

# **Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing**

## **Staff Wellbeing**



**Bottisham Village College**

**The policy document** is the outcome of a collaboration between Bottisham Village College and the CAMH Learning and Development team, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust.

It is intended as a template for other secondary schools and will therefore be made available across the county. Recommendations for adaptations for Primary Schools will be made available in due course.

However, it is not meant to be adopted without due process and careful and thorough consideration of the individual school's needs in relation to the emotional wellbeing and mental health of its pupils and staff.

It is important that it embodies and reflects the school's own culture since it will provide a window through which others will understand its ethos and approach in relation to these issues.



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## Section G: Staff Wellbeing

### Purpose and Principles

The wellbeing of professionals working within the college is of paramount importance. Staff are the most important resource at the college. Without a personal sense of wellbeing, it is difficult to nurture wellbeing in others. Employers have a legal "duty of care" towards employees which requires them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of their staff. Wellbeing at work is therefore essential if we are to reach our best potential and help students to do the same. There is a definite correlation between positive staff, student achievement and a school's continued improvement.

Managing staff wellbeing and promoting a healthy work-life balance will help attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for an outstanding education system. Supporting wellbeing of staff will:

- Reduce staff absenteeism and turnover
- Develop a more motivated workforce with high morale, able to deliver a challenging education for our students
- Improve team work, staff development and co-operation
- Recognise that excessive hours of work can reduce staff effectiveness
- Support positive communication and therefore positive outcome
- Provide positive role models for students

Causes of negative stress at work can vary widely and include:

- Physical and emotional demands of the job
- Parent's behaviour
- Work load
- Work place bullying
- School environment
- Lack of professional development and learning opportunities
- Low morale
- Excessive change
- Culture of blame
- Striving for perfection
- Poor communication

There are many positive outcomes for staff in their varying roles and responsibilities. The dynamics between the highs and lows throughout the year are important in the overall balance of jobs staff do.



# Actions

## Nurturing resilience

- The college has a named senior manager who makes employee health and wellbeing a core priority. (see page 4)
- College professional development has encouraged small groups to discuss challenges within teaching and work collectively towards solutions. The leadership team aim to develop a culture where it is acceptable to seek help if it is required and encourage mutual support.
- The wider management team work together to create a working environment where potential work-related stressors as far as practicable are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development.
- Managers' and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress has been increased through training opportunities.
- The college has developed a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- There are a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes. Staff are encouraged to voice their opinions through e.g. staff meetings/faculty meetings etc. Staff engagement forums are included in development plans. Employee opinions are sought through for example, staff meetings and faculty meetings.
- Professional development can be an effective way of boosting wellbeing at work and developing resilience in staff. Staff at all levels in the college have access to continued professional development some of which forms part of performance management goals and objectives. Performance management is linked to clear job specifications.
- Professional learning opportunities are encouraged within school throughout the school day alongside opportunities to attend relevant courses and conferences. Staff meetings provide opportunities for professional dialogue between staff members.
- The leadership team manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism. There is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism
- Where workplace stressors are identified, risk assessment will be undertaken to help eliminate the stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed by the college leadership team.

## **Promoting health and happiness**

The college leadership team make line managers aware that supporting employee health and wellbeing is a central part of their role.

The school supports employee health, happiness and wellbeing by:

- Providing up-to-date job descriptions, with duties and responsibilities relating to individual teacher's roles clearly identified
- The physical environment at the college provides a positive working environment. If there are concerns, there are systems in place for issues to be raised and resolved.
- Perfectionism is discouraged, being the best you can be is rewarding but understanding when to leave a task is an essential skill.
- Working hours are monitored and staff are encouraged to take breaks as required by legislation.
- Staff have access to support via HR who can advise on how to seek professional support.
- Staff have the option to participate in wellbeing activities e.g. sport activities, social activities, Mindfulness sessions.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job.
- Staff are provided with relevant safeguarding training and guidance to work collaboratively when dealing with stressful incidents including access to appropriate support
- Review of work load and time spent on paperwork and systems, allows the leadership team to develop practical alternative solutions through the college improvement plan.
- Appraisal reviews offer the opportunity for staff to discuss with reviewers any concerns regarding workload
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the School.
- Staff achievements are valued and acknowledged by the leadership team e.g. during staff briefings. There is a culture of inspiring and celebrating at the college.
- Staff are offered quiet spaces where they can work. The staffroom is a welcoming space during break and lunch time.
- Staff are encouraged to experience new things and develop new skills through professional responsibilities like participating in trips, activities, Duke of Edinburgh award, taking on new responsibilities.
- New staff are supported with appropriate induction training and a mentor scheme.
- Staff recruitment and retention is overseen by a senior manager.
- Organisation of CPD and INSET takes account of staff wellbeing. For example there are early closure at the end of each term, a Christmas lunch and refreshments available on training days. A range of opportunities are available through the 'Happy, Healthy Bottisham' initiative including sport and social events.
- Ensuring that patterns of meetings are appropriate to the requirements of the whole school and published in advance
- A weekly bulletin is provided for all staff
- Peer observation will be actively encouraged and the system of 'lesson study' will encourage shared development of effective teaching practice

