

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

For Employees and our Young People

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Contents

Purpose and scope	3
Relevant additional policies, law and guidance	3
Lead Members of Staff	3
Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing	3
At our Academies we:	3
We promote a mentally healthy environment through:	4
Mental Health and the Curriculum	4
Targeted support	4
Targeted Support: Trust Early Help offer	4
Signposting	5
Identifying needs and Warning Signs.....	5
Working with other agencies and partner	5
Training	6
Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing	6
Promoting wellbeing at all times.....	6
Role of all employees	6
Role of line managers.....	6
Role of senior staff.....	7
Role of the Local Governing Body (LGB) and Trust.....	7
Support: managing specific mental health / wellbeing issues.....	8
Mental Health and Wellbeing - Current Initiatives	8
Links to Employee Wellbeing resources:	8
Links to Employee and Student Wellbeing resources:.....	9
Monitoring and review	9

Purpose and scope

As a Trust we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our young people and employees. Our aim is to create a wellbeing-focussed culture across the Trust. We have a holistic approach to wellbeing, ensuring a nurturing, supportive, and caring ethos. We endeavour to always be understanding, kind and respectful, valuing all members of our academies and Trust communities.

Mental Health and wellbeing is an area we are continuing to strengthen, recognising that supporting wellbeing is not a fixed goal, but requires ongoing attention and development. To support this ongoing work, we have established a Wellbeing Working Group. This group brings together representatives from across the Trust to help shape, strengthen, embed our approach to wellbeing; the group helps guide our approach, ensuring it remains thoughtful, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our communities.

Relevant additional policies, law and guidance

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following additional documents:

- Absence management Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Appraisal Policy
- Capability procedure
- Equality Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy

Lead Members of Staff

At our Trust, we recognise that promoting the mental health and wellbeing of our young people and employees is a shared responsibility across the entire Trust community. This commitment is actively supported by dedicated leads at Trust level, and championed within each academy by Principals and their Senior Leadership Teams

Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing

We believe that positive mental health is everyone's responsibility and concern. We recognise all members of the Trust community have an important role to play.

We know and understand that everyone's life experiences are different and that all young people and adults can feel vulnerable at times, anyone may need additional support at any time in their lives.

We offer an open and non-judgmental approach which enable our young people and employees to become more resilient, knowing how and when to ask for help at a pace that is safe for them to do so.

At our Academies we:

- Have Pastoral and Support teams that offer planned interventions and support on a daily basis.
- Have a dedicated team of Teachers and Support staff in the Academies and Trust to help pupils feel comfortable in sharing any worries or concerns
- Support our young people in developing emotional resilience

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Ensuring that both academic and non-academic achievements are recognised
- Giving our young people a sense of belonging
- Offering support
- Provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of self-worth
- Active student councils to promote pupil voice.
- Offer appropriate support services both internal and external for pupils, students, and staff

Mental Health and the Curriculum

Some young people can often have negative experiences of education. We aim to ensure the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to keep mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental of our personal development and RSE curriculum which is taught across all year groups.

The specific content of lessons is delivered against the National Curriculum using the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in full, in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

Academies will offer support to young people which may include:

- Access to Academy counsellor
- Transition support
- Bereavement and Loss
- Managing feelings
- Alert programme
- Anxiety Management
- Building self-esteem and self-worth
- Helping to change behaviour
- Positive Behaviour Plans
- Support group for parents
- Inviting outside agencies in to support with specific interventions.

Targeted Support: Trust Early Help offer

The Trust is committed to providing timely, targeted support through its Early Help offer, ensuring pupils and families can access the right help at the earliest opportunity. This includes coordinated support from a range of services to address emerging needs before they escalate. Our Attendance and Welfare Team, including education welfare officers, counsellors, and mentors, work closely with academies to support attendance, emotional wellbeing, and safeguarding. Referrals can be made for pupils requiring additional advocacy or therapeutic support, with interventions tailored to individual circumstances. This proactive approach promotes resilience, emotional health, and overall family welfare.

