



Staff Well-Being Policy

Courtney Primary School

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Date: March 2018

Ratified by: FGB

Review Date: March 2021

Signed by:

Position:

1. Introduction

At Courtney Primary School, we place a high priority on maintaining the well-being of all employees. We recognise that people are our most precious resource and have put together this policy to help maintain and promote the health and well-being of all employees.

The School has a duty to have in place measures to mitigate, as far as practicable, factors that could harm employees' physical and mental well-being, which includes work-related stress. We recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' well-being and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level. The School is committed to fostering a culture of cooperation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

Health and Safety

The School has a Health and Safety Policy as well as a Safer Working Practices Policy which identify the responsibilities of different groups and individuals within the School.

2. What is Work-Related Stress?

What is Stress?

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as "the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them".

Primary Sources of Stress at Work

The Health and Safety Executive have identified the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:

- Demands – workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- Control – how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- Support – the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.
- Relationships – promoting positive working relationships to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- Role – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- Change – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

Possible Sources of Pressure

Potentially there are many aspects of both our working and personal lives that may place us under pressure. Whilst some degree of pressure can actually improve performance, each of us has a different ability to cope with it and this can fluctuate depending on our personal situation.

There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them. This policy recognises that there are many sources of work related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or pupils.

Some pressure is inherent in the very nature of the work we do but each job carries with it a performance level that the employee is expected to meet.

If a member of staff is considering taking up a post with additional responsibility, they must be realistic about their ability to cope with the extra pressure this would entail.

Signs of Stress

If pressures increase beyond an individual's ability to cope, it can then lead to stress. Individuals suffering from stress can be affected emotionally (eg irritability, depression, anger); physically (eg raised blood pressure, tiredness, headaches); mentally (eg concentration, memory); interpersonally (eg relationships become more difficult); or with day-to-day functioning (eg poor timekeeping, accidents, erratic attendance.).

We also need to be alert to the colleagues who may not show their stress in School so everyone thinks they are alright.

What to do about it?

If you feel the pressure of work or home life is beginning to affect your health or performance, it is important to take action early, especially if you cannot foresee it lightening in the near future. Whilst the School will try to be sensitive when external pressures are affecting a member of staff, it clearly must balance the needs of the individual with the needs of the children. It may be possible to make adjustments in the short or long term which will ease the pressure.

It is important that individuals attempt to pre-empt pressure and take steps themselves to avoid or reduce it before it becomes a problem. A good example of this is time management – it is really helpful to work backwards from deadlines so that spikes in pressure can be reduced.

We strongly encourage anyone suffering excessive stress, which is affecting their performance at School, to speak to someone in School who can help - ideally the Headteacher but it could be any colleague. We would also encourage an appointment to be made with a doctor.

School Measures to Enhance Well-being

Preventative and Supportive Measures at a School Level

The School will promote the well-being of staff members by:

- Creating a working environment where potential triggers of work-related stress are avoided, minimised or mitigated, as far as practicable, through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development.
- Protecting all staff from any harassment including behaviour directed against a person's gender, racial origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, religious conviction or any other personal characteristic.
- Ensuring that staff are made aware of periods when there are high demands on the office team and putting in place measures to minimise unnecessary pressure.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- Developing the competence of SLT so that they manage staff effectively and fairly.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the School.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Annually agreeing a Directed Time timetable for teachers.

The School will:

- Ensure issues relevant to staff well-being are on the School Development Plan and a standing item at Full Governing Body Meetings.
- Implement initiatives designed to encourage staff to achieve a balance between their work and home lives eg joint topic planning for year groups to reduce workload.
- Streamline our monitoring and feedback so that teaching staff are not overwhelmed and can prioritise next steps.
- Ensure that the focus of official lesson observations is clear and, where possible, advance notice is agreed.
- Organise regular whole team meetings with line managers to ensure all staff have a say in the direction of their roles and an opportunity to both celebrate successes and raise concerns.
- Ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend any whole-school well-being meetings.
- Use the leadership capacity to provide bespoke support.
- Support a consistent Behaviour Policy so that staff can teach.
- Provide a free Counselling Service.
- Include 'Thank you' messages in the Weekly Bulletin.
- Endeavour to share 1-2-1 roles between SEN TAs so that emotional pressure is reduced.
- Keep governors aware of any well-being issues and appoint a Well-being Link Governor.
- Timetable joint PPA time to allow collaboration.
- Display the RAP so all staff are aware of termly milestones and be clear on the School's current priorities.
- Carry out Return to Work interviews.
- Provide time for subject leaders to complete major tasks.
- Collect statements for affirmation envelopes for individual members of staff each term.

What you can do out of School

It is really important that when you are not in school you make sure that you look after your own well-being. Besides the usual advice on eating healthily, taking regular exercise and getting enough sleep, there are new pressures associated with the rise of digital communication. It is essential that you disconnect from email communication when you are not 'on duty'. Switch off the automatic alert and only look at emails intentionally and mindfully!

Roles and Responsibilities

Implementing the Policy

The Governors, Headteacher and SLT will:

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the school.
- Champion good management practices and the establishment of a work ethos within the School which discourages assumptions about long term commitment to working hours of a kind likely to cause stress and which enables employees to maintain a reasonable "work life balance".
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements.
- Encourage staff to be fully involved in the decisions of the school and can talk freely about any issues which impact on their ability to carry out their jobs.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and well-being.
- Treat individuals with consideration and dignity, and will promote a culture of mutual respect in the teams they manage. They will not permit unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- Take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.

Employees will:

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Co-operate with the School's efforts to implement the Well-being Policy, attending briefings and raise their own awareness of the causes and effects of stress on health.
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being.
- Take responsibility for their own health and well-being by adopting healthy lifestyles.
- Take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, thus helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

HT and SBM will:

- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress, referring them to the Counselling Service where appropriate.
- Enable the School to measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee well-being, such as: Sickness absence data, Staff turnover, exit interviews, Number of referrals to Occupational Health, Numbers of grievance and harassment cases.

The Governors will:

- Seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the School's Well-being Policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.
- Ensure that the Well-being Policy is kept under review and updated as appropriate.
- Receive a Well-being Report as part of the Annual Headteacher Report in Term 6.