### **Line managers support employee health and wellbeing by:**

- Effective timing and use of PD days to allow time for staff to meet and share ideas
- Offering employees help and encouragement to build supportive relationships
- Being open and approachable to ensure employees feel free to share ideas
- Consulting regularly on daily procedures and problems
- Recognising and praising good performance
- Identifying and addressing issues and concerns and taking any action needed as soon as possible to prevent problems escalating
- Identifying sources of internal and external support
- Agreeing relevant and realistic job targets
- Promoting effective communication and ensuring that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements at both a School-wide and departmental level

### **Employee's have a duty to support their own health and wellbeing by:**

- Staff are encouraged to be mindful of their personal work life balance. Work life balance is key for those wanting to reduce negative stress.
- Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety at work co-operating and follow any reasonable instructions to safeguard their health and safety and seeking guidance from health professionals where appropriate
- Cooperating with the College in any measures taken to improve their psychological wellbeing
- Cooperating with the College if the College wishes to seek further information to support their wellbeing.

### **Managing staff absence**

Staff absence is dealt with through the 'Discretionary leave policy' and 'Management of Sickness and Absence policy'

- The College responds sensitively and flexibly to external pressures that impact on staff lives whilst also ensuring the efficient running of the college.
- The College will provide support and discuss options as appropriate if problems arise for staff. In some cases this might include external support e.g. from the Local Authority for counselling, occupational health etc. The College will continue to support even when external services are involved.
- During the time staff are absent, the college will maintain confidentiality and the rights and dignity of the staff involved.

### **Related Policies**

Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff are entitled to be treated fairly and professionally at all times. The Governing Body takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer to all members of staff and a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty. These include:

- Guidance for Safer Working Practice
- eSafety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Communication with Parents and Carers Policy

**Other policies contribute to staff wellbeing** by providing certainty, fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff in different contexts, including:

- Management of sickness and absence policy
- Discretionary leave policy
- Disciplinary and capability Procedures
- Pay Policy
- Performance Management Policies for Teaching and Support Staff
- Whistle blowing policy

The intranet provides easy reference to a wide range of information needed at different times by employees.

### **Monitoring and reviewing the staff Well-being policy.**

The Governing Body recognises its duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees in the school. The staff Well-being policy will be reviewed annually by the College Management team in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources and Governors.

This review will involve feedback from Staff Surveys, consultation with Heads of Faculty and Pastoral leaders together with the findings from risk assessments.

### **Support**

Depending on needs there are a range of adult services that can help support staff including specific services for Eating Disorders, Psychosis and Affective Disorders (for example anxiety or depression). Usually individuals are referred to the service that is most appropriate to them by their GP

- **CPFT Psychological Wellbeing Service** Accessed through GP or self referral. Brief supported self-help and talking therapy options. Many community locations throughout the county <http://www.cpft.nhs.uk/services/pws/psychological-wellbeing-service.htm>
- **Mind** website <https://www.mind.org.uk/> To make sure no one has to face a **mental health** problem alone.
- **Anna Freud Centre** '**Supporting Staff Wellbeing in Schools**' booklet. "It has been developed with our Centre's mental health experts, and aims to offer practical guidance about what school staff and senior leaders can do to support their own and their colleagues' wellbeing. Topics featured include *what can impact on or support wellbeing? what can supervision look like in schools? and how can senior leaders prioritise wellbeing?*" <https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/staff-wellbeing/supporting-staff-wellbeing-in-schools-booklet/>
- **Roffey (2017)** – Creative caring for teachers (<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/creative-caring-teachers>)
- **Hudders et al. (2017)** The Resilience Centre; the teacher well-being project (<http://leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/research/mental-health-in-schools--dec-2017-issue.pdf?la=en>)
- **Roffey (2012)** – Pupil well-being – teacher well-being: two sides of the same coin? (<http://www.sueroffey.com/wp-content/uploads/import/32-Roffey%20ECP29-4.pdf>).
- **BPS (2010)** Psychological wellbeing at work ([https://www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/user-files/Division%20of%20Occupational%20Psychology/public/rep94\\_dpx.pdf](https://www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/user-files/Division%20of%20Occupational%20Psychology/public/rep94_dpx.pdf))

- **NEF(2008)** Five ways to wellbeing  
[http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/8984c5089d5c2285ee\\_t4m6bhqg5.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/8984c5089d5c2285ee_t4m6bhqg5.pdf)
- **Briner & Dewberry (2007)** – Staff well-being is key to school success  
[www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/viewdoc.aspx?id=44615](http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/viewdoc.aspx?id=44615)
- <http://www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk/46-things-we-do-staff-well-being/>
- <http://lifecraft.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Mental-Health-Handbook-Jul17.pdf>  
A directory of local and national health services for people who experience mental distress, carers, friends and service providers.
- **CPFT First response service** for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. 111 option2.

