

# Work-Life Balance Policy



*Learning together in a changing  
world, creating success for all.*

## **Trinity Fields is a Rights Respecting School, a Healthy School, Investors in Families School, an ECO School, a MOVE school and an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) Flagship School.**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our pupil friendly and adult version of our “**Shared Values and Aims**”.

### **School context**

Trinity Fields is a **Rights Respecting School**; we are committed to the principles and values of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across all areas of our work. We are a school where pupils are at the heart of everything we do. We successfully achieved UNICEF’s “Rights Respecting School Award” in **January 2017** and we have a well-established record of developing pupil engagement at all levels.

Refer to pupil friendly “**Pupil Participation**” policy and our whole school “**Pupil Participation**” policy for further details.

We are a **Healthy School**; we take responsibility for maintaining and promoting the health and wellbeing of the Trinity Fields team (pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors etc.). This includes teaching pupils about how to lead healthy lives by enabling them and staff to take control over aspects of the school environment that influence their health and wellbeing. We achieved the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award in **March 2018, with re-accreditation in December 2020**.

Refer to “**Health and Well-being for Pupils**” policy and our whole school “**Health and Well-being**” policy for further details.

We are an **Investors in Families School**. We are committed to developing active and effective relationships with parents/carers and families and recognise the value of close partnership working to improve outcomes for our pupils. We were the first Special School in Wales to achieve the Investors in Families Quality Mark, and regularly share our excellent practices with other settings.

We demonstrate our commitment to the Rights to Action agenda and value and support the important role that families play in the education of their child. We strive to promote social inclusion and a sense of wellbeing for families through positive participation in their child’s education.

During the re-accreditation process (2019), the school’s work was judged to be of a very high quality. Family and Community Engagement are fully embedded and it was evident that the school works hard on its journey towards excellence. The assessor was very pleased to award the school the **Diamond Standard**.

We have demonstrated through a national annual assessment that we have the capacity to play a strong leadership role in developing inclusion best practice across a network of schools; as well as being committed to extending those networks and develop classroom-based research.

Refer to **“Inclusion”** policy and to **IQM assessment reports** for further details.

In **summer 2022** we gained our **Platinum ECO Schools Award**; the Eco-Schools programme is designed to be pupil-led and looks at the impact of our actions on the environment.

Our sustained journey towards attaining the Platinum Award showcases pupils’ ideas and helps to inspire others to make the right environmental choices.

More recently (2019), the school started its journey towards becoming a **MOVE school**; successfully accredited at Silver level in **December 2021**. The MOVE Programme is an activity-based practice that enables children and young people with physical disabilities to sit, stand, walk, and transition as independently as possible.

**Our overarching philosophy is summarised in the following statement:**

**“We believe that everyone at Trinity Fields is entitled to have access to the very best learning experiences. These will be provided within a safe, caring and stimulating environment that will enable all learners to achieve their full potential through learning opportunities that meet their individual needs”.**

#### **Education in Wales: Our National Mission**

Our work with pupils and their families will be developed building upon Wales’ National Mission. This national mission is ambitious, innovative and confident ensuring that we all take responsibility for all of our pupils to have equal opportunities to reach the highest possible standards.

Trinity Fields will continue to develop as a learning organisation to ensure it has the capacity to adapt to and explore a range of new approaches which results in improved outcomes and well-being for all of our pupils.

In order to realise our shared vision and approaches in delivering Wales’ transformational curriculum that will enable all of the pupils at Trinity Fields to make the progress commensurate with their individual needs we are committed to the 4 key enabling objectives, detailed in **“Education in Wales: Our national mission (2017)**. These are:

- **Developing a high-quality education profession.**
- **Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards.**
- **Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellent, equity and well-being.**
- **Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system.**

The core purposes and values that are associated with these prestigious national awards are encapsulated in our vision and aims:

**“We believe that everyone at Trinity Fields is entitled to have access to the very best learning opportunities. These will be provided within a safe, caring and stimulating**

**environment that will enable all learners to achieve their full potential through learning opportunities that meet their individual needs”.**

Qualified for Life (2014) provides further endorsement of our commitment to being a Rights Respecting School by stating:

**“learners are the heart of all that we do” and further “every child and young person benefits from personalised learning”.**

