

**School Name: Pike Fold Primary School**

**TWA Status: Shortlisted**



**Amplification:**

Pike Fold Primary School is committed to supporting the wellbeing of its staff through a comprehensive range of initiatives and benefits, reflecting its dedication to creating a positive and supportive working environment.

**I. Overall Workplace Culture & Commitment to Wellbeing**

- **Creating a Supportive Environment:** Pike Fold's ultimate goal is to create and foster a culturally diverse working environment that is free from the stigma attached to poor mental health. They are champions of positive workplace well-being and encourage all employees to find a positive work-life balance.
- **Valuing Staff:** Staff are recognized as individuals with their own journeys and goals, and are considered valued assets, not just resources. Their skills and abilities are seen as vital tools for delivering an outstanding education.
- **Mindful Employer Status:** Pike Fold Primary School is a "Mindful Employer". This commitment includes:
  - Creating a supportive and open culture where colleagues can talk about mental health.
  - Ensuring employees feel safe disclosing mental health conditions and are confident they will be properly supported with reasonable adjustments.
  - Providing non-judgemental and proactive support to individuals experiencing mental ill health.
  - Not making assumptions that a person with a mental health condition will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off.
  - Showing positive and enabling attitudes to all employees and job applicants with mental health conditions, including positive statements in recruitment literature.
- **Positive Work Environment:** The school welcomes fun and quirky workplace vibes that promote teamwork and collaborative working. It is described as a fun, inclusive, and caring organization, where staff are fully committed and enjoy working.

**II. Mental Health & Emotional Support**

- Direct Access to Support:
  - Access to free counselling and support is provided.
  - The school's Mental Health Champion serves as the first point of contact for all employees.
  - Employees can also speak with their line manager or other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
  
- Mental Health First Aiders:
  - The Head Teacher and School Business Manager are the designated Mental Health First Aiders.
  - They are available to offer initial mental health first aid and guide individuals in distress to relevant help.
  - They can respond to urgent requests for support outside of normal working hours via phone call or text message, emphasizing that health is paramount.
  
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) via Health Assured:
  - This is a 24/7, free, and confidential support service available to all employees and their immediate family members (spouse/partners, and children aged 16-24 in full-time education living in the same household).
  - The EAP provides immediate access to:
    - Unlimited counselling for emotional problems, with pathways to structured telephone or face-to-face sessions (employees only).
    - Legal information for issues causing anxiety or distress (employees only).
    - Bereavement support from qualified counsellors and legal advisors.
    - Medical information from qualified nurses.
    - Online Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) self-help modules, factsheets, and advice videos.
  - Wellbeing Portal: A virtual library of wellbeing information, including articles, self-help guides, interactive health assessments, fitness and lifestyle advice, four-week self-help programs, mini health checks, and financial wellbeing articles.
  - Health e-Hub Mobile App: Offers holistic health and wellbeing support, including support videos, webinars, four-week programs, home/work life assistance, and physical/emotional health information.
  
- The SMART Clinic Package: The school has invested in this package for all staff, providing additional support beyond the EAP:
  - Unlimited employee assistance helpline usage.

- Six counselling sessions per employee per year.
  - Four physiotherapy sessions per employee per year.
  - Unlimited virtual GP consultations.
  - Six stress coaching sessions per employee per year.
- Occupational Health: Managers have access to high-quality occupational health advice to support employees in their roles, and can make fast-track counselling and physiotherapy referrals.

### **III. Financial Wellbeing Support**

Commitment to Financial Wellbeing: Pike Fold is committed to supporting employees with their financial wellbeing, recognising that personal financial worries can negatively impact physical and mental health and job performance.

Open Communication & Confidentiality: The school aims to normalise conversations about money worries and break down stigma. Employees are encouraged to discuss financial concerns with their Deputy Head confidentially. Managers maintain an open-door policy and will support open discussion without making presumptions, addressing individual needs sensitively and confidentially.

Specific Financial Support Measures:

- As a Manchester City Council employer, the school is a Real Living Wage employer.
- Support for in-work progression and access to financial education and guidance.
- 50% discount on after-school club facilities for staff's own children.
- Subsidized staff lunches once per month and low-cost breakfast daily.
- A team of financial wellbeing champions lead financial awareness activities.
- A dedicated 'Pike Fold Pantry' for staff to make donations or withdrawals.

City Council Employee Benefits: Staff have access to additional benefits as City Council employees:

- Lifestyle Savings: Retail discounts at national chains and local businesses (currently unavailable due to procurement).
- Manchester Credit Union: Savings accounts and affordable loans with convenient salary deductions.
- Travel Options: Reduced cost season tickets for trains, buses, and Metrolink trams with interest-free loan options. The Cycle to Work Scheme offers loans through salary sacrifice for potential savings on bikes and accessories, with a

cycle allowance, changing facilities, and showers available. Car sharing, short-term car hire, and discounted city-centre parking are also available.

- Pension Schemes: Access to the City Council's defined benefit pension schemes, with an employer contribution of 18.5%, tax relief, and life cover (3x salary lump sum if dying in service).

External Financial Advice: Employees can get free, confidential, and independent money and debt advice from the Government's Money & Pensions Service and organizations like Citizens Advice.

#### **IV. Professional Development & Career Support**

Career Development: The school works with staff to shape the future of their careers through ongoing appraisal and review systems. They commit to supporting staff in developing their skills set to its maximum potential.

CPD Opportunities: Includes Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities with Performance Management as standard. There is a specific CPD Cycle for support staff, including an annual appraisal.

Teaching Assistant Support:

- Observation of Teaching Assistants (TAs) to improve practice.
- Opportunities for TAs to job rotate, enabling upskilling.
- Nationally recognized for its outstanding practice in the effective use of Teaching Assistants, evidenced by the Best Practice with Teaching Assistants Award 2022-2025.

Management Training: All line managers have access to information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.

Social & Leisure:

- Wellbeing draws for leisure time and for a 'kitty'.
- Dress down days and Hot chocolate days.
- Time for new TAs (NTA time) to get to know each other all year round.
- Lunch provided on inset days.
- Monthly 'Feel Good Fridays' with low-cost meals subsidized by the school.
- Lots of enriching events, such as summer and winter fun days.

Health & Wellness Perks:

- Free flu jabs and eye tests via the SMART Clinic.

- Voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses via the SMART Clinic.
- Discounted Gym Membership at leisure centres across the city.

**Carers Support:**

- Support for employees with caring responsibilities, offering flexibility when needed.
- A range of policies and guidance for working carers and their managers.
- A Carers Passport to facilitate discussions about caring responsibilities and agreed support.
- A virtual Carers Network for peer support and relevant information/events.