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Health and Well Being Policy

2021

Rationale

The emotional and physical wellbeing of all staff is important to Ecclesall Primary School. At our school not only does every child matter but we also believe every person matters. We are committed to supporting and nurturing each other within our ethos.

The actions within this policy have 5 key aims:

- To safeguard staff physically, emotionally and mentally.
- To minimise the harmful effects of stress.
- To provide effective support for all staff.
- To help each individual to achieve an appropriate work-life balance.
- To take a positive and understanding approach to the management of stress in line with current good practice.
- To respect confidentiality.

As a school, we promote work life balance. We seek advice from outside support agencies such as occupational health. We have policies and procedures to deal with bullying, harassment and issues of personal safety. We seek opportunities to care for the staff through initiatives and through discussions within performance and development reviews.

We are a sociable staff and support each other in our teams. Regular staff events involving staff from all areas of the school have developed a cohesion and strength within the workforce.

As a school we are committed to support the staff in times of rapid educational reform. Through the application of this policy, we hope to counter the negative impact of Government actions upon their wellbeing.

Annual Procedures

As part of our efforts to ensure that every member of staff is treated fairly and our desire to create an open working environment, we have set up procedures to ensure that we can be evaluated from an external perspective.

We will undertake an annual staff wellbeing questionnaire which informs an action plan within the school development plan. Any issues are incorporated and addressed over the coming year. The outcomes of this plan are externally validated by another Head teacher from within the SWIP (South West Improvement Partners) Schools. This role allows a different perspective and may give further insight into any areas for development. A short report in the form of a checklist and comment is provided at the end of each validation visit.

Performance Management and Accountability

Within Ecclesall Primary School every member of staff is given adequate and achievable tasks which suit the agreed hours of work.

Individuals have a job description which details the job demands and this is part of the recruitment procedure before agreed contracts are signed.

Appointments are made to match the skills of the person with the job and adjustments are made with the agreement of all. No member of staff will be expected to carry out duties which are beyond their capabilities unless these are agreed as a development strategy.

Concerns about the work environment and its impact upon an employee's ability to satisfactorily complete duties are shared with either a line manager or senior member of staff. Every attempt is made to rectify the issue.

The Performance Management Cycle is supportive and staff are organised into coaching pairs to mentor and care for each other.

Within Ecclesall Primary School every member of staff has a defined role and subject leadership or year group/pupil to support. Initiative is actively encouraged and as a school we welcome staff to be free thinkers and extend practice beyond the expected. The school has a Continuing Professional Development Policy which details the means by which all staff are encouraged to extend their skills and knowledge. Formal access to courses and training is identified through the performance management process but if staff identify a training opportunity that supports the School Improvement Targets/pupil needs and if budget allows, they will be supported in attending the training.

Support

Within Ecclesall Primary School we have an active support structure within the staff which has no formal basis but is generated from mutual respect. However, should this structure break down, the Management structure has a wide base with each year group having a leader. The Head and the two Deputy's support each year group.

The school encourages staff to discuss work and provide each other with constructive feedback. Although we have formal observations, the staff have agreed that informal observation and comment is still part of the school culture. The coaching pairs plan with each other and observe practice.

Ecclesall Primary School is a supportive school and this is reflected in the personal and private leave procedure – Leave of Absence Policy which operates when necessary. In addition we intend to set up a Wellbeing Group who will meet at least termly to discuss any wellbeing issues and to support staff.

Management of Sickness Absence

The school's Management of Sickness Absence Policy, takes a positive approach to sickness management, ensuring that staff are treated in a fair and appropriate manner. Staff are reminded that they have a responsibility to colleagues, as absences create extra pressure on those staff working, thereby affecting their well-being.

The policy outlines the role of the employee, the role of the manager and the role of the personnel team. It covers the procedures from notifying absence through to identifying actions in respect of frequent or long-term absence.

Relationships

Within Ecclesall Primary School we promote positive relationships within the staff and encourage everyone to report any incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour. This in turn will then be fully investigated by an appropriate member of the SLT and a governor, if required. *This includes relationships with parents.*

Harassment and Bullying

A complete and inclusive definition of harassment and bullying is difficult, but defining factors are that the behaviour is offensive or intimidating to the recipient and would be regarded as harassment by any reasonable person. Common forms of harassment involve offensive conduct and behaviour directed to a person's gender, racial origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, religious conviction, or some other personal characteristic. It can also include the inappropriate use of physical or mental power, more commonly known as bullying. Other less obvious but equally serious forms of harassment and bullying can occur in 'staff room talk' about colleagues. Expressions of opinion about colleagues, which can be viewed as harmful, malicious, or showing prejudice, are unacceptable anywhere at school. Harassment and bullying of any kind is potentially deleterious to physical and mental health not only to the person to whom it is directed but others, who are then subjected to an unpleasant and often hostile atmosphere. The school's Code of Ethics sets out our position regarding this issue. We recognise also, that complaints may be made with mischievous or malicious intent, and such cases will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

We are respectful to parents at all times but if a member of staff feels that they have been bullied or harassed by a parent, this will be referred to the Head and the matter will be investigated and the member of staff supported. The member of staff's union will also be contacted for additional support.

Change

Upon appointment, staff have a job description which outlines the key roles and expectations of the job. New staff are provided with a Staff Handbook to familiarise themselves with the schools induction procedures and an appropriate mentor is attached. This is the year Leader.

As a school, we have many influences which impact upon our working structure. This may result in short notice changes. During periods of role change, staff will be kept up to date through staff briefings and individual meetings.

Within Ecclesall Primary School we seek to involve all appropriate staff in consultations regarding change. We provide information as soon as possible and will call staff meetings if they are relevant. Staff are always aware that consultations are a means by which we gather views and are not always a mechanism for changing policy or decision.

When changes do take place, timescales will be published and we will include details where possible on showing the impact upon the working lives of the staff.

Support will be provided during the process if needed and outside support agencies will be signposted.

Preventative/supportive measures at an organisational level

The school will:

- Promote a culture of consultation, participation and open communication throughout the organisation
- Make courses available for all staff on stress awareness and stress management to help them handle pressures they may encounter, and to recognise stress if it occurs, in themselves and others
- Provide behaviour support training for staff
- Help employees identify internal and external sources of assistance
- Provide training and other opportunities directly linked to well-being needs
- Provide all employees with a coaching partner
- Provide space where an employee can have some 'time out' if distressed
- Make arrangements for religious observances wherever reasonable alongside normal duties.
- Support initiatives designed to encourage staff to achieve a balance between their work and home lives
- Monitor levels of absence due to stress.
- Ensure issues relevant to staff wellbeing are on the school development plans
- Endeavour to provide a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment.
- Have clear systems of line management
- Recognise the value of each individual's work

Staff Responsibility to one another

Staff will:

- Express feelings in an acceptable manner to the appropriate people
- Raise concerns in the correct forum, with a commitment to being part of the solution
- Take advantage of training opportunities on stress management and wellbeing.
- Report for work in a fit state to carry out duties
- Help maintain a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment – including tidying after one's self
- Use facilities provided appropriately.