Successful Futures (2015) also states that:

**“Each child and young person in Wales should be able to benefit from curriculum and assessment arrangements that will best meet their present needs and equip them for their future lives. Our children and young people only have a relatively short time at school. We must use that time judiciously and productively to help each one of them to grow as a capable, healthy, well-rounded individual who can thrive in the face of unknown future challenges”.**

## **Introduction**

The Governing Body of Trinity Fields School is committed to ensuring that all staff are able to balance their working lives with their other commitments. All teachers, including headteachers are entitled to enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. This is acknowledged in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), which states that:

**“Governing Bodies and headteachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the headteacher and teachers at the school to be able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties ... and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work. In having regard to this, Governing Bodies and headteachers should ensure that they adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations.”**

**(STPCD, Section 2, Part 7, paragraph 53.4)**

All staff are entitled to enjoy a satisfactory balance between the demands of their professional duties and their personal interests outside work. A headteacher must:

**“Lead and manage the staff with a proper regard for their well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments.”**

**(STPCD, 47.13.)**

Work/life balance is specifically provided for in the conditions of service for all teachers and headteachers in maintained schools set out in the STPCD. This document requires that:

- additional hours over and above the annual 1,265 must be reasonable;
- for those teachers not covered by the 1,265 limit on directed time, overall hours must be reasonable;
- headteachers must have regard to the desirability of all teachers being able to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance.

The long term success of our school depends, to a large extent, on the commitment, expertise and dedication of all our employees who, to be successful in this changing world, must be prepared to be flexible and willing to adapt to circumstances. This policy sets out our rationale for encouraging and enabling all staff to maintain a healthy balance between their work and the other interests and responsibilities in their life.

We believe that all staff, regardless of age or personal circumstances, will work best when they are able to maintain a satisfactory personal balance between their paid work and other aspects of their lives. We understand that individual needs are likely to change as people progress through the life-cycle.

We will in partnership with all staff to continue to foster a culture within this school that makes it acceptable for individuals to discuss openly their concerns about work-life balance. This policy document for work-life balance should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Leave of Absence policy;
- Managing Attendance policy;
- Parental leave, adoption and paternity leave regulations;
- Occupational maternity leave benefits;
- Flexible working arrangements i.e. job share, job split, part-time work etc.;
- Employee support programmes, such as Care First, Teacher Support Line etc.

## Links with other legislation

- **The Working Time Regulations 1998**
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 set limits on working time.
- **Health and Safety Regulations**

All employers have legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes minimizing the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees.

## Policy objectives

These are to:

- enable employees to balance their working lives with their personal needs, interests and caring responsibilities;
- safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff;
- support the headteacher in undertaking their professional duties.

## Background to work-life balance

The government has recognised that education professionals have an excessive workload. They have done something about it for teachers working in the maintained sector. Working with unions, managers and employers, the government sought to identify positive ways to tackle teachers' excessive workload by creating the **Workload Agreement in 2003**.

A major part of addressing workload has been the greater involvement of support staff in the delivery of education. Teachers should now not routinely be required to undertake a list of 21 administrative tasks (**see appendix 1**). These measures were phased in from 2003-2005 for schools in England and Wales.

## Rationale

A good work-life balance is central to staff effectiveness and satisfaction, both of which have a positive impact upon pupil learning and achievement. A well-planned and implemented work-life balance strategy impacts upon pupil and whole school performance because it:

- Helps to attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for a 21st Century education system;
- Supports the school's effectiveness by actively reducing staff absenteeism and turnover;
- Results in a more highly motivated workforce, with high morale; this ensures that the staff team deliver the very best learning experiences for all pupils;
- Improves team work, staff development and cooperation by effectively distributing leadership whilst developing new leaders at all levels;
- Recognises that excessive hours of work do not equate to higher levels of commitment and effectiveness but may actually reduce staff effectiveness.

An important element within the wider remodelling agenda is the statutory responsibility governors have with regard to the work-life balance of the headteacher. The headteacher, in turn, will have regard to the work-life balance of all other staff. The Governing Body also has a statutory responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees, so far as is reasonably practicable.

