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**Staff Benefits Policy**

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| **Date:** | September 2023 |
| **Date approved by Management Committee:** | 23 November 2023 |
| **Signature of Chair of Management Committee:** |  |
| **To be reviewed:** | Every two years |

## Aims

At the Link School, we believe our staff are our most important resource and do our best to support and develop them. We aim to ensure that emotional well-being is at the heart and ethos of the school, to promote emotional health and well-being in staff, as well as our children.

The Link School actively encourages staff to develop personally and professionally, within a learning and caring community. We aim to create and support a healthy and happy working environment, where staff feel they are listened to and valued.

**Objectives**

We aim to:

* Develop a healthy, motivated workforce
* Provide effective and appropriate support for all staff
* Recognise the importance of a work-life balance for all staff and help each other to achieve this
* Monitor workloads and provide support to reduce any excessive demands on staff
* Minimise the harmful effects of stress.
* Respect confidentiality
* Create a positive attitude towards each other, to promote positive personal qualities
* Develop positive, supportive relationships
* Build trust, confidence and reliability

**Staff benefits include:**

**Competitive salaries**

We offer competitive salaries for both teaching and non-teaching staff based on the type and level of role you do. This ensures we are treating people fairly across the school as well as remaining competitive. Pay ranges are reviewed annually with our recognised unions. Your starting salary will be determined by the pay range for your role, your experience as well as external market conditions.

**National Terms and Conditions**

The Link School is committed to offering national terms and conditions in line with the School Teacher’s Pay and Conditions document (“STPCD”), the Burgundy Book (for Teachers) or the NJC Green Book (for Support Staff). This commitment is protected via a Recognition and Collective Agreement between The Link School; and the national Trade Unions and Professional Associations.

**Pension Scheme**

All contracted members of staff will be automatically enrolled into a career-average pension scheme with either the [Teachers’ Pension Scheme](https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/members/member-hub.aspx) or the [Local Government Pension Scheme](https://www.lgpsmember.org/) (whichever is appropriate). You don’t pay tax or national insurance on your contributions and The Link School adds a generous employer contribution, which varies depending on your salary.

Death in service is a form of benefit that's provided by Teachers’ Pension Scheme or The Local Government Pension. This will pay out a tax-free lump sum of cash if you die while you're employed by The Link School.

All staff are entitled to opt-out of the pension scheme should they wish to do so.

**Holiday**

We recognise the importance of a good work-life balance and provide generous holiday entitlements. This entitlement is in addition to any Bank or Public holidays. If you work part-time, your holiday entitlement will be pro-rated. Teaching staff receive the standard school holiday allowance.

**Flexible and Family Friendly Policies**

We understand that our employment policies need to be flexible and responsive in order to promote diversity and equality, and to attract and retain the highest quality workforce. We offer flexible working opportunities; job share arrangements and part-time roles; generous family leave packages; and leave to support you with emergencies or for compassionate reasons.

**Salary Sacrifice Schemes – Child Care Vouchers**

As an employer we provide you with the opportunity to pay for Childcare Vouchers as part of your wages. You sacrifice part of your wages in return for a similar value in vouchers.

Before you can start benefiting from Childcare Vouchers, your employment contract will need to be updated with the inclusion of a signed agreement, which confirms your acceptance of the salary sacrifice.

The Link School pays no NI on the amount agreed giving them savings of up to £402 for each employee. And you pay no NI or tax meaning you can save about £1,000 per year.

**Additional Payments**

Payments for running revision classes on weekends or over the holidays, or for running weekend or holiday trips, or extra-curricular activities, for example Breathing Space

**Recognition**

We’re proud to have a range of schemes, which recognise the achievements of our staff and show our appreciation of their contributions. Our Link School Celebrating Success scheme provide a way for the school to reward and recognise colleagues who go that extra mile. We also like to take the opportunity to formally recognise and celebrate the loyalty of those who have worked for us for a significant period of time.

**Long service awards**

For staff who have been with the school for 20 years are entitles to a one off financial payment – £50

**Free Staff Lunches**

All staff who work directly with children and provide lunchtime cover will receive a free staff lunch every day, this is worth £3.05 per day.

**Free Refreshments, accessible throughout the day.**

Tea, coffee, milk and juices are available to all staff and visitors

**Staff Uniform**

Staff are provided with free staff uniform on an annual basis, the basic allocation is 4 staff polo shirts/tops, staff jumper/hoodie and an outdoor coat. Staff can also have order Link school jogging bottoms, shorts depending on their role in school. Staff are then allocated a further two items per year with an option to order more.

Administration staff have the option to order formal style Link School work wear.

**Training and Development**

The Link School offers excellent opportunities for personal and professional development in a caring and supportive environment. New teachers to the school are allocated a mentor at the start of their employment and there is a well- planned Induction process. Staff are encouraged to identify their professional development needs and we offer regular professional INSET and the opportunity to attend external courses and other CPD activities. We fully support our employees’ desire to progress and will look to support where possible and appropriate.

The Link School offers financial support to staff through our training budgets because we recognise the benefits of additional external study, most commonly for HLTA’s, masters’ degrees or higher. Courses leading to an award of a higher degree or postgraduate qualification at a UK University, College or Further Education Establishment are eligible, as are courses leading to a qualification or an award of corporate membership from a recognised professional organisation. Other study courses would be considered, if they lead to achievement of a qualification recognised as contributing to the School.

**PPA Time/Dedicated TEAM time.**

Through a flexible approach to the timetable, the Link School has every Friday afternoon dedicated for teaching staff to take their PPA, and liaise with their support staff/teams to ensure that everything is in place for the following week – a way to achieving a work life balance in readiness for the weekend.

**Attendance at key life events for dependents**

The Link School aims to support the attendance of staff of key life events for their dependents, these can include nativity performances, sports days, celebration assemblies, graduations and other events as discussed with the Head Teacher or Head of School. Attendance at these events cannot be guaranteed but School Leaders will endeavour to facilitate staff attendance.

**Cycle to work scheme**

Our Cycle to Work scheme enables employees to purchase brand-new bicycles and cycling equipment via salary sacrifice, making tax and National Insurance savings.

**First Aid Training**

All staff have access to free First Aid at Work training. This course is suitable for people who might need to provide first aid by responding to a wide range accidents, injuries and illnesses that they could encounter in their workplace.

**Lifestyle Benefits**

**Christmas Shopping Afternoon** (1pm finish) – these are offered to all staff throughout the months of November and December, in the Autumn Term. Staff are encouraged to sign up for one calendared afternoon based on their individual circumstance.

**Staff access to the Gym**

All staff can access the gym facilities at Pallion out of contracted work hours – the gym is accessible to staff from 7.15- 8.15 am and 4.30 – 5.30pm. Inductions on gym equipment will be provided for all staff should they wish to access the gym.

**Staff Emotional Well-Being Sessions**

As part of our CPD programme, we have half termly emotional well-being sessions. The sessions are built into directed time and as valued as teaching and learning sessions.

These sessions provide staff the opportunity to gain professional supervision, have the opportunity to work with key stage teams, site teams and cross site teams. Activities can involve cookery sessions, reiki, meditation, mindfulness sessions, gel nails, head massage, art groups, running groups, walking groups, team building opportunities such as bowling, golf, fishing, card games and quizzes or time for a cuppa and a chat.

**Free Confidential Access to Staff Counselling**