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Review
Resources, Audit and Risk
Committee



STAFF WELLBEING POLICY

THE TRUST MISSION STATEMENT

Inspired by the life of Christ we provide an exceptional education in our Catholic schools which enables our children:

- to fully embrace all possibilities
- to flourish
- to develop their faith

and therefore to choose a path that enables them to be a positive influence upon our world.

'Prepare the Way' The Gospel of St Mark 1:3

St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust
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1. Introduction

The Trust recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees ('staff'). We value every member of our community, recognising and valuing our staff as our most precious resource. We strive for our workforce to be professionally, personally and spiritually fulfilled, within a culture of collaboration and belonging.

This policy has been developed to promote positive wellbeing of all staff, whilst balancing the needs of employees and the Trust's educational, business and operational needs. It has been written with reference to our Trust values; by seeking to live these values everyone in the Trust will support each other's wellbeing:

- **Loving care** - forgiveness, empathy, inclusion, kindness, compassion
- **Learning together** – growing, leading, aspiring, enabling, understanding
- **Growing in faith** – Christ at the centre, service, stewardship

Directors understand that wellbeing and performance are linked. By facilitating a supportive working environment which promotes wellbeing, we can improve retention, reduce absenteeism and increase productivity. All of which are essential to our mission to provide an exceptional education in our Catholic schools.

This policy:

- sets out the responsibilities of various stakeholders for promoting positive staff wellbeing; the range of support available to help staff maintain their wellbeing; and our commitment to handling individual issues.
- sets out our commitment to careful analysis of wellbeing at organisation level, acknowledging that work-related stress can take many forms.
- does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2. Definitions

- **Wellbeing** is how we're doing as individuals, communities and as a nation, and how sustainable that is for the future. Wellbeing encompasses the environmental factors that affect us and how we function in society, and the subjective experiences we have throughout our lives¹.
- **Stress** is the body's reaction to feeling threatened or under pressure². [Stress] gives us a boost or motivates us to act quickly, but too much stress can affect mood, body and relationships. Long-term or severe stress can lead to feeling physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. The things that cause stress vary from person to person.
- **Mental health** is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community³. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.
- **Directed time** is the time during which teachers employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) must normally be available to perform any activities or tasks specified by their employer for 1,265 hours across the school year on days they're required to be available for work

¹ Definition from [What works wellbeing](#)

² Definition from the [National Health Service](#)

³ Definition from the [World Health Organisation](#)

(with this limit pro-rated for part-time teachers). In addition to the 1,265 hours, teachers must work additional hours as needed to effectively fulfil their professional duties⁴, particularly:

- planning and preparing courses and lessons.
- assessing, monitoring, recording and reporting on the learning needs, progress and achievement of assigned pupils.

3. The evidence on wellbeing

[What works wellbeing](#) have identified factors that have the greatest impact on an individual’s wellbeing. These help to distinguish between external factors that affect our lives, and our own internal psychological needs:



These factors illustrate the importance of individuals taking responsibility for their own wellbeing, as stated by the [Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \(ACAS\)](#), for example by:

- staying in contact with people – talk to people you work with or friends about how you're feeling.
- having a routine so you plan in advance what you'll be doing each day.
- keeping active and exercise.
- making time for activities you enjoy.
- reflecting on what helps you feel more positive and what does not.

These factors also contextualise the ‘duty of care’ placed on employers, who are expected to support to their employee’s health, safety and wellbeing. For example, by:

- making sure the working environment is safe.
- protecting staff from discrimination.
- treating mental and physical health as equally important.

⁴ Taken from the [Key for School Leaders](#)

4. Responsibilities

4.1 All staff

- Be aware of and act in accordance with this policy, alongside other Trust and school-level policies relating to their role.
- Take responsibility for their own wellbeing, including:
 - acting as suggested by ACAS in the previous section of this policy;
 - taking action on guidance provided to support their own wellbeing e.g. if required, attend appointments with Occupational Health.
- Adhere to any professional standards pertaining to their role, e.g. Teachers' Standards.
- Treat each other with kindness, empathy and respect, acting in line with the Trust values.
- 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.
- Follow the sickness absence policy and procedure to report any absences due to work-related stress or mental ill health.
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support.
- Engaging with opportunities to feedback on their wellbeing, for example staff surveys, discussions during appraisal meetings, and more frequently during line management meetings.
- Follow the Trust Email protocol.
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit.
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices.

