Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School and Nursery

Mental Health and Well-Being Policy

Reviewed September 2022
Next Review September 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises the importance of promoting positive mental health and well-being, through a multi-disciplinary approach whilst ensuring that members of employees work, in a professional but supportive and caring environment.

This policy and guidance (See Appendix 1) outlines Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery's intention regarding Mental Health and Well-being, including areas such as stress and harassment. In particular this policy takes into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Management Standards and as such are brought to the attention of all employees.

This policy applies to all employees. The Leadership Team, line managers and the Governing Body are responsible for the implementation of this policy, with Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery Governing Body being responsible for providing the necessary resources.

2. MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY STATEMENT

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery recognises that mental health problems and stress can affect anyone regardless of their position and is a school issue that all staff have a responsibility to address. This policy applies equally to all employees and is designed to complement Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery existing policies.

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery Governing Body is responsible for providing the necessary resources to enable the Leadership Team to implement this policy.

In undertaking its duties with regards to Mental Health and Well-being Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery will aim to:

- Reduce the stigma around mental ill-health
- Positively promote and safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of its employees and prevent stress by promoting a supportive workplace culture based on trust, support and mutual respect, where employees are able to talk openly about their job and their mental health and report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal
- Create an environment that supports and encourages good mental health amongst our employees
- Ensure that The Leadership Team/line managers are equipped to appropriately respond to disclosures which supports Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery's commitment to mental health and well-being
- Provide appropriate support for all employees suffering from mental health and associated problems
- Identify workplace stressors through measures such as the organisational employees opinion survey, stress risk assessments and the HSE Stress Management Standards to eliminate or control the risks from stress
- Educate the workforce about the advantages of good mental well-being and its influence over the quality of working and personal life
- Reduce the levels of absence as a result of increased healthy mental well-being amongst employees
- Demonstrate that the workforce is valued and the work-life balance is respected by the support of good mental health and physical activity initiatives led by the company
- Evolve job design and equipment to remove mental health risks in the workplace wherever possible
- Eliminate from the workplace, stressors which can have a detrimental effect on employees' well-being.

Examples of these are:
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discrimination (sexual, religious, political, ethnicity)
- Victimisation
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the effective review and revision of this policy statement as necessary on a bi-annual basis
- Provide support for the Leadership Team/line managers to ensure they are dealing appropriately with issues and maintaining their own mental health and well-being
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the school's agreed mental health and well-being management policy

3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

In terms of The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers have a general duty to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health of their employees at work. This includes taking steps to make sure they do not suffer stress related illness as a result of their work.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: The main provisions of these regulations regarding stress are; a duty to assess risk, apply principles of prevention, ensure employee's capability to undertake work tasks and provide suitable training.

The Stress Management Standards: The Management Standards define the characteristics, or culture, of an organisation where the risks from work related stress are being effectively managed and controlled. The Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.

The six Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work.

These are:
1. DEMANDS – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment
2. CONTROL – how much say the person has in the way they do their work
3. SUPPORT – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
4. RELATIONSHIPS – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
5. ROLE – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
6. CHANGE – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and aims to remove discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they 'have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

This policy will relate only to the part that covers disability and in particular mental health and harassment.

4. REVIEW AND MONITORING
The monitoring and review arrangements include;
- Reporting Absence Management statistics and trends on at least a quarterly basis to the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team.
- Reporting the use of support and counselling services on at least yearly basis to the Governing Body.

5. IMPLEMENTATION
To successfully implement this policy, we will:
- Ensure through our recruitment processes that we ensure that the role fits the person. This will be done through fair recruitment procedures.
- Ensure through our recruitment processes that no one is disadvantaged in obtaining employment or progressing in the company on the grounds of their mental health.
- Provide employees with an induction training programme that includes the benefits of good mental health awareness.
- Provide access to mental health awareness training for employees if requested.
- Link to local and national campaigns to promote positive mental health.
- Encourage early reporting of any issues in the workplace which may affect employee's mental health.

- Encourage early reporting of any existing mental health issues which our employees may be suffering from in order for us to be able to provide confidential support and any workplace adjustments in a timely fashion.
- Ensure that employees have opportunities to raise issues through, appraisals, Performance Management, Keeping in Touch meetings.

Appendix 1
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE
1. INTRODUCTION
The aim of this Procedural Guidance is to outline the benefits of positive mental health and well-being, promote a supportive work environment and set out the measures Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery puts in place for Mental Health and Well-being, including prevention, stress management and support for employees.

