



WYCOMBE
ABBEY

CASE STUDY

The benefits of prioritising staff wellbeing in independent boarding schools

Sian Rees-Evans, Member of the Staff Wellbeing Committee, Executive Assistant to the Head and Head of Communications, Wycombe Abbey, Buckinghamshire, discusses the benefits of prioritising staff wellbeing

About Wycombe Abbey

[Wycombe Abbey](#), is a prestigious independent boarding school which has provided a world class education for girls for 125 years. Ranked number one for academic results in the South East in the Sunday Times' Good School Guide 2022, the school defines success not only with superb academic outcomes but also by providing the opportunity for all pupils to develop their passions and explore new possibilities.

'The School's core values of mutual respect, encouragement and trust, underpin everything we do at Wycombe Abbey,' Sian explains, 'our 660 pupils live in a happy and close-knit community, where everyone is treated as an individual and friendships flourish within the wonderful surroundings of 170 acres of magnificent parkland.'

Why is staff wellbeing a priority?

'Term time in boarding school is short but intense, with extra-curricular activities after lessons and Saturday morning school. While school is in session the routine is demanding for staff and can be stressful at times. Striking a balance between the daily workload and down time can be a challenge in itself, and we need to ensure that all our staff feel supported so they can offer the pupils their very best.'

'Wellbeing also sits at the very heart of recruitment – in order to attract and retain excellent staff with a passion for their area of expertise and enthusiasm - we need to ensure that staff joining us feel as welcomed and supported as possible.'

'In a boarding school, the staff naturally become role models for the pupils, so our focus on wellbeing is reflected by them - when we started a walking club, the girls soon noticed!'

How is wellbeing approached at Wycombe Abbey?

'Wellbeing is central to our success and is part of one of the pillars of the school's strategic direction. We recognise that in order to create meaningful change, we need an ongoing understanding of professional life at Wycombe Abbey. We are now in our third yearly cycle, collecting data about staff wellbeing and using this to lead our future improvements. We use Welbee, an effective online evaluation and staff wellbeing improvement tool, to gather and collate all the information efficiently and effectively.'

[Welbee](#) is an excellent solution - the platform provides a staff survey, a transparent, anonymised means to collect staff feedback, build data and analyse the feedback. As it is an outsourced service the staff are happy to share their views openly in the survey, so we are confident that the results are a true reflection of staff wellbeing.

'The survey results highlight areas of strength and areas on which to focus, which are benchmarked and filtered. The platform also shares suggested actions which form the basis for our wellbeing action plan, with specific goals and a timeline for completion and review. The action plan is shared with management and staff so everyone is aware of what we are aiming to achieve – communication and transparency are key.

'Welbee's excellent customer support provides us with immediate responses to all our questions, talks us through the results and gives great advice on planning ahead.

'We also have a Staff Wellbeing Committee which represents all staff, with members from all areas of the school and different levels of management, chaired by the Headmistress. A photo and profile on each committee member is shared with staff so they know who to approach if they have a concern or suggestion or an item for the agenda. In addition some members of the committee are being trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

'Since the introduction of the Welbee survey and action plan, we have witnessed the benefits to a systemised approach that enables us to ensure wellbeing is at the very heart of Wycombe Abbey.'

To find out more please visit <https://welbeeindependent.school>

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About Welbee

Welbee from School Wellbeing Accelerator is a highly effective online evaluation and staff wellbeing improvement tool, designed to help senior leaders and HR Directors create mentally healthy schools, retain and motivate staff, reduce costs, drive up student attainment.