotes an happy, healthy atmosphere of security, trust and respect.
- An appropriate work life balance will ensure people are motivated and positive in their role and help create a happy and respectful working environment.

Key Aims

The governing body believe the promotion of work life balance working arrangements can benefit employees and school through ensuring:

- Increased loyalty & commitment
- Raising morale, motivation and engagement
- Improved mental well-being
- Recruitment and retention of valuable employees through becoming an “employer of choice”
- Reduce absenteeism and sickness
- Increase the school’s ability to deal with organisational change
- Ensure the school meets its legal requirements and responsibilities relating to work life balance.
- More time for employees to focus on life outside work

Key Documents

The governing body have approved a number of policies and procedures to ensure our commitment to work life balance within school, including:

- School leave of absence policy
- Flexible working policy & procedure
- Policy on working beyond normal age retirement
- Procedures relating to maternity/paternity and adoption leave
- Procedures for implementing rarely cover and other statutory regulations relating to workload levels of employees within school.

Consultation & Review

Employee involvement is the key to the success of this work life balance statement. To ensure that our policies and procedures remain applicable to the needs of both school and employees we recognise the need to have periodic review of the impact through an annual report to governors.

We envisage that where such polices and procedures require amendment this will be undertaken following consultation and open dialogue with employees and school based trade union/professional association colleagues, prior to adoption by this governing body.

Contacts

Staff considering a request relating to work life balance should initially discuss this with the headteacher, who will provide advice as to which school policy or procedure is most appropriate, prior to making any formal request.

Appendix

The Governing Body identified at its meeting in December 2010 the following ways in which they promote work life balance and also ways in which they could develop further their work in this area.

Current methods.

These opportunities are open to all staff (except PPA).

1. Where possible in terms of class health and safety staff are able to attend any Christmas concerts and school sports days they wish to.
2. There is an open door system for staff to report any issues concerns or ideas.
3. The staff survey covers issues of work life balance and issues are followed up and discussed.
4. Staff returning from illness have the opportunity for flexible phased returns which can be changed on agreement.
5. Where unavoidable staff are able to attend medical appointments in work time.
6. Staff have access to services such as counselling and physiotherapy funded by school where appropriate.
7. Staff are able to have time off for sudden domestic emergencies.
8. Staff are able to apply for flexible working or to work part time and this is encouraged where at all possible.
9. A detailed risk assessment is carried out, involving the member of staff concerned where a member of staff is pregnant.
10. The school is as supportive as possible to staff who have suffered a personal bereavement.
11. There is a detailed policy in place covering how to support each other when a child from school dies.
12. Teaching staff are able to do their PPA at home if they find that helpful. This is on the understanding that they are available to come into school for an emergency.
13. Where staff find it helpful they can access their work emails at home but they are not expected to do so.
14. All teachers have laptops and there are laptops available for none teaching staff who wish to work at home.
15. The views of staff are taken into account when planning Training Days and also on the timing of any twilight training.

Areas for Development.

1. From 2011 all staff will have a section in their PDM Meeting to discuss their work life balance and agree any possible way school could improve this.
2. The school will make sure it keeps staff aware of health opportunities such as eye testing and cycles to school provided by the LA.
3. The school will offer more frequent opportunities for staff to join in activities such as netball and keep fit.
4. The work life balance of the caretaker will be specifically considered.
5. If possible opportunities for staff to work from home on a Wednesday evening will be offered.
6. Staff will be made aware of North Tyneside's Ease card system which gives them reduced access to after school leisure opportunities.
7. The Induction system will contain information about the flexibility on offer to improve work life balance.