



Staff Stress and Wellbeing Policy

Updated: September 2023
Next Review: September 2024

Rationale

Green Park Community Primary School places 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 ensure that employee well-being is regularly monitored and reviewed against the National Health and Safety standards.

Introduction

The school as employer has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It is also required 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. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the school's control.

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". 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 students. The Health and Safety Executive have produced a number of Management Standards which cover 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 – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment.

Control – i.e. how much say the person has in the way they do their work.

Support – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

Relationships – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Role – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.

Change – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

Statement of Intent

The Governors and the School's Leadership Team acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health, and that there is a persuasive business case as well as a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote employee well-being as far as reasonably practicable. The Governors and the School's SLT are 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. The Governors and the School's SLT recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' well-being, and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

The Staff Well-being policy expands upon the School's Health and Safety policy, setting out how the school will promote the well-being of employees 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 and staff development.
- Increasing SLT and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress.
- 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 health and well-being through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.

Responsibilities for implementing the Staff Well-being policy

The Governors, Head Teacher and the School's 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 through staff forums in which staff 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 reporting to them 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.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work-related stress.
- Encourage their staff to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the school to promote well-being and more effective working.
- 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 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 SLT will:

- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress, referring them to the School's Occupational Health advisers 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.
- Seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the School's Well-being policy and stress management arrangements

The Well-being team will:

- Ensure that the Well-being policy is kept under review and updated as appropriate, under the remit of the Health and Safety Committee.
- Develop an institution level risk assessment based on the Health and Safety Executive's "Management Standards for Work-related Stress".
- Coordinate with the HT to ensure that appropriate training is in place to support individuals
- Organise in conjunction with the staff, appropriate events and initiatives to promote health and well-being.
- Liaise with the staff on the development and implementation of the Well-being policy.

The Governing Body will:

- Determine the Well-being policy and recommend its adoption by the school.
- Monitor the implementation of the Well-being policy and the operation of associated arrangements such as the staff counselling service.
- Review the policy every three years following feedback from staff and SLT information provided by staff.

Arrangements for implementing the Well-being policy

Arrangements for well-being and stress prevention is made through good management practices.

These can include the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures.
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Training and Development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Promotion and reward procedures.
- Managing performance procedures
- Capability and absence management & return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness.
- Suitable adaptations for disability.
- Harassment and anti-bullying procedures.
- Procedures for communicating with employees on the work of the school and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements, and contact days with staff on maternity leave.

Monitoring and reviewing the Well-being policy.

The Well-being policy will be reviewed every three years by the Well-being team.

This review will involve feedback from staff.