Wellbeing Policy

Signed: Headteacher
Print Name: Ross Whitaker

Date Reviewed: May 2024
Next Review due: May 2025

Contents

1.   **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees and workers, etc. It has been subject to consultation with Trade Unions. It does not form part of anybody's contract of employment and may be varied.

2.   **Introduction**

This policy outlines our commitment to employee health and wellbeing, the responsibilities of our leaders and others for identifying, promoting and 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.

This policy sets 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. We recognise that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

3.   **Responsibilities**

3.1.   **Employer**

We recognise our legal duty of care to employees to promote health at work. We will ensure that our policies and practices reflect this duty and create a working environment where potential work-related stressors, as far as reasonably practicable are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices.

3.2.   **Leaders**

Our leaders will ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the appropriate information and support to do their job. Leaders will also familiarise themselves with our policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff. In particular, they are expected to ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- 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

- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work, including changes to their roles / responsibilities, 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

- ensuring that workstations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

3.3.   **Senior Leadership Team/ Governors/Trustees**

Our leaders, in liaison with governors/trustees, will develop employer-wide policies and procedures to support the wellbeing of employees. Leaders will assist managers in supporting individuals and liaise with occupational health (OH) as needed, with the objective of helping employees to maintain good psychological and physiological health.

3.4. Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, exercise and smoking) and must raise concerns with their manager if they feel that there are work issues that are causing them stress or having a negative impact on their wellbeing. Employees must take responsibility for developing their own coping strategies as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.

3.5. Occupational Health (OH)

We subscribe to an OH service **UKIM**. Occupational Health professionals will work with our leaders to provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work or to return to work. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from us, liaising with GPs and working with us to help employees to retain employment.

4. Health promotion initiatives

From time to time, we may develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing.

Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example, lunchtime walking or dancing clubs, which create a sense of community and inclusion for all. Where possible these initiatives should take place out of core working hours and employee working time.

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

- an employee assistance programme (VIVUP);
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour;
- special leave arrangements such as career breaks / sabbaticals;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities.

5. Training and support

Managers and employees should regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to changing job demands, this will usually be focused on internal support, often relatively simplistic in nature and most commonly developed to cover all staff as new initiatives are introduced.

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 communication tool most appropriate to the message, for example departmental/team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and organisation-wide methods. We will seek to ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

6. Occupational health support

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 manager. The discussion should cover

workload and other aspects they find to be a struggle; this may lead to the identification of training/support needs.

A referral to the occupational health team may be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager. 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. This report will contain any recommended adaptations to the working environment, for consideration by the referring manager.

7.   Relationship with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, procedures and guidance covering health and attendance: Health, Attendance and Leave; Flexible Working; and Harassment and Bullying.

8.   The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter

We have signed up to the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, which is a declaration of support for, and set of commitments to, the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working in education.

The aim is for us to use the charter to:

- show staff that we take your wellbeing seriously.
- open a conversation with staff about your wellbeing and mental health.
- create a staff wellbeing strategy.
- create a wellbeing-focused culture.

More information can be found at the link as outlined in (Appendix 1.)

9. **Appendix 1 – Links to external organisations**

ACAS booklet on health and wellbeing that sets out the components for a healthy workplace

https://www.acas.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing

MIND gateway Mental Health at Work: your first stop for better mental health at work

https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk

Helping you / education support - Independent support for all working in education

https://www.educationsupport.org.uk

Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families /Schools in mind

https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges

Education staff wellbeing charter Gov.UK

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-staff-wellbeing-charter

Trade Unions:

https://neu.org.uk/

https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/

https://www.ascl.org.uk/

https://community-tu.org/

https://www.naht.org.uk/

https://www.unison.org.uk/