[Early help - Learning Community Trust](#)

Signposting

We will ensure our young people, employees and parents are aware of what support is available within our academies and Trust and how to access further support. We can provide this signposting through verbal communication, emails, letters home or through academy communication platforms (MCaS/Dojo for example) and websites.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

We will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate Including:

- PASS (Pupils attitudes to school and self)
- Student and Staff Wellbeing Survey
- CPOMs safeguarding / behaviour incident recording facility

Behaviour is a form of communication and behaviours of concern happen for a reason. Possibly identifying factors may include but are not exclusive to:

- Attendance concerns
- Physical indicators
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Approach to learning
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Possible warning signs can include:

- Changes to eating/sleeping habits
- Being social withdrawn
- Changes to activity and mood
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or of failure
- Talking about self-harm and or suicide
- An increase in non-school attendance or lateness
- Repeated physical pain with no evident cause.

Working with other agencies and partner

As part of our targeted provision, the academies and Trust community will work with other agencies to support our young people's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- BEEU (CAMHS)
- STARS (substance misuse)
- Counselling services
- Strengthening Families

- Family Solutions
- Clinical Psychologist
- Virtual school

Training

Employees receive regular updates and training on recognising and responding to mental health concerns as part of their ongoing child protection training, helping them to safeguard young people effectively. Designated Safeguarding Leads benefit from regular networking sessions and targeted training, while all staff have access to a wide range of online courses through the National College. As a Trust, we are committed to raising awareness and ensuring consistent, high-quality training across all our academies.

Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing

As a Trust we aim to:

- Support the wellbeing of all employees to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- Provide a supportive work environment for all employees
- Acknowledge the needs of employees, and how these change over time
- Allow employees to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- Help employees with any specific wellbeing issues they experience
- Ensure that employees understand their role in working towards the above aims

Promoting wellbeing at all times

We monitor employee wellbeing throughout the school year through structured line manager meetings, staff appraisals, and Senior Leadership Team discussions. Insights gathered from these processes help us to continually refine our employee wellbeing programme and strengthen our efforts to build a culture of wellbeing across the Trust.

Role of all employees

All employees are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of employees
- Support other employees if they become stressed, providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other employees know when they need support
- 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 individual's wellbeing

Role of line managers

Line managers are expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with their employees and value them for their skills and contribution to the Academy and wider Trust
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to employees
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using academy/Trust policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to employees about their work/life balance
- Make sure new employees 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
- Stay connected with employees if they're absent for long periods
- Manage and monitor employee sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support employees back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning employees to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

Role of senior staff

Senior employees are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other employees and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for employees
- Monitor the wellbeing of employees through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on employees, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are accurate and up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and employees being consulted before any changes
- Listen to the views of employees and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives with all members of employees to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the academy/Trust
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of employees are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines, and events so that employees can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote employee wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

Role of the Local Governing Body (LGB) and Trust

The LGB and Trust is expected to:

- Make sure the Academy and Trust is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving employees a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the Principal or Headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote employee wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with employee wellbeing in mind, particularly in regard to workload

- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from employees as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that employees are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

Support: managing specific mental health / wellbeing issues

The Academy and Trust will support and discuss options with any employee that raises wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at the academy (place of work) or in their personal lives. Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. As a Trust / academy we have many mechanisms in place to support:

- Carefully considering all requests of employee time off to deal with a personal crisis
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme open to all and information accessible from the Principal's office in hard or soft copy
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassessing workload and/or time management advice; deciding what tasks to prioritise

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of our employees will be maintained.

Mental Health and Wellbeing - Current Initiatives

We take employee wellbeing very seriously and have a programme of support in order to improve:

- employee health and wellbeing
- productivity
- employee engagement and corporate responsibility
- recruitment and retention
- sickness absence

The programme consists of such initiatives as:

- Staff Wellbeing working party led by The Director of People and Senior Mental Health Lead
- Employee Assistance Programme confidential counselling service
- Staff room 'Shout Out' board
- Employee socials

Links to Employee Wellbeing resources:

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/?page=1>

https://telfordeducation.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/TAWA02/Shared%20Documents/Staff%20Resources/Whole%20School/STAFF%20WELLBEING/Staff_Wellbeing-Pack_.zip?csf=1&web=1&e=R4oxHh

[Resources to support staff members' mental health | Mind - Mind](#)

[Publications | Mental Health Foundation](#)

[NHS England » Wellbeing conversations](#)

Links to Employee and Student Wellbeing resources:

<https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources/>

Monitoring and review

The Trust's Director of People will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the Trust and the academies.