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Coton-in-the-Elms C of E Primary School

Wellbeing Policy

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1. Introduction and Purpose

Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School is committed to the physical and mental wellbeing of all its employees and this policy sets out how the organisation will manage those obligations and commitments. The organisation, including the Governing Board, recognises that performance and wellbeing, including stress, are linked and that striving for a reasonable balance between work life and home life, will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance and success.

Nationally the incidence of stress related illness at work has been increasing and this prompted the Health and Safety Executive to publish six management standards which they have identified as the key areas for focus in relation to work related stress. See appendix 1 for an explanation of these standards.

Through the consideration of the 6 management standards and this policy, with its associated control strategies, it is intended to reduce exposure and effects of excessive stress within the workplace.

2. Aims

The aims of this Wellbeing Policy are:

- To attract and retain the right people in the right jobs to deliver improved outcomes for young people
- To support all employees at the school to give their best in a supportive and positive environment
- To put into place measures to prevent and manage risks (Risk Assessments) to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and support
- To encourage employees to have honest conversations with their line manager when support is required
- To ensure line managers recognise the signs of a colleague who needs support and to know how to approach and manage the situation
- To reduce sickness absence by focusing on preventative approaches
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions, including flexible working where possible and appropriate, whilst maintaining focus on operational delivery and excellence in teaching and learning
- To acknowledge the need for the school leadership team (including the governing board), trade unions/staff representatives and employees to discuss wellbeing and workplace approaches
- To operate fairly and consistently complying with health and safety and equality legislation.



3. Responsibilities

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring relevant policies and procedures are implemented and followed including annual staff appraisals. The Head Teacher will be also be responsible for referring staff members to available support services.

The Head Teacher will also ensure:

- Application of the principles of Risk Assessment to all activities, to identify undue levels of stress and put in place control measures to mitigate the risk
- Monitor work related stress and carry out a stress management of any employee who has been identified as suffering from excessive stress at work
- Develop safe systems of work and introduce practical preventative measures where unacceptable risks of undue stress are identified.
- Provide appropriate training for teachers to help them recognise the symptoms of stress and give them practical guidance on the measures that may be taken to assist individuals suffering from potentially stress related symptoms.
- Provide information to all employees and training where appropriate, to enable them to recognise the symptoms of stress and the appropriate measures that may be taken – See appendix 2
- Monitor and evaluate absence levels and staff turnover due to stress related illness reporting annually to the Governing Board.
- Recommend reviews of this policy in light of any national directive.

Governing board

The governing board and senior leadership team will ensure that health and wellbeing are a primary consideration and will ensure that the school fulfils its legal duty of care to employees and review the effectiveness of this policy. The Governing Board will work closely with the Head Teacher to ensure all relevant aspects of the Managers' and Employees' Guidelines are implemented.

Line Managers

Line managers at Coton-in-the-Elms school must familiarise themselves with the relevant organisational policies to ensure measures are in place to minimise the risk to employee wellbeing. Line managers can reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring employees understand their role, what is expected of them and how standards will be measured;
- Fostering a team culture where open communication is respected and encouraged, and everyone's contributions are valued equally leading to high motivation and morale
- Ensuring employees know who to approach with concerns about their work or wellbeing
- Ensuring workstations and resources are appropriate and fit for purpose



- Providing the necessary support with work direction and clarification, providing regular feedback and praise and addressing individual workload to ensure a fair and reasonable balance of work between the team
- Taking responsibility for following the relevant policies when required and taking decisive management action to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing e.g. prompt referrals to Occupational Health and conducting risk assessments.

Employees

Everyone has a personal role and responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing to ensure they attend work on a regular basis to fulfil their contract of employment. Employees can do this by adopting good health behaviours (e.g. in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the school if they believe that work or the work environment poses a risk to their wellbeing.

