Colleague Wellbeing and Stress Management Policy 2022

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Contents

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Support the wellbeing of all staff to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- Provide a supportive work environment for all staff where they feel valued and a sense of belonging
- Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time
- Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- Avoid and address any issues arising from stress in the work place
- Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience
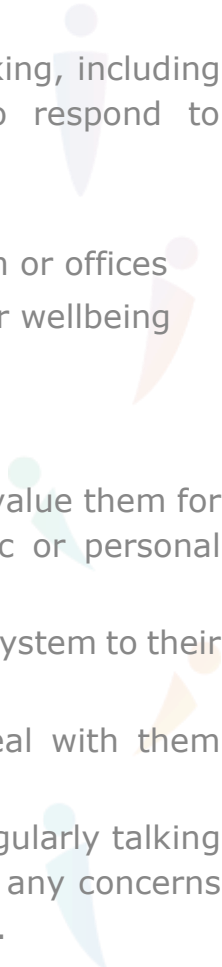- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims

2. Promoting well-being at all times

The trust is committed to maintaining and promoting positive well-being of all our staff, we are committed to developing an annual well-being plan that will offer practical support for physical, mental and financial well-being within the trust. The annual plan will be produced in line with our schools, to ensure we have a mixed approach to well-being and allow our academies/schools the autonomy to adapt support where needed and to ensure it is inclusive and embraces the diverse range of colleagues within SET. Within each area, there are specifics regarding expectations of colleagues and support available to tackle stress in the workplace.

2.1 Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance, or referring to another colleague if they are not able to do this themselves
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support, this includes if workload is causing stress

- Follow the trust's policy on out-of-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

2.2 Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their teams and value them for their skills, not their working pattern, demographic or personal relationships.
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their teams
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the trust's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, regularly talking to staff about their work/life balance, take seriously any concerns noticed or raised, referring to SLT or ELT as needed.
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and have the ability and confidence to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures.
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services that may help with colleague wellbeing
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods in line with the trust's absence policy
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings if any patterns emerge for a mutually agreed period.
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that may have influenced their resignation or influenced their decision to leave.

2.3 Role of senior staff

Senior staff are expected to:

- Create and sustain a strong culture of support, team-working and respect within the school which includes ensuring all staff feel that they belong, that they are respected and treated fairly

- Ensure workload impacts are carried out for roles to avoid unrealistic expectations being placed on colleagues which may lead to stress

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours

- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff

- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations

- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring

- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible

- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made

- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives

- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school

- Establish a clear policy on out-of-school hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders

- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated

- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload

- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities

- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organise extra support during times of potential stress, such as Ofsted inspections or regulatory visits

2.4 Role of the Executive Leadership Team (SET)

- The Leadership Team is expected to:
- Make sure the school/Academy is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly regarding workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

3. Managing specific wellbeing issues

The trust will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at work or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving reasonable staff time off to deal with a personal crisis;
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services and stress clinics;
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified;
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise;
- Supporting staff through referral to occupational health where concerns arise and with the agreement of the colleague;
- Directing staff to specific support areas or guidance regarding how to maintain a healthy work-life balance and avoid stress.

- At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

4. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

Appraisal policy

Behaviour policy

Capability procedure

Staff code of conduct

Pupil &
people
centred

Act with
integrity

Be
innovative

Be best
in class

Be
accountable