



George Fentham Endowed School
Hampton in Arden

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Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Mental health can be defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential and can cope with the normal stresses of everyday life, working purposefully and productively and contributing to their own community.

Our staff are the biggest asset we have at school; and their own biggest asset is their health and well-being. This policy aims to outline the ways in which we can work together to make sure our school is a safe, compassionate, and happy place to work. If this can be achieved, then individual wellbeing, through personal fulfilment and professional identity, will be enhanced. Consequently, and subsequently, our pupils and our community will also benefit.

We often spend more waking hours in school than at home, so it is important that we can have ownership of many of the decisions that affect us and that we have in our working lives. We can do this by taking responsibility for these actions and approaching the tasks in our own way.

All our work should be healthy, safe and supportive, and governors have a responsibility to ensure our practices contribute to staff well-being. This includes monitoring staff absence and regularly requesting feedback from staff governors about well-being. Governors recognise the importance of the wellbeing of staff in our school.

We promote a holistic, proactive approach to managing health and rehabilitation issues at work, with everyone working together, Head Teacher, staff, leadership team, governors, HR human resources, occupational health and health and safety professionals, to:

- tackle the causes of workplace injury and ill health, including stress and anxiety.
- address the impact of health on employees' capacity to work, providing support for those with disability, health conditions and rehabilitation.
- promote healthier lifestyles and well-being to support the general health of the team.

Confidentiality can be important in establishing trusting relationships, providing the safety of the person, or others, is not compromised. However, where possible, staff are encouraged to share their mental and/or physical needs in an open way with colleagues, to maximise support networks available. This practice also helps to de-stigmatise issues related to health conditions in the workplace.





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Mental Health and Well-being Lead

All staff should champion good mental health, but it is important for the staff to have a named person to maintain the importance of mental health issues and to support and nurture their interest. This role will be to champion mental health for the school community. The role will include being a 'listening ear'; acting as a signpost for other services or professionals, relaying ideas and information to senior staff that could further improve wellbeing in school; having input into school improvement plans to ensure that mental health promotion has a key place; help to reduce barriers to mental health in school by promoting positive language in relation to mental health. Our current Mental Health and Well-being Lead is Karen Chamberlain.

School Priorities

To support the well-being of our staff our priorities are:

- Language – to be mindful of the language we use to talk about mental health at all times.
- Communication – to encourage individuals to communicate their needs and concerns.
- Relationships – to promote good relationships between staff
- Kindness – to promote the importance of treating people as we would want to be treated ourselves.
- Tolerance – for different ways people think and act, providing our goal of ensuring good outcomes for pupils is not affected.
- Respect – for how a staff member may want to manage their own mental health or well-being.
- Harmony – to promote ways of being with each other, including times when opinions differ, or when a person becomes upset with another.
- Equality – to ensure all staff having an equal right to wellbeing in the workplace.
- Trust – to develop a supportive process in which staff can trust, for the continued wellbeing of staff.
- Empowerment – to ensure staff members feel a part of the decisions which affect them. This includes consultation on key decisions which affect individual staff and a genuine right to reply and appeal on decisions which may have an adverse effect.
- Balance – to recognise the demands of workload on staff and to find ways to ensure a good balance over a school year, between work that is necessary for good outcomes for pupils and time to enjoy when not at work.





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School Strategies:

- We all talk to each other and are generally very good at being aware of each other's well-being needs and offering support.
- If someone notices someone isn't 'quite right' but they don't feel they can approach them they'll flag it to a teacher or colleague who is closer to them.
- Inset Days and staff meetings offer a variety of time for shared learning and mutual support.
- Support given to staff to help balance teaching outcomes across the day/week to reduce marking workload.
- Staff offered time for professional development.
- We share a philosophy of education and have mutual school values and ethos, centred around our commitment to Christian Values, SMSC and BLP.
- We value our diverse characters and personalities with a shared dedication and desire for the very best for the children in our school.
- Staff ideas for change are listened to and considered respectfully.
- Staff can communicate concerns in person, email or text.
- Staff supported to debrief and process occasional incidents of challenging behaviour from pupils.
- We work together towards a school improvement plan.
- Regular briefings and communication accessible to all staff via staff meetings, emails and the staff room wall!
- Shared events, such as end of year parties, trim and tree evenings, governor's teas.

How will we know we are successful?

- Lower sickness rate amongst staff for minor illness.
- Occupational Health offered to support our staff to return to work or manage health conditions.
- Many individuals are able to talk openly about their mental health/and or personal situations and find solutions to aid their wellbeing.





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- Staff are able to be honest when they are finding a professional situation difficult, knowing colleagues will try to offer solutions.
- Good staff retention
- Staff generally feel valued, as reported in staff survey.

What would we want to happen to further improve staff wellbeing?

- *To ensure staff workload is constantly reviewed, enabling all staff to meet their statutory duties and achieve a good work life balance.*
- *To continue to prioritise cover and support to enable all staff to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the best of their abilities e.g. additional subject leader time.*
- *To ensure any deadlines are published well in advance to enable staff to plan and manage their workload.*

(Suggested by LMT & to be discussed with staff during consultation on this policy JG)

Solihull Local Authority

It is worth remembering that the employee assistance programme 'Confidential Care', is a free, confidential service offering specialist counselling and support to employees 24 hours a day, online or by telephone. The number is 0800 085 1376, or online is well-online.co.uk.

In addition, the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service is funded by the Department for Work & Pensions so there is no charge for this service. The service is 100% confidential and can be accessed face-to-face or over the phone. They promise to get back to you within one working day.

hello@able-futures.co.uk

www.able-futures.co.uk

Freephone 0800 321 3137 8am-10.30pm Monday to Friday

Other useful websites may be:

www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk

www.Mindfulteachers.org

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxietydepression/improve-mental-wellbeing/

www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling

Mrs K Chamberlain

November 2021

Approved by Governors

January 2022





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