Coton-in-the Elms school is committed to supporting disabled employees and employees with disabling conditions by working with them to remove any disadvantage which may be a barrier for them. Any personal information disclosed about health and wellbeing will be treated sensitively.

Occupational Health Service

Line managers and employees can contact the organisation's occupational health service (At the time of Policy review) on:

Telephone 01629 536969 / sandy.mckay@derbyshire.gov.uk.

A comprehensive occupational health service is available for employees who are attending work or are absent due to illness. Occupational Health support the organisation's approach to wellbeing by providing:

- Individual consultations
- Pre-employment screening
- Fitness for work assessments
- Vaccination service
- Training for line managers
- Advice on return to work plans and rehabilitation back into work

If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager. A referral to occupational health will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with his/her manager. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although a report will be provided to the Head Teacher/ employer so they have advice from a medical professional on how to best support the employee.

Support for healthy minds

The school offers a counselling service providing any employee who is struggling with mental health with access to professionals who can support them appropriately. Online support is available from a variety of sources. Staff should speak to the Head Teacher in the first instance if online services do not provide a realistic answer to their worries.



5. Healthy workplace

Employees that have good wellbeing and are engaged with the organisation will go the extra mile, give their best, have less sickness absence and be committed to their job and their employer.

Coton-in-the-Elms school is committed to implementing the following factors for wellbeing:

- Values-based work environment and management style with unity of purpose, and being treated with dignity and respect
- Line managers who are well trained in people management skills and confident in their approach
- Positive working relationship with good teamworking, open communication, co-operation and flexibility
- A reasonable balance between work and home life
- The ability to negotiate workload and pace without fear of reprisal
- Managers who promote an attendance culture and know how to use appropriate health services (such as Occupational Health) and manage common health problems (such as mental health and musculoskeletal disorders).
- Personal growth in terms of career and skill development

Changes everyone can make

There are small changes that all individuals can make to improve their wellbeing. Employees at Coton-in-the-Elms school are encouraged to consider the Management Standards suggestions in Appendices 1 and 2 of this policy.

6. Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an organisation's commitment to take account of its economic, social and environmental impacts in the way it operates, while improving the quality of life of the workforce, the local community and society.

CSR activities demonstrate the organisation's commitment to its values, enhances the relationship between the organisation and its employees, boosts morale, attracts and retains employees and improves the organisation's reputation. This leads to an increased sense of wellbeing at work.

7. Policy framework

This wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures including but not exclusively:



- Managing Attendance at Work
- Flexible Working
- Time Off

- Health and Safety
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Appraisal Policy

8. Version Control

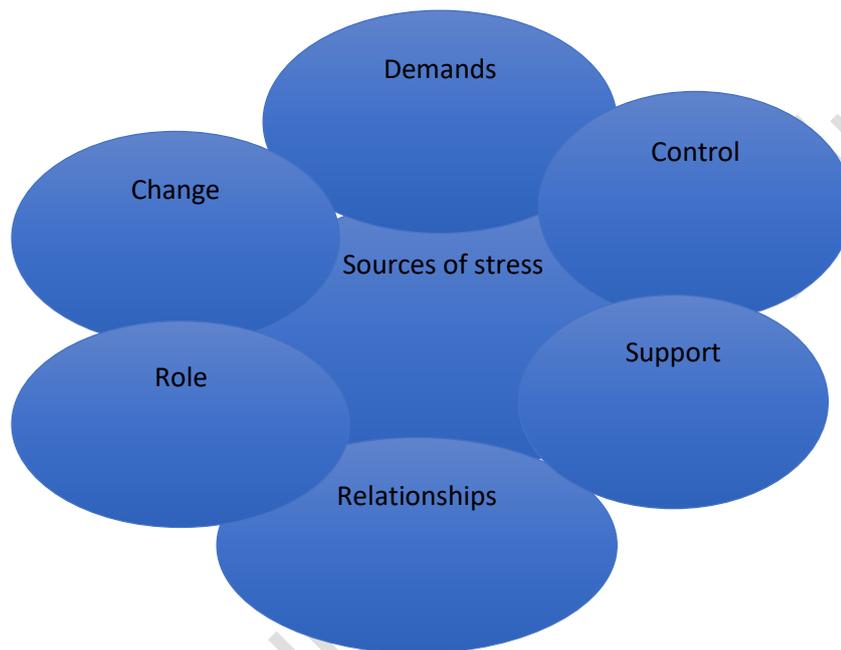
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Appendix 1

