



TIRIMOANA SCHOOL

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

RATIONALE:

Work life balance is about creating a productive work culture where the potential for tensions between work and other parts of people's lives is minimised. This means having appropriate employment provisions in place with organisational systems and supportive management underpinning them.

It is the responsibility of both the individual worker and management staff to recognise stress in the workplace, to implement procedures to minimise and be aware of work stress, and to support colleagues when personal issues impact on work.

PURPOSES:

1. To highlight the need for management and employees to work in partnership to identify work-life balance issues and workplace stress, and to discuss relevant, workable solutions.
2. To ensure all work-based solutions relating to work-life balance and stress management are carefully planned, practical and flexible.
3. To ensure all solutions are fair and equitable and are affordable and realistically budgeted for.
4. To meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 by helping employees to reduce workplace stress and learn to manage stress better.

GUIDELINES:

1. Work-life balance solutions will be responsive to the needs of the school as a whole and will not impact adversely on children's learning.
2. Work-life balance solutions and stress management assistance will be available to all employees.
3. Specific Work-life balance solutions will be determined by a Work-Life balance committee comprising the principal, a senior management DP/AP and the staff EEO officer.
4. Staff will have access to EAP Services (Employee Assistance Programmes).
5. Matters of personal emergency situations will be managed to fit specific circumstances with reference to the relevant employment contract.
6. Senior management staff will have the responsibility to monitor and support the work-life balance and stress management needs of teachers, taking a proactive role to prevent burn out and offer practical suggestions to ease pressure on teachers. The principal will be responsible for all other employees.
7. Senior management staff will have the responsibility to counsel teachers who are experiencing work-life balance conflicts of interest and/or workplace stress and who do not recognise them, offering them solutions.
8. Senior management staff and the BOT will have the responsibility to support other senior management colleagues and the principal when issues of work-life balance and/or stress are evident.
9. Senior managers and the BOT will recognise that sometimes employees need support with managing personal wellness/hau ora, and that personal time may occasionally need to be offered or encouraged.

CONCLUSION:

Employees who have a sense of work-life balance and who are fulfilled in their personal lives are more likely to manage their stress better in the workplace and be more effective in their job.

NELP Objective 1,3

Priorities: 3

Policy: 49

Review Date: August

17/08/2022

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE TO MANAGE WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WORKPLACE STRESS

- Induction of new staff to include a discussion about maintaining a healthy work-life balance and to be aware of workplace stress
- The opportunity for staff to request occasional nonpaid work-life balance days
- Recognising the different needs of staff, and that work-life balance needs change over time
- Commitment to encouraging employees to manage their sense of personal wellness/hau ora
- Exploring possibilities for nonpaid sabbatical leave as per NZEI Award
- Exploring opportunities for part time work or job share if practicable
- Commitment to providing teacher release
- Commitment to encouraging staff to take rest and relaxation during school holidays
- Commitment to minimising workplace meetings after 4.00pm
- Commitment to fulltime employees working a 40-hour week in the workplace and discouraging excessive working late or weekend work
- Encouraging employees to more effectively managing work demands by balancing a late working day with less demands later in the week. If you work late one day, then don't work late the next day. If you work in the workplace during the weekend, then don't over commit yourself during the week.
- Don't overload ambitious or highly committed work colleagues; be wary of burnout
- Senior management to lead by example
- Colleagues to share the load so that no one employee carries an excessive burden
- Staff to consider how to build in times for personal wellness during the working week, such as a once-a-week lunchtime walking group, or a once a fortnight lunchtime outing, social club
- Supporting colleagues when they need time out for family or personal reasons
- Encourage teachers to use laptops at home to minimise staying late after 4.00pm
- Encourage teachers to learn to prioritise and diary 'to do lists'
- Remind teachers to be aware of issues of isolation in their classrooms, especially more distant rooms such as Rooms 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28
- Be aware of younger less experienced staff taking on too many responsibilities
- Support Beginning Teachers with managing work-life balance and work stress
- Support employees who have children at home by recognising the needs of parents
- Encourage staff to negotiate priorities, timeframes and realistic work loads when under stress
- Encourage staff to share ideas and look at reducing double up of work; encourage efficiency of workplace activities
- Be aware of staff with any disabilities and adjust work demands accordingly
- Encourage staff to participate in healthy leisure and physical activities
- Encourage an active staff social committee
- Understanding and accepting cultural differences, especially with family needs out of school such as attending hui or tangi
- Understanding and supporting staff who are engaged in voluntary community activities or representing the city or country at events
- Dealing with staff who may be hesitant to take time for themselves because of the perceived impact on their career or class, and what their colleagues may think
- Encouraging staff to seek out a colleague who is a good listener; encouraging staff to develop and share active listening skills and be available to listen to others when needed; reminding staff that listening empathetically and non judgementally is very powerful.
- Develop procedures or steps for how to manage and share with others that you are stressed or overloaded.

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