

# Staff Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



<b>Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy</b>	The Michael Syddall C of E (Aided) Primary School
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## 1. Policy Statement

*Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)*

At Michael Syddall C of E (Aided) Primary School we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to our school community. Our open culture allows staff and pupils' voices to be heard and, through the use of effective policies and procedures, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected – both directly and indirectly – by mental health issues. In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do, our foundations are built upon Christian values which promote a caring, loving and respectful climate for learning and daily school life.

At Michael Syddall C of E (Aided) Primary School we believe and recognise that our staff are our most important resource and all are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community. The school are signatories of the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, in signing this charter, this school commits to placing wellbeing and mental health at the heart of our decision making. We will support staff to make positive choices for their own wellbeing and encourage a positive culture in school. We furthermore commit to developing a long-term strategy for improving staff wellbeing that will prioritise staff mental health.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of pupils and that the culture and ethos of a school is determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision. We believe it is essential that all staff feel valued as a team member, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance. This Staff Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining staff wellbeing, while recognising that each individual member of staff and their circumstances are different.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work related stress as “the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. There is an

important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

## **2. Scope**

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction our Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Absence Policy, Code of Conduct Policy and any other relevant school policies.

The policy aims to:

- Develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high standard of education to pupils.
- Help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees stress levels, mental and physical health.
- Recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- Communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- Respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- Engage with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships.
- Improve staff development, cooperation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- Make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and wellbeing issues.
- Encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Comply with statutory requirements, taking into account equality implications.
- Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through communication and consultation with staff and their representatives on health and safety matters.
- Develop an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional wellbeing is taken seriously and in which staff are encouraged to seek any help and support they need.

## **3. Lead Members of Staff**

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Alison McHarg - Headteacher

Neil Saunders – Deputy Headteacher

Nickie Young – Pastoral & Wellbeing Mentor / Mental Health Lead

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a colleague should speak to a member of the SLT or the Pastoral & Wellbeing Mentor. These discussions will be treated with tact and sensitivity, confidentiality will be upheld where possible and the staff members privacy and dignity will be respected.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will

- Create a working environment where potential work related stressors are understood and mitigated as far as practically possible through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development.
- Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- Promote a healthy workplace and practices that ensure that members of staff are able to develop a healthy mind.
- Develop a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- Understand the differing needs to staff, at different points and events during their life cycles and offer support accordingly.
- Engage with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships across the school.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby staff feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental health problems.
- Manage pressures which may affect staff, including the impact of workload pressures, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives – for example: incorporating the 5 Ways to Wellbeing into their daily lives, utilising the benefits available through the Health Assured programme, joining weekly staff Drumba sessions.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Promote effective communication and ensure there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting staff on any changes in the School, to management structures and working arrangements

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice. Support will be provided to any employees facing high levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work related issues which have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff members health and wellbeing. In some cases this may include external support. During this time the staff members privacy and dignity will be respected, maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employees rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

#### **Class Teams will:**

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the School.

- Help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees stress levels, mental and physical health.
- Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental health problems
- Attend training on health and wellbeing in schools
- Demonstrate commitment to staff by encouraging a good work / life balance.
- Treat individuals reporting to them with consideration and promote a culture of mutual respect, dealing quickly with unacceptable behaviour and taking decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.
- Adhere to the principles set out in school policies and procedures.
- Ensure workload is distributed equitably and fairly and that when work is delegated, colleagues have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver it.
- Regularly check in with colleagues, thank and encourage them and offer praise when it is due

#### **Members of staff should:**

- Participate in activities undertaken by the School to promote wellbeing and more effective working.
- Treat colleagues and others they interact with during the course of their work with fairness, consideration and respect.
- Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.
- Value all members of staff in the school, acknowledge the important role that each and every one takes, treat one another with honesty, respect and kindness
- Raise concerns with the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- Be liable for their own health and wellbeing as far as is practically possible.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, supporting others as appropriate and helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.
- Contribute to the ethos of the whole school and wider school life where possible, to enhance morale and effective team spirit.

#### **The governing body will:**

- Recommend the adoption of the Staff Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy.
- Ensure the Staff Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy is reviewed bi-annually and updated where appropriate.
- Adopt appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns etc. where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.
- Provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision making process.
- Review demands on staff and seek practical solutions wherever possible.
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### **To promote staff mental health and wellbeing the School will:**

- Communicate plans weekly to all staff via email.
- Provide continuing professional development for all staff.
- Ensure training and development procedures are in place so individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks and duties required of them.
- Annual performance management to discuss performance development.
- Encourage staff to comment on and contribute to the School Development Plan.
- Invite all staff are to INSET days, relevant staff update meetings and training.
- Celebrate staff on birthdays and special occasions.
- Ensure there are good communication systems to limit stresses potentially caused by lack of clarity.
- Conduct and act upon a termly Staff Wellbeing Survey.
- Provide clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure staff members are clear on what is expected in their role and the right person is recruited where vacancies exist.

### **5. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is: **November 2024**

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Nickie Young, our Mental Health Lead.

This policy will always be updated to reflect personnel changes.