

# **STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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This policy has been implemented following consultation with the recognised trade unions and the review of its implementation and impact will also include the recognised trade unions.

### **Stress Management Policy**

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) place a high value on providing a supportive working environment and on maintaining the health, safety, and welfare of its staff at work. It recognises that their wellbeing is important to the school's performance and to the education of the children whom we serve. BDAT therefore, takes positive measures to encourage staff to be in the best health that they can be, both physically and mentally. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and working towards eliminating workplace stressors.

Primarily this policy is concerned with stress problems arising from the working environment, but we recognise that staff's personal life may also lead to them suffering from stress, such as, for example, bereavement or separation. The academy or central Trust office is committed to implementing this policy for all staff in order to enable individuals to cope successfully with the demands and pressures in their lives, whatever the reasons might be for them suffering from stress, by providing appropriate support to staff.

For the purpose of this policy, health and wellbeing is taken to include the promotion of positive mental health of all staff, and the prevention and management of problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

This policy has been provided as a Trust level resource for BDAT and does not form part of an employee's terms and conditions of employment.

### **Definition of stress**

Stress is experienced when people cannot cope with the pressures and demands placed upon them. All work has its pressures and people vary in their capacity to cope with different types of pressure. Some levels of pressure, even when high, can be motivating and challenging. Pressures that can be responded to effectively are likely to lead to job satisfaction. However, pressures at a level where an individual cannot cope, or even too little pressure or challenge, are likely to result in stress.

The effects of long-term stress can be displayed in a physical, intellectual, emotional and/or behavioural manner. These can include headaches, crying, nausea, tiredness, palpitations, worrying, making mistakes, anger, irritability, and job dissatisfaction.

There are a number of factors which employers can control and influence when it comes to mental health at work, and which can contribute to stress. These are:

- Workload
- Work variety
- Work relationships
- Involvement
- Culture of disclosure
- Communication
- Bullying

**BDAT will deliver this policy through:**

1. Improving the organisational environment through effective and sensitive management; developing working practices and procedures that reduce the factors which may lead to stress in the workplace and addressing the underlying causes of workplace stress.
2. Implementing the HSE Management Standards for Work-Related Stress which provide a yardstick against which to measure performance in tackling the causes of work-related stress.  
See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm>
3. Promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, including the use of risk assessments and health needs analysis to identify and reduce hazards impacting on the health of the workforce.
4. The use of staff consultation to monitor and identify areas of the school where interventions could prevent or reduce health problems.
5. Providing consistent, equitable and effective procedures to prevent and manage workplace health and well-being problems.
6. Providing opportunities for staff to maintain and promote their health and wellbeing.
7. BDAT is committed to monitoring levels of staff ill-health and absence on a regular basis, paying particular attention to workplace stress.
8. BDAT accepts its duty to monitor and address levels of stress experienced by Head teachers/Principals.

This policy should be seen as overarching other policies that are in place and can be considered as part of the school's positive approach to health and wellbeing.

These include:

- Capability policy
- Equality policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Flexible Working policy
- Leave of Absence policy
- Maternity, Paternity, Adoption Leave policy
- Professional Development policy

**Principles**

The Trust will ensure that all staff who experience health problems are treated fairly, sensitively, with respect and in accordance with the academy's equal opportunities policy.

The Trust will aim to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach

The Trust will consult with trade union representatives on any proposed action relating to the prevention of ill health, stress and mental health problems.

Open communication will be encouraged and promoted, whilst the Trust will ensure that staff confidentiality is respected.

The Trust will provide access to training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices.

### **Shared Responsibility**

- The prevention of stress can only be achieved through recognising that the promotion of positive health is a shared responsibility.
- The Trust is a significant employer in the community and has a responsibility to ensure the continual development of a safe and healthy work environment and to create the conditions that enable staff to maintain and improve their health.
- The Trust's management team has a responsibility to ensure that the promotion of the health of staff becomes a key part of the organisation's culture and that this is reflected in day-to-day work practices.
- Staff have a responsibility for their own health and safety, and that of others, for developing an awareness of the factors that contribute to ill health, and for participating in the efforts to raise health standards.

### **Responsibilities**

Senior Managers and the governing body are expected to:

- Demonstrate their commitment and support to this policy by ensuring that the principles and approaches to managing health and wellbeing are implemented.
- Reflect the policy's principles and approaches within their management practice.
- Conduct Risk Assessments on workplace stress based on the HSE Stress Management Standards, and implement the recommendations which arise.
- Monitor the level of workplace stress in consultation with trade union representatives.

Line managers are expected to:

- Reflect the policy's principles and approaches within their management practice.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure that staff are provided with clear and realistic objectives and that performance is managed effectively and fairly.
- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments/health needs analysis within their areas and provide modification of work where it is known staff are stressed.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within the workplace.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.

Staff are expected to:

- Support the school's Health and Wellbeing policy and initiatives.
- Raise issues of concern with either their line manager, Safety Representative, occupational health, or HR team.
- Seek to safeguard their own health and safety, and that of others.

## Support

In order to support this policy, the following Human Resources services are available to managers and staff.

Fusion HR – to provide advice, guidance and training on health and wellbeing issues and what steps the academy and/or staff can take (tel. 01924 827869).

When making proposals to prevent workplace stress the Trade Union Safety Representative will be consulted.

Training will be provided for all managers in dealing with workplace stress, implementing this Policy and in identifying any warning signs.

Commitment to consult with specialist agencies when dealing with specific cases.

### Other sources of information:

HSE website: [www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

[HSE Stress at Work Website](#)

[HSE Stress Management Standards](#)