



Policy: Well-being

This Policy was adopted by the Governing Body of Wellfield School:

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Policy for Well-being

Rationale

Wellfield School's Well-being policy has been developed to promote and encourage health, well-being, positive relationships and an effective (emotionally literate) learning climate within our school. It has strong links with our Self Discipline for Behaviour and Rewards Policy and has been developed in full consultation with our staff, students, parents and Governors (who fully endorse and support this area of school life).

This Policy recognises how our unique features (including our organisational structures, systems of operation, management practices and workplace environment) impact on the lifestyle of all our staff and students, and the need for us to ensure that a healthy work-life balance is maintained.

Experience demonstrates that organisations that adopt a clear policy towards the well-being of their stakeholders may achieve benefits including reducing:

- Absenteeism;
- Staff turnover;
- Student transfers.

and increasing

- Stakeholder moral;
- An enriched learning and teaching environment;
- Quality of work-life balance.
- Educational achievement.

leading to

- Improved productivity and overall organisational performance.

Experience also demonstrates that in order for sustainable gains to be achieved, work force health initiatives must be integrated into the organisation's strategic planning processes. A healthy organisation recognises that people are its vital resource, and develops policies, systems and practises which optimise peoples' ability to work together and achieve their full potential.

Policy Statement

Wellfield