2. DEFINITIONS
Definitions of Mental Health
Mental health is defined as 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 Organisation (WHO)
The positive dimension of mental health is stressed in WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."
Mental Health: an umbrella term which refers to a continuous spectrum from positive mental health and wellbeing to mental health problems which can be mild to moderate or more serious, severe and enduring
Mental Well-being: a term that includes life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing – for example, having a sense of control, purpose in life, a sense of belonging and positive relationships with others
Mental Health problems: a term that refers to symptoms that meet the criteria for clinical diagnosis of mental health problems - for example, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia.
However, not everyone has a diagnosis of a mental health problem
Mental health is just as important as good physical health. If you are in good mental health, you can make the most of your potential, cope with life and play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends.
Mental Health and Work
There is compelling evidence to show a positive link between employment and mental health. People enjoy better mental health when they are in work and for people with mental health problems, work can be therapeutic. A return to work improves mental health as much as the loss of employment worsens it. Some aspects of the work environment can pose a risk to mental health but the overall balance of evidence is not in doubt: work is good for mental health.
Contrary to popular belief, the majority of people with a mental health conditions have a job and are almost as likely to be working as anybody else. On average, employers should expect that at any one time, nearly 1 in 4 (Mental health foundation) of their workforce is affected by a mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. Only a small proportion of this ill health is directly caused by work or working conditions.
Evidence suggests that the key ingredients of an effective workplace programme are:

- Recognition that work is good for mental health and that people do not need to be symptom free to work successfully
- Prevention of mental health problems including the provision of mentally healthy working conditions and access for all employees to generalised health promotion and well-being programmes
- Early identification of emerging problems, with any unexplained change in an employee's productivity at work being seen as a possible warning sign
- Awareness training for employees to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health issues
- Better access to professional help (such as an counselling, coaching) which wherever possible enables people to carry on working at the same time as receiving support
- Effective rehabilitation for those who need to take time off work, including regular contact with employees during periods of absence.

Common to all of these situations is that they essentially involve a clear, positive line management role; however the first step is simply a better understanding of mental health issues throughout Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery.

Definition of Stress and Work Related Stress
Stress related illness is perhaps the most common way mental health problems may present themselves.
The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as
"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them".
This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health, in particular mental health. Life is a challenge and pressure is a natural part of it. Individuals vary in their ability to cope with pressure.
Personal factors are the most common stressors and can impact the situation permanently or temporarily. When stress is intense repeated or continuous, physical or mental ill health can result.
No one is 'immune' to stress and it is not a sign of personal weakness. It is recognised that some levels of pressure can be motivating and challenges that can be responded to effectively may lead to job satisfaction. However this Policy is concerned with the negative effects of stress and can include mental health problems and also physical effects such as heart disease, back pain, gastro-intestinal disturbances, various minor illnesses, psychological effects, anxiety and depression and sleep disturbances.

Stress at work - pressure at work can affect individuals, but it is not unusual for there to be personal factors also impacting on someone's ability to cope at work. Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School has a clear responsibility to ensure work factors are addressed appropriately and the risk to individuals is minimised.

PROCEDURE
Prevention
Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery shall work towards creating and maintaining a positive culture by:
- Developing and introducing work life balance policies
- Working towards and maintaining the Workplace Well-being Charter

- Raising awareness of mental health issues, roles and responsibilities through training
- Demonstrating commitment to this policy by the Leadership Team initiating uptake of training and supporting and promoting a healthy work life balance for employees
- Raising awareness through promotional campaigns
- Enabling employees to raise mental health issues and receive appropriate support by:

Raising awareness and uptake of support services through Occupational Health, Health and Safety and the LA Human Resources
The Leadership Team and the Governing Body undertaking mental health and well-being management training
Utilising the appropriate policies in relation to absence.

- Recognising and valuing the contribution of each individual within the workplace by using the appraisal procedures to acknowledge skills
- Providing a safe and healthy working environment by undertaking an assessment based approach to work related hazards
- Periodically identify and assess sources and measures of workplace stress where available by:

Undertaking a employees survey and acting on the results
Analysing accident statistics

Stress Management
Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery shall:
- Provide information on good practice in preventing / managing stress (Appendix 2)
- Offer stress management, assessment and prevention training to all employees as appropriate
- Provide support and advice once an individual need has been identified via Occupational Health, which is a specialist area of medicine concerned with the interaction between people's health and their work, who provide Confidential Occupational Health Advisor or Occupational Health Physician appointments Advice on possible reasonable adjustments
- Ongoing support, tailored to individual need

Further information on the Stress Management Standards can be found via the following link:
http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/

Mental Health and Well-being support
It is recommended that all members of employees who have a period of absence as a result of mental health problems or stress are given the opportunity to discuss their issues with Managers to establish whether any adjustments can be made to alleviate their symptoms. If appropriate Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery will refer the employee to Occupational Health as early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution.

