Bassingbourn Community Primary School

Staff Wellbeing Policy

This policy was ratified on: 29th January 2026

Implemented on: 29th January 2026

Review date: January 2027

Contents

Staff Wellbeing Policy

1. Terms of Reference

1.1. For all employees employed by the Governing Body of Bassingbourn CP School

1.2. Definitions:

Headteacher also refers to any other title used to identify the Headteacher, where appropriate, or other senior manager delegated to deal with the matter by the Headteacher.

Line manager also refers to any other title used to identify a direct supervisor or other senior manager.

2. Introduction

2.1. The Governing Body recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and understands that wellbeing, attendance, employee turnover and performance are linked.

2.2. The Governing Body are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

2.3. This Employee Wellbeing Policy sets out the school's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, physical health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

2.4. The Governing Body recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' wellbeing and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

2.5. The Governing Body are committed to balancing the needs of employees and the school's educational, business and operational needs.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. The Governing Body

3.1.1. The Governing Body has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The Governing Body will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

3.1.2. In addition to reducing safety risks, we will operate the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are reasonable and having policies and procedures in place to support employees experiencing mental ill health at work.

3.1.3. The Governing Body will:

- Take overall responsibility for implementing this policy.

- Adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of flexible working arrangements, part-time working, etc. where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.

- Ensure clear procedures are in place that will minimise levels of stress caused to employees when following formal procedures such as the capability, disciplinary or sickness absence management procedures.

- Ensure that employees roles and responsibilities area clearly defined.

- Put in place measures to prevent detriment to and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support.

- Allow and promote access to school canteen and leisure facilities and any other in house/external provision.

- Look to provide information to employees about mental and physical health and healthy eating and promote relevant initiatives.

- Seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental and physical health at work.

3.2. The Headteacher

3.2.1. The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the procedure to ensure that the procedure is communicated to employees and that it is applied consistently.

3.2.2. The Headteacher will:

- Create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns and enable employees to do so in a supportive environment where stress is not considered a weakness.

- Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress.

- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental health problems.

- Ensure that contact is maintained with staff while absence and that a return-to-work policy is established in the workplace that is supportive of employees.

- Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.

- Carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate.

- Ensure that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications.

- Make sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams.

- Demonstrate commitment, via systems and practices in place in school, to employees maintaining a good work/life balance, and ensure that such practices are communicated to all employees.

- Manage pressures which may affect employees, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.

- Promote physical and mental health and health eating through activities/initiatives and providing information.

- Ensure the well-being policy is accessible to all employees.

3.3. Line managers

3.3.1. Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the organisation's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support employees, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

3.3.2. In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- Creating reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns.

- Paying attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress.

- Following agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental health problems.

- Carrying out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.

- Seeking agreement from the employee for a referral to Occupational Health if this is required and/or appropriate in the circumstances.

- Attending regular training on health and wellbeing in schools.

- Keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload.

- Ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management.

- Ensuring that workstations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

- Promoting physical health through school initiatives including healthy eating and encouraging employees to take a lunch break during the working day.

3.4. Employees

3.4.1. Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, exercise, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the organisation if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers or the occupational health service is treated in confidence.

3.4.2. Employees should:

- Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem at the earliest opportunity to ensure effective strategies can be implemented.

- Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.

- Ensure awareness of the school's policies and procedures relevant to employee wellbeing.

- Assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or colleagues.

- Treat colleagues and all other persons whom they interact with during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity.

- Consider accessing school initiatives/facilities to help manage good physical and mental health where applicable including school canteen facilities and sports equipment.

- If required, attend appointments with Occupational Health or other medical appointment/examination by a registered medical practitioner nominated by the school.

4. Support Mechanisms

4.1. Training and communications

4.1.1. Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

4.1.2. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications, and organisation-wide methods. The organisation will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

4.1.3. The organisation will consider special communication media during periods of organisational change.

4.2. Occupational health support

4.2.1. Line managers can contact the organisation's occupational health service for advice on managing issues regarding work-related stress and wellbeing. The occupational health provider delivers a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This includes preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the HR department, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

4.2.2. Occupational health professionals can aid in developing rehabilitation plans for employees returning to work after absences related to mental ill health, and work with GPs and line managers on designing jobs and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is successful.

4.2.3. A referral to the occupational health team will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their line manager. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team is likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the school.

4.3. Employee Assistance Programme

4.3.1. The provider of external employee assistance services will alert the organisation's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the organisation, drawing on anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees.

4.4. Counselling

4.4.1. Counselling can be provided where appropriate through the Local Authority Employee Assistance Programme. This will be a confidential, independent service using professionally qualified counsellors.

4.4.2. Employees can access the Counselling Service by contacting the Employee Assistance Programme.

4.5. Mediation

    4.5.1. A mediation service could also be supportive in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. This could be accessed via the Counselling Service/ACAS/other. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.

4.6. Mental Health First Aid

    4.6.1. Access Mental health first aider is available, and the school trained mental health first aider is Jen Gregson. This is a confidential service.

4.7. Other

    4.7.1. Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- Procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment).

- Promoting the well-being policy as part of induction.

- Promoting the Cycle to Work Scheme.

- Special leave arrangements.

- Opportunities for flexible working.

- Support for workers with disabilities.

- The organisation's grievance policy.

- Access to water stations around the school.

- A stress management/handling pressure programme.

5. Relationship with other policies

5.1. This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including policies on work-life balance, special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, violence at work, equal opportunities and employees training and development.

5.2. The Governing Body of school takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer to all employees and a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty.

- These include:
- Management of Sickness Absence Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Whistleblowing Procedure
- Induction Policy
- All policies are published on the school website.

6. Policy Review

The policy's effectiveness can be measured through:

- Feedback from staff
- Stress risk assessments
- Staff sickness, presenteeism and staff turnover levels
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health or counselling services
- Staff complaints or referrals
- Feedback from qualified mental health first aider.