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Staff Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

Approved by: GB

Date:

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:



Principles and Values

At Olchfa we believe and recognise that our staff are our most important resource and all are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the well-being of our staff and the well-being of our pupils, and that the culture and ethos of a school is determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

We believe that it is essential that all staff feel valued as a team member, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance. We embrace the many school practises that support staff health and well-being, to minimise the harmful effects of stress and ensure that there is cohesion in working towards health and well-being for all staff. This outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining staff well-being and it recognises that each individual member of staff and their circumstances are different but provides an overview of the basis on which everyone can contribute and expect to be treated.

Objectives of this policy

This policy aims to:

- Develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to pupils.
- Help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- Recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- Communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- Respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.



- Provide staff with training to deal positively with stressful incidents, and provide them with a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies via training.
- Improve staff development, cooperation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- Make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and wellbeing issues.
- Encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional well-being.
- Comply with statutory requirements, taking into account equality implications.
- Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through communication and consultation with staff and their representatives on health and safety matters.
- Develop an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional well being is taken seriously and in which staff are encouraged to seek any help and support they need.

Roles and responsibilities

The Leadership Team, governing body, teaching and non-teaching staff, will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, kindness and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and well-being are seen as important. We expect all staff to treat confidential information sensitively and in-line with school policy.

The governing body will:

- Take overall responsibility for implementing this policy.
- Adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns etc., where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.
- Ensure that clear procedures are in place that will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as the Capability or Disciplinary Policy.
- Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision making processes.



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- Review the demands on staff, and seek practical solutions wherever possible.
- Provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building, etc.

The headteacher will:

- Recognise the value of good management practice with systems in place to effectively manage staff and encourage a partnership approach with staff and workplace unions.
- Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- Promote a healthy workplace and practices that ensure that members of staff are able to develop a healthy mind.
- Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- Understand the differing needs of staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required. This may include support for pregnant women, older women during the menopause, and those with caring responsibilities.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems.
- Ensure that a return-to-work policy is established in the workplace that is supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work.
- Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.
- Ensure that all staff have access to regular training sessions on health and wellbeing in schools, including practical sessions to deal with mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues, and that they are given the appropriate time and resources to undertake this.
- Carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate.
- Demonstrate commitment, via systems and practises in place to employees maintaining a good work/life balance, and ensure that such practices are communicated to all staff.
- Manage pressures which may affect staff, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.



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- In consultation with the workplace unions, conduct an annual survey of staff, including a section on health and wellbeing, and share and act upon results.

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and pastoral staff and who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice. Support will be provided to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or support from the Local Authority e.g. counselling. During this time, the staff member's privacy and dignity will be respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

Senior Leaders / Line Managers will:

- Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work-related stress and other mental health problems.
- Ensure that the 'return-to-work' arrangements are supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work.
- Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.
- Attend regular training on health and wellbeing in schools.
- Communicate work-life balance practises to all staff and manage pressures which may affect staff and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.
- Demonstrate commitment to staff by encouraging a good work/life balance.

Members of staff should:

- Take care of their own health and safety at work and communicate with key staff when they think they are experiencing a problem.
- Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.



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- Consider wellbeing support mechanisms offered; e.g. counselling.
- Consider attending training on health and wellbeing issues where they feel that this is appropriate.
- Where possible, be watchful of any indication of changes of behaviour in colleagues and promote sympathetic alertness to colleagues who show signs of stress.
- Be committed to the ethos of staff well-being, keeping in mind the workload and well-being of others.
- Value all members of staff in the school, acknowledge the important role that each and every one takes, treat one another with honesty, respect and kindness.
- Contribute to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible, to enhance morale and effective team spirit.
- Develop and respect shared areas so that there is an appropriate space to relax.
- Continue to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours unless absolutely necessary.

COVID-19

The spread of COVID-19 and the response measures will impact on health and wellbeing within the school community. These go beyond the immediate risk of infection. Social distancing and self-isolation will impact on physical and mental and emotional health, while all members of the school community will be faced with the risk or reality of losing loved ones. The latest Welsh Government advice will always be consulted in order to promote emotional health and wellbeing.

<https://gov.wales/health-and-well-being-school-staff-childcare-providers-and-learners-coronavirus>

To support staff, the protective measures we have put in place are:

- Regular contact to all staff to keep in touch and check on their wellbeing.
- Keeping staff informed and updated with Welsh Government and Local Authority guidance.
- Access to external agencies such as counselling, mediation and occupational health services i.e. through the Local Authority or signposts to services.
- Risk assessments for vulnerable and shielding staff members.
- The continuation of professional learning opportunities for all staff.
- Sensitive planning and timetabling of staff rotas.



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Useful Websites

Acas - information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace

www.acas.org.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous - fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to recover from alcoholism.

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Boing Boing - resilience

<https://www.boingboing.org.uk/>

Carers UK - the voice of carers

www.carersuk.org

CBI - guidance to businesses on managing stress at work

www.cbi.org.uk

Department of Health - information on dealing with stress and mental health problems, including the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

www.gov.uk/government/organisation/department-of-health

Dignity at Work Partnership - information and guidance on bullying in the workplace

www.dignityatwork.org

Education Support is the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of education staff in schools, colleges and universities.

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/> Free 24/7 confidential helpline available to all staff 08000 562 561

The Equality and Human Rights Commission - the commission is working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

www.equalityhumanrights.com



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Gingerbread - gingerbread and One Parent Families have now merged to provide better support and a bigger voice to 1.8 million lone parents and their children throughout England and Wales.

www.gingerbread.org.uk

HSE - information on the stress management standards

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

Mind - mental health support

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Mindful Employer - information and guidance on managing stress and mental health in the workplace

www.mindfulemployer.net

NASUWT - information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing

<https://www.nasuwat.org.uk/>

NEU - information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing

<https://neu.org.uk/>

NHS 111 - National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters

<http://www.nhs.uk/111>

Princess Royal Trust for Carers - Here to improve carers' lives by fighting for equality and recognition for carers.

<http://www.carers.org>

Relate - UK's largest provider of relationship counselling and sex therapy.

<http://www.relate.org.uk>

Samaritans - offers confidential, non-judgemental support to individuals.

<https://www.samaritans.org/samaritans-cymru/>

Teacher Support Network



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https://www.cpdsewales.org.uk/cpd/content_detail.asp?contentid=370

Welsh Government - Staff Health and Wellbeing Handbook

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/staff-health-and-wellbeing.pdf>

Work Life Balance Centre - exists to help people restore control over their workload and working lives to enable them to cut down overworking and so make new decisions about how they spend their time.

<http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org>

World Health Organisation publication on work organisation and stress

http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/en/oehtstress.pdf

Young Minds - caring for the wellbeing of teachers and school staff

<https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/caring-for-the-wellbeing-of-teachers-and-school-staff/>