Responsibilities

Both Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery and its employees share a mutual responsibility to work together in the management of Mental Health and Well-being. Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery will do all it can to provide, so far as is reasonable and practicable, a safe and healthy working environment. Employees must also take responsibility for their own health and safety, and also for others who may be affected by their acts or lack of due diligence.

4.2 Specific Responsibilities – Governing Body/Headteacher/Leadership Team

Early action can prevent a member of employees becoming more unwell. Where you have concerns about a member of employees, ask if they would be comfortable discussing their situation with the Leadership Team or if preferable with a Governing Body member. As part of the discussion, to be aware of the support mechanisms available to both yourself and the member of employees and take into consideration good practice in preventing/managing stress.

Where appropriate, an individual assessment should be conducted in consultation with the member of employees, Occupational Health and HR to ensure that reasonable adjustments within the role, workplace and working hours are considered

Where a member of employees has had a period of absence because of mental health problems or stress, ensure they are referred to Occupational Health, as early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution. Any manager can request a referral to Occupational Health through, if it is deemed appropriate assistance for the individual

Ensure good communication between management and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes and involve employees at an individual level and team level in seeking solutions to resolve work related issues

Promote a culture which has a positive attitude to mental health and well-being, where employees can approach the Leadership Team when they are feeling stressed without fear of blame or reprisals

Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their area of responsibility and control

Support employees with mental health problems or who may be affected by stress who are either at work or returning to work and where appropriate

Be vigilant and offer additional support to employees who are experiencing stress outside work, for example, bereavement or separation

Ensure all employees receive appropriate induction and training for their job, including reference to support services

Ensure employees are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities

Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety

Monitor workloads, working hours and overtime to ensure that employees are not overloaded

Monitor holidays to ensure that employees take their full entitlement

Specific Responsibilities – Occupational Health Staff
- Support staff who have been absent from work with mental health problems or stress related illness and advise them and the school/centre on a planned return to work, including potential reasonable adjustments
- Provide a structured rehabilitation plan
- Support staff who are at work who may be experiencing mental health problems or stress related illness
- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on mental health and well-being
- Support the Leadership Team in implementing stress risk assessments
- Inform Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School & Nursery Governing Body of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through, for example, occupational health statistics and trends, use of support and counselling services

Specific Responsibilities – LA Human Resources
HR Advisers role is to provide support to the Leadership Team/line managers and staff and take appropriate action to:
- Offer help and guidance to managers on the mental health and well-being policy
- Inform the Leadership Team/Governing Body when staff are not dealt with appropriately by line managers with regards to mental health problems or stress
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through, for example, sickness absence statistics, staff turnover, early retirement due to ill-health
- Advise Leadership Team/line managers/Governing Body and individuals on training requirements
- Ensure that staff are aware of this policy, through induction training, and the actions they must take if they believe they are experiencing stress at work

Specific Responsibilities – Headteacher
Headteacher role is to:
- Ensure that employees are aware of this policy, through induction training, and the actions they must take if they believe they are experiencing stress at work
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to Occupational Health where appropriate
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through, for example, sickness absence statistics, employees turnover, early retirement due to ill-health

Specific responsibilities – employees
- Raise any concerns that they have about work pressures, work life balance and any external pressures that are affecting their health at work, with the Leadership Team/line manager (If you are not comfortable raising this with

your manager, you may contact the Headteacher or a member of the Governing Body).

- All members of employees have a responsibility to contribute to a supportive work environment by:
  - ➢ Being respectful and considerate of others
  - ➢ Listening to the problems or concerns of others and providing practical
  - ➢ support as appropriate
  - ➢ Being positively appreciative of people and their efforts
  - ➢ Being ready to offer help to colleagues, where appropriate, for example, their
  - ➢ behaviour, mood or performance may indicate or suggest something is wrong
  - ➢ Respecting confidentiality
  - ➢ Participating in goal setting and positive management of workload
  - ➢ Avoiding overloading colleagues with extra work or responsibility

Any member of employees who has a period of absence due to mental health or stress related issues, should remain in close contact with their line manager to enable them to work together on a structured rehabilitation plan for their return to work.