4.2 Trust Board of Directors

- Have a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999. The Board of Directors will ensure that the Trust's policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.
- In addition to reducing safety risks, direct the Executive team to operate the Trust in a way which promotes positive staff wellbeing.
- Employ a Trust Head of Human Resources to ensure that there is in-house expertise to protect the wellbeing of staff, for example ensuring that line managers receive training and support in supporting individual members of staff.
- Ensure clear procedures are in place that will minimise levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as capability, disciplinary, sickness absence managements or staffing adjustments processes.
- Receive and challenge periodic reports on wellbeing of the Trust workforce from the Executive team.

4.3 Trust Executive team

- Take overall responsibility for implementing this policy.
- Ensure that employees' roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Ensure that the demands of jobs are reasonable, whilst recognising that many jobs have expectations defined at sector level, for example the Teachers' and Headteachers' Standards.
- Establish a Staff Charter setting out the following:
 - Prioritisation of high-quality professional development and performance development.
 - Calm and supportive working environments in our schools.
 - Clear channels of communication through which staff can express their views and raise concerns.
 - A commitment to effective communication e.g. through a staff email protocol.
 - A commitment to reducing unnecessary workload.
 - Trust-wide support for wellbeing of all staff.

- Appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of flexible working and part-time arrangements, where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the Trust.
- Monitor indicators of wellbeing across the Trust, including:
 - analysis of staff absence and staff turnover.
 - regular benchmarked staff surveys.
 - wellbeing discussions incorporated into appraisal meetings.
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of Trust Headteachers specifically.
- Listen to the views of Headteachers and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives.
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with Headteachers to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at Trust level.
- Provide advice and guidance to Headteachers about specific wellbeing issues.
- Consult with Trade union representatives, through a Joint Consultative Committee, on employment-related policies held at Trust level.
- Report periodically to Directors on staff wellbeing.

4.4 Headteachers

- Ensure that school-based staff are aware of this policy and implement it consistently.
- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff-
- Enact the Trust Staff Charter in their schools, by:
 - Promoting a culture of open communication.
 - Seeking to collate non-urgent communications to staff into weekly newsletters or bulletins.
 - Creating reasonable opportunities for staff to express views and discuss concerns in a supportive environment (where stress is not considered a weakness). For example, through a school staff wellbeing committee comprised of a cross-section of staff.
 - Implementing the Trust New staff induction policy.
 - Designing in-school Professional Development carefully, using the Trust Professional Development strategy.
 - Implementing Performance Development in their schools consistently, following Trust guidance and using related systems.
 - Supporting staff to manage pupil behaviour.
 - Reinforce the Email protocol with staff.
 - Making periodic use of the government's workload reduction toolkit, including ensuring that school-level policies such as Feedback and Marking are written with workload in mind.
 - Ensure that work is allocated appropriately between teams.
 - Ensuring that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring work, and that the format and quantity of information requested of staff during such work is reasonable.
 - Conducting Teacher Directed time calculations before the start of each academic year.
 - Providing staff with a calendar of events and key deadlines, to help them manage their workload.
 - Ensuring that their staff are aware of available Trust-wide support mechanisms for wellbeing.
 - Ensuring that their staff are aware of available school-specific support mechanisms for wellbeing e.g. Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) based at a given school.
 - Facilitating requests for flexible and / or part-time working from their staff, where these can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of their schools.
 - Signing up their schools to the government's [Education staff wellbeing charter](#).
- 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.
- Draw on the Trust Head of Human Resources for advice about specific wellbeing issues.
- 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.

- Follow the Trust absence procedure when there are absences due to work-related stress and other mental-health problems, including maintaining contact with staff while absent and facilitating a supportive return to work.
- 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.
- Work with the Trust Executive team to ensure that wellbeing is monitored across the Trust, specifically by:
 - Recording staff absence in the HR Portal consistently.
 - Encouraging staff who hand in their notice to complete the Trust exit survey as soon as possible, in order that reasons for leaving can be considered.
 - Promoting regular benchmarked staff surveys in their schools, including providing staff with time to complete them.
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated.
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections.

