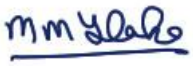
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Promoting Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Policy Name: Promoting Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy	**Policy Reference: MAT-OP03**
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Contents

1.	Policy Statement	3
2.	Who is Covered by the Policy?	3
3.	Responsibilities	3
4.	Health Promotion Initiatives	6
5.	Training and Communications	6
6.	Occupational Health Support	6
7.	Relationship with Other Policies	7

1. Policy Statement

1.1 The trust has developed an employee wellbeing policy to manage its obligations to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers our commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

1.2 The aim of this policy is to describe the trust's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how we fulfil our legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The World Health Organisation define wellbeing as "a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community". The trust recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved performance.

1.3 Mental wellbeing is relevant for all employees, which means every member of staff can play a part in improving wellbeing in the workplace. Through promoting a positive culture linked to mental health and supporting staff where there are issues with their mental health the Trust can improve the general wellbeing of employees, reduce absenteeism, lower staff turnover and increase productivity.

1.4 This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. We may vary any of the provision detailed within this policy without consultation. It has been formally adopted by the Trust Board

2. Who is Covered by the Policy?

2.1 The procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 *Trust*

The trust has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The trust will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

3.2 The trust will give regard to ACAS, Government & Health & Safety Executive guidance on this topic.

3.3 In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

3.4 The trust will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. It will also seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

3.5 The trust will commit to mental health first aid training for teams, or ensure the business has mental health first aiders who can support staff with mental ill health.

3.6 *Line managers*

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards[1] and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the trust's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues. Managers should also familiarise themselves with the ACAS publication on Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace[2]. Headteachers are responsible for ensuring line managers have appropriate time to carry out these duties.

3.7 In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- Have an understanding of poor mental health and potential causes of this
- Make a commitment to improve mental health at work
- Champion awareness of mental health and fight any stigma attached to this
- Identify ways to improve workplace well being
  Help to identify potential causes of mental ill health
- Ensure staff have resources and support, including access to this Promoting Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy and the EAP

[1] https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm

[2] https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/3384/Promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/pdf/Promoting_positive_mental_health_in_the_workplace.pdf

- Offering non-judgemental support to any member of staff experiencing a mental health issue.

Examples of how this can be achieved are as follows:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- delivering a thorough induction for all new starters, providing an outline of the trust, its policies and the role they are expected to play and providing a copy of this policy to all new starters during their induction;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations and working environments are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.
- ensuring staff have resources and support if they are suffering from mental ill health
- work with trade unions/employee representative groups on ways to promote positive mental health
- educate the workforce about mental health
- deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism or discrimination.

- Provide a list of mental health first aiders within the school / Trust and ensure the information is shared and readily available and sign post as appropriate

3.8 *Human resources support*

The trust will engage with their HR support to develop trust-wide policies and procedures, to protect the wellbeing of employees, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

The trust operates practices and policies that ensure staff are able to achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and other commitments, and adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998.

3.9 *Occupational Health*

The trust has engaged occupational health professionals to support with preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from the trust, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment. Employees are able to view this report before the employer if they so wish and are able to request an occupational

health referral if appropriate. These reports are only viewed by the employees line manager and HR if appropriate.

3.11 *Employee assistance programme provider*

The provider of external employee assistance services Education support (educationsupport.org.uk) will alert the trust's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the organisation, drawing on anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees. Accessing the EAP is completely anonymous; the Trust do not receive information on individuals who have accessed the service.

3.12 Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)

The trust provides training for Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) who can provide guidance and support to anyone experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. Mental Health First Aiders are not trained to be therapists or psychiatrists but they can offer initial support through non-judgemental listening and guidance. The list of current, qualified Mental Health First Aiders is available in the staff handbook or from HR, each school is responsible for providing an accessible list of Mental Health First Aiders for employees, please speak to the HR person within your school or Trust HR Manger if you are unable to access this information.

3.13 *Employees*

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the trust if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the HR department or the occupational health service is treated in confidence. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting employees, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary. As part of the application of this policy, the trust may collect, process and store personal data and special categories of data in accordance with our data protection policy. We will comply with the requirements of the **Data Protection Legislation** (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Records will be kept in accordance with our [Workforce Privacy Notice], our [Retention and Destruction Policy] and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

4. Training and Communications

4.1 Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change. Please also see appraisal policy.

4.2 Nominated employees within schools will be able to train as mental health first aiders.

4.3 Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress audits and staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and trust-wide methods. The trust will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

4.4 Managers and employees are encouraged to utilise Wellness Action Plans where appropriate. A Wellness Action Plan is an informal plan that can be considered for employees who already have a mental health disorder or concern but they are also useful for an employee who is currently well, but wants to take a more pro-active approach to staying mentally fit at work. A plan can be tailored to the individual's needs and seeks to identify any possible triggers to stress, how the employee wishes to be communicated with and steps/actions that can be taken by the trust to assist when they are not coping.

4.5 The trust will ensure robust communications during periods of trust change.

5. Wider Health Support

5.1 Line managers with concerns relating to employee's health should contact the Trust HR Manager. Employees can also speak to their line managers/HR if they would like to be considered for support linked to Occupational health.

5.2 Workplace wellbeing services provided by the Trust include:

- workstation assessments;
- fitness-for-work assessments;
- eye tests for users of visual display screen equipment;
- post-incident support;
- designing and advising on health promotion initiatives; and
- health and safety training.
- Counselling
- All other services provided by the EAP including legal and financial support as detailed in the EAP Programme.

If you are unsure on how to access any of these services, please ask your line manager, HR or Trust HR Manager.

5.3 If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or the HR department if you have one. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands, and raise issues such as identified training needs.

5.4 A referral to the occupational health team will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager or the HR department. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team will provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the trust. This report can be viewed by the employee prior to the Trust relieving a copy if they wish.

5.5 Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- an employee assistance programme;
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- special leave arrangements;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities; and
- the trust's grievance policy.
- cycle to work scheme
- Workload reduction actions – see appendix 1 of this policy
- Workload and wellbeing culture group – the Trust have committed to the formation of this group with representatives from schools, Trust and HR, if you would like to be a part of the group or put your ideas forward for wellbeing or workload initiatives, please contact the Chief Operations Officer or Trust HR Manager.

6. Relationship with other policies

6.1 This promoting positive mental health & wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including policies on work-life balance, stress management, special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, equal opportunities and staff training and development.

APPENDIX 1

WORKLOAD REDUCTION ACTIONS

Below is a list of potential ideas for the reduction of workload at Trust and school level, please note workload reduction initiatives are to be discussed with Headteachers for their approval, not all suggestions will be relevant for each individual school.

- Work emails – staff to include a narrative on their email signature which details their working hours or advises they will not respond to emails past 6pm or before 8am.
- Advanced notice of cover for pre-planned absence
- First call rota for cover planned termly
- Administration support for trips organisation
- Review of meeting structures to ensure meetings are purposeful
- Review of marking process
- Review of subject lead time allocation
- Utilising TA's effectively to ensure maximised support
- Behaviour management – clear indication of responsibility e.g pastoral, SLT, class teacher
- Review of photocopying needs, booklets vs exercise book inserts, support during busy periods
- School wide calendars shared with all staff
- Online parents evenings vs in person, potential for one of each during the school year
- Ensure no meetings scheduled for the day after evening events