The 6 Management Standards



Demands – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment

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

Support – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues

Relationships – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour

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



Change – how organisations change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

Practical examples within each category are given on the generic risk assessment of the Head Teachers and Managers Guidelines (Section 13, page 9)

Appendix 2

Wellbeing at Work Guide for managers

Stress can be described as a situation that arises when you feel unable to cope with whatever is demanded of you. Everyone responds to pressure differently so what may cause one person stress, will have no impact on another. Feeling under stress for prolonged periods can damage your health.

Stress triggers at work can include:

- a meeting with your line manager or Head Teacher
- working to a tight deadline
 - having a heavy workload
- a difference of opinion with a colleague
- completing a task for the first time
- giving a presentation
- the computer not working properly
- challenging pupils

Aspects of the workplace can also cause stress including an inadequate workstation, feeling of uncertainty, lack of support, working long hours with no breaks, unrealistic demands and repetitive tasks.

Effects of Stress

The effects of stress can be experienced and observed as follows:

Physically: a range of symptoms including headaches, back and neck pain, stomach problems, dry mouth, sweating, not being able to sleep and fatigue

Emotionally: agitation, frustration, anxiety, irritable, feeling threatened, losing temper, feeling high or low

Behaviourally: not eating regularly and making unhealthy choices, drinking too much alcohol, smoking, aggression, not being bothered, being distant or offhand with colleagues



Individual response to stress

Not everyone responds to stress in the same way; it is an individual's response to pressure and their ability to cope with that that will determine their level of stress. Here are some factors which influence our susceptibility to stress:

- coping mechanisms
- emotional stability
- lifestyle and approach to work
- previous experiences
- self-confidence

Recognising stress in colleagues

If a colleague is experiencing stress, you may observe the following:

- changes in their normal behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn irritable or unpredictable, signs of tiredness, crying, swearing or emotional outbursts
- changes in their work output, motivation levels and ability to concentrate/ focus
- having increased short term absence
- changes in eating habits

Tips for managers

Line managers are well placed to identify signs of stress in their colleagues and these tips provide good advice for minimising the likelihood of an individual becoming absent due to stress:

- adopt a strategic approach to wellbeing with the leadership team sending a clear message that wellbeing matters and everyone will be supported to give their best
- create a culture where employees feel comfortable to talk with you if they feel stressed
- be proactive if you recognise the signs of stress in a colleague. Speak with them privately and ask if everything is ok
- ensure they know you will support them and remind them they can come and talk to you at any time
- carry out a stress risk assessment if appropriate to identify the workplace stressors and record actions to address them
- utilise the occupational health and counselling services available to you; employees can access these on a self or management referral basis. They provide specialist advice and support and the earlier they are engaged, the less likely an issue is to escalate



- encourage employees to look after themselves and support each other. When you meet with your staff for one-to-ones, make sure you discuss their personal wellbeing and any concerns they have about workload, deadlines or personal issues which are impacting on work.
- actively promote the adoption of healthier working habits and approaches to wellbeing. This could be by encouraging employees to swap their caffeinated or fizzy drink for water, eat healthy or fruit snacks, to take a lunch break, to get outside for some fresh air or a short walk at break or lunchtime or to use their annual leave to rest and recuperate after busy periods.

NB: This is not legal advice and is intended as a guide only, it is not a substitute for obtaining appropriate legal advice.