

STAFF WELLBEING 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.

Staff Wellbeing 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 Trust'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 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 the adverse reaction that people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand place on 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. Monitoring levels of staff ill-health and absence on a regular basis, paying particular attention to workplace stress.

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

These include:

- Capability Policy (to manage, where appropriate, those whose workloads are causing difficulties)
- Staff Attendance Management Policy (containing appropriate procedures for managing stress-related absence)
- Staff Complaints and Grievance Procedure (for those staff who wish to make a complaint about stress inducing behaviour)
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (to manage members of staff who are conducting themselves in a manner that might cause stress or act in contravention of this policy)
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Staff Discretionary Leave of Absence Policy
- Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, and Shared Parental 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, and for developing an awareness of the factors that contribute to ill health, and for participating in the efforts to raise the level of staff wellbeing. Staff are able to raise any issues relating to workplace stress to the appointed health and safety representatives, their line manager, occupational health, or HR.

Responsibilities

Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- 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
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Follow the school or Trust's policy on out-of-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit

- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

Senior staff are expected to:

- Identify all workplace stressors, to conduct risk assessments to identify the risks, eradicate them and to review them regularly.
- Implement recommendations developed from the risk assessments within their remits.
- Ensure specific and clear communication with employees on any changes that may affect them personally.
- Ensure that there is a zero-tolerance culture on bullying and harassment.
- Consult with workplace counsellors or specialist agencies when dealing with specific cases.
- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff. Ensure employees are able to access counselling or other appropriate forms of support when applicable.
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations. Compile sickness absence statistics to measure the effectiveness of the policy.
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- 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
- Establish a clear policy on out-of-school hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- 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
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

The governing board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- 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
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- If a member of staff is absent due to stress or other wellbeing issues, then the absence procedures set out in the Staff Attendance Management Policy must be followed.

Support

In order to support the implementation of 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

[HSE Stress at Work Website](#)

[HSE Stress Management Standards](#)