

Wellbeing Policy

Date of Adoption:	6 March 2019
Date of Implementation:	11 March 2019
Date of Review:	July 2021
Responsible Department:	Human Resources
Policy Applies to:	All employees

The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act*
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it*
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.*

In the development of this policy due regard has been given to achieving these objectives.

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all centrally employed Wellspring Academy Trust employees and those employed by Academies within the Trust.

2. Principles

The Trust/Academy recognises that outstanding education for our young people is achieved through outstanding individuals and teams. Our employees are our greatest asset and their welfare and wellbeing is a key strategic priority for the organisation.

3. Aims

The aims of the policy are to:

- 3.1 Create healthy, safe and inclusive workplaces that enable our employees to thrive at work whilst managing home-life commitments.
- 3.2 Promote positive mental and physical health and wellbeing in all employees and students.
- 3.3 Increase awareness and understanding of warning signs of mental ill health and common mental health issues to enable early intervention.
- 3.4 Encourage and enable staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

4. Leadership Responsibilities

- 4.1 Foster a culture of cooperation, openness and trust, where all employees are treated with positive regard and help seeking is encouraged.
- 4.2 Challenge inappropriate/unacceptable behaviour, taking decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- 4.3 Ensure there are opportunities for employees to raise concerns to enable early intervention/resolution, seeking advice from HR where required.
- 4.4 Promote effective and open communication and ensure ongoing consultation and engagement with employees on relevant workplace health issues.
- 4.5 Encourage consistent and positive approach to employee wellbeing and initiatives/events promoting wellbeing and health.
- 4.6 Ensure that risk assessments are in place for a role or working practices that may give rise to work related stress.
- 4.7 Take steps to remove risks of stress as far as reasonably possible by making adjustments and supportive measures.
- 4.8 Ensure that relevant people management policies and procedures are consistently applied and employees are clear of expectations.
- 4.9 Monitor employee mental health and wellbeing by understanding available data, consultation with employees, Trust-wide staff survey data and understanding risk factors.

5. Employees Responsibilities

- 5.1 Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity.
- 5.2 Co-operate with the Trust's efforts to promote wellbeing, attend briefings and commit to raising self-awareness and awareness of the causes and effects of stress and other forms of mental ill-health.
- 5.3 Although there are no legal obligations to declare mental health issues, employees should raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are issues, which are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- 5.4 Take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by endeavouring to follow a healthy lifestyle, as far as is practicable, seeking advice/support/guidance as early as possible
- 5.5 Take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce the risk of stress.
- 5.6 Take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues
- 5.7 Act in a way, which promotes a positive and supportive atmosphere in their workplace.
- 5.8 Report honestly about their wellbeing and ask for help when they feel under pressure or stressed.
- 5.9 Familiarise themselves with relevant people management and development policies.

6.0 Positive Mental Health

“Being mentally healthy is about having the strength to overcome the difficulties and challenges we can all face at times in our lives – to have confidence and self-esteem, to be able to take decisions and to believe in ourselves.” (www.rethink.org).

- 6.1 At the Trust/Academy we aim to promote positive mental health for everyone and increase understanding and awareness to enable recognising and responding to mental ill health as early as possible.

6.2 Warning Signs

All members of staff will be aware of the warning signs that can indicate a person is having difficulties managing stress.

Some of the **behavioural indicators** caused by stress include but are not limited to, the following:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Changes in eating habits
- Increased smoking or drinking
- Isolation from friends and family

Some of the **mental indicators** caused by stress include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Memory loss
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Low self esteem

Some of the **emotional indicators** caused by stress include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Anger or irritability
- Anxiety
- Hypersensitivity
- Feeling drained and listless

Some of the **physical indicators** of stress include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tiredness
- Indigestion and nausea
- Headaches
- Aching muscles
- Heart palpitations

6.3 Signposting

When employees are experiencing a mental health problem, supportive and reliable information can change their life. Increasing awareness and understanding of common mental health problems and accessible support within the Trust/Academy, local community and online enables people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. It also enables employees to support one another, students and wider community they interact with on a regular basis.

Some accessible sources of information, guidance and mental health support are available below:

- Education Support Partnership - the UK's charity providing mental health, wellbeing and financial support services to all education staff and organisations <https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>
- Mind - the mental health charity supporting anyone experiencing a mental health problem <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- Rethink Mental Illness – the charity supporting people affected by mental illness by challenging attitudes, changing lives <https://www.rethink.org/>
- MindEd – educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

7.0 Physical Health

7.1 Physical activity has significant benefits for health, both physical and mental, and can help to prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions and diseases, including some cancers, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and depression (Public Health England, 2018).

- 7.2 The Trust/Academies will consider the physical activity needs and wants of the local workforce to create a culture change towards a more active workforce.

8.0 Physical Environment

- 8.1 The surroundings in which employees spend their working lives are an important source of job satisfaction and impact on work motivation and patterns of interaction. They can be as much of a source of pressure as a heavy workload, poor work-life balance or significant organisational change (Public Health England, 2015).
- 8.2 The Trust/Academy is committed to creating an environment where potential work-related stressors as far as practically possible are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective human resource policies and workforce development.
- 8.3 Establishing working arrangements where, as far as reasonably possible, employees are able to influence their physical work environment.

9.0 Wellbeing Champions

- 9.1 The Wellbeing Champions will be a key contact to discuss any issues. The Wellbeing Champions will be trained and equipped with tools to provide basic wellbeing support and signpost employees to the relevant sources of information and accessible support, both internally and externally.
- 9.2 The Wellbeing Champions will treat all cases confidentially. However, in some cases, such as those where safety of employee or others is at risk or where there would be a direct impact on the day to day running of the academy, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If this is the case, Wellbeing Champion will inform employee that the information they provided must be shared and who it will be shared with. They will always aim to have received employees consent to share the disclosure.
- 9.3 The Wellbeing Champions will engage with the wider network across the Trust for training and development purposes, and to enhance the wellbeing offer for all staff across the Trust.

10. Review of the policy

- 10.1 The operation of this policy does not form a contractual entitlement and Wellspring Academy Trust reserves the right to modify or withdraw the policy at any time.