4.5 Line managers

- Be aware of the policies relating to staff wellbeing and implement them consistently.
- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills.
- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours.
- Ensure that staff understand their role within their team and receive the necessary information and support to do their job.
- Enact the Trust Staff Charter in their teams, by:
 - Promoting a culture of open communication.
 - Creating reasonable opportunities for staff to express views and discuss concerns in a supportive environment (where stress is not considered a weakness).
 - Periodically discussing individual Professional Development needs with staff, and ensuring that their staff receive the necessary training to enable them to do their job.
 - Implementing Performance Development consistently, following Trust guidance and using related systems.
 - Supporting staff to manage pupil behaviour.
 - Reinforce the Email protocol with staff.
 - Ensuring that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring work, and that the format and quantity of information requested of staff during such work is reasonable.
- 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.
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance.
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and ensure that concerns are escalated to your Headteacher (or Executive team in the case of central teams).
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help.
- Follow the Trust absence procedure when there are absences due to work-related stress and other mental-health problems, including maintaining contact with staff while absent and facilitating a supportive return to work.
- Provide support to staff by working with the Trust Head of Human Resources and the Trust's External Human Resources provider, and by making referrals to the Trust's Occupational Health provider where appropriate.
- 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.
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated.

- Engage in line management training, as and when requested.

5. Wellbeing support mechanisms

We will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives. Where possible, support will be given by line managers or Headteachers. This section outlines universal and targeted wellbeing support mechanisms available within the Trust.

5.1 Cycle to Work scheme

Cycle to Work is a government initiative which offers staff who want to cycle to work the opportunity to get a new bike and accessories, tax-free. This enables users of the scheme to save up to 42% on a bike and accessories. Interested staff can access the scheme by contacting their local finance officer.

5.2 Influenza vaccination

Staff are offered an annual flu vaccination. Staff will be contacted directly to ask whether they wish to take advantage of this offer. They will then be issued with a voucher which allows them to book an appointment at an approved pharmacy.

5.3 Employee assistance programme

The Trust has contracted Educator Solutions to provide all staff with an Employee assistance programme. Known as the 'Norfolk Support Line', this includes:

- Confidential access to fully qualified counsellors and support specialists 24/7, 365 days a year to discuss any emotional, personal or work-related issues.
- A range of self-help booklets.

Information for staff on how to access counsellors and support specialists will be displayed in the staff room of every school in the Trust.

5.4 Occupational Health support

Headteachers can contact the Trust's occupational health service via hr@sjbcmat.org.uk. Staff can also speak to their line managers if they would like to be considered for support from Occupational Health. The occupational health provider delivers a comprehensive service designed to help staff stay in work, or return to work, after experiencing health (including mental health) problems. This includes preparing medical assessments of individual's fitness for work following referrals from line manager and the HR team, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them retain employment.

Occupational Health professionals can aid in developing rehabilitation plans for employees returning to work after absences related to ill health, and work with GPs and line managers on designing jobs and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is successful.

A referral to Occupational Health will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their line manager. Discussions between employees and Occupational Health professionals are confidential, although those professionals are likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the Trust.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 Confidentiality of individual wellbeing matters

Information about individual's wellbeing is highly sensitive. Every member of staff is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required when dealing with information about wellbeing

whether they are supporting a colleague or because they are otherwise involved in the operation of a related policy or procedure.

A breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.

6.2 Exceptional circumstances

There are occasions when information about stress or mental wellbeing needs to be shared with third parties. For example:

- Where steps need to be taken to address work-related stress such as reallocating work within a team.
- Where medical advice is required on how to support a member of staff, address issues raised by work-related stress or address issues raised by mental ill health.
- Where allegations of harassment, bullying or other misconduct require a disciplinary investigation or proceedings to take place.
- Where a member of staff presents an immediate danger to themselves or others.

In these circumstances, wherever possible, matters will be discussed with the member of staff concerned before any action is taken.

7. Related other policies

The Trust takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer and a number of policies and procedures have been written in relation to this duty. This staff wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with these:

- Employee appraisal policy and procedure for support staff
- Employee appraisal policy and procedure for teachers
- Capability procedure
- Code of Conduct policy
- Dignity at Work policy
- Discretionary Leave of Absence policy
- Email protocol and guidance
- Employee disciplinary policy and procedure
- Equality and Diversity policy
- Flexible working policy
- Grievance resolution policy
- Health and safety policy
- Sickness absence policy and procedure
- Staff code of conduct
- Staffing Adjustment policy
- Whistleblowing policy

All Trust policies can be found on [our website](#).

This policy also relates to the following policies which exist at School level:

- Behaviour policy
- Feedback / Marking policy
- Visitor and Parent Code of Conduct policy

8. Related legislation

This policy has been written in relation to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Equality Act 2010