## Work-life balance

Work-life balance is about helping staff combine work with their personal interests and commitments. Whilst everyone must take responsibility for their own work-life balance and be aware of the example they are setting for others, Trinity Fields School, in compliance with the legislative framework, will

actively work to support a broad range of initiatives to ensure that there is an appropriate work-life balance strategy in place that supports staff health and wellbeing.

## **The benefits of good work-life balance strategies**

These include:

- Productivity– greater loyalty;
- Efficiency– greater energy;
- Motivation– empowerment;
- Recruitment– a ‘first choice’ employer;
- Retention– keeping good staff;
- Training– engaged workforce;
- Reduced absence;
- Greater flexibility;
- Responsibility and ownership;
- Feeling valued;
- Improved relationships at work and at home through a better balance in whole life;
- Improved self-esteem, confidence and concentration;
- Greater control.

## **Key principles**

All staff, including the headteacher, will be supported to achieve a balanced lifestyle where they can achieve their best at work and manage other areas of their life effectively. Our strategies to support a balanced lifestyle include:

- Clear identification of roles and responsibilities relating to individual staff, reviewed annually through performance management in order to support staff in the delivery of their work and managing the expectations of the job;
- Regular review of staff meetings and after school training, to check the effectiveness of the school’s work-life balance strategies;
- Continually looking at existing and new practices to make systems as efficient and time-saving as possible thereby discouraging staff from working excessively long hours;
- Working with staff to agree and provide appropriate training to enable them to do their jobs competently and effectively and within normal working hours;
- Involving staff in agreeing and setting realistic work related targets for the staff and the school;
- Involving, encouraging and enabling staff to actively manage their own careers and personal development;
- Supporting leave of absence applications, as appropriate (and in line with the school’s policy), when staff are faced with an emergency outside of work;
- Considering leave of absence when staff have additional demands on their responsibilities outside of work e.g. with children or elderly relatives;
- Providing opportunities, where possible, for flexible working practices;



- Providing suitable workplace facilities for breaks and relaxation (as is reasonable and practicable);
- Providing suitable equipment and work spaces to enable them to work efficiently as budgetary constraints allow;
- Increase teacher administrative support, through TA and administrative staff, as much as possible within constraints of budget;
- Operating in a fair and consistent manner;
- Valuing staff for their contribution to our school, not their working pattern.

## **Annual/termly calendars**

An annual calendar of meetings, deadlines and events will be provided to staff so that they can plan ahead and manage their workload in such a way as to help maintain a satisfactory work/life balance. When drawing up a calendar for the following academic year, senior leaders will consult with and agree with staff on the pattern and number of meetings.

Consultation with staff will also include the timings of INSET, report schedules, parents' evenings, sports days, classroom observations and other activities and events that might impact on work-life balance. If, because of unexpected pressures, a member of staff recognises that they may not be able to meet a particular deadline then they should inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity to discuss how they can be supported in completing the task.

## **Meetings**

Senior leaders will consult with staff on the pattern and number of meetings that staff are required to attend. Meetings will last no more than 60 minutes and will be held on no more than an average of one evening per week during a term, with a maximum of two evenings in any one week.

Meetings will be timetabled at the beginning of the academic year and should have a clear purpose. Only staff whose presence is essential will be required to attend.

Agendas will be prepared and circulated in advance and it is the responsibility of those calling and directing meetings to ensure effective time management. Meetings will terminate when their purpose has been achieved, even if this is before the allotted 60 minutes.

Part-time teachers will not be required to attend meetings or come into school for other purposes on days when they are not required to be available for work under their contract of employment.

## **Directed time**

Following consultation, staff will be provided at the beginning of each academic year with a breakdown of directed time, setting out their commitments in terms of teaching, PPA time, leadership and management time and meetings.



## Policy review

Responsibility for the success of our work-life balance strategy lies with the Governing Body and with each employee. In light of the ongoing and rapid developments within Welsh education this policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects current legislation and best practice.

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Signed</b>		<b>Chair of Governors</b>
<b>This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review cycle.</b>		

As a Rights Respecting School we are committed to embedding the principles and values of the United Nation Conventions for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This policy enables our pupils to access and enjoy the following articles of the convention:

**Article 12:** Every child has the right to be heard.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

**Article 42:** Every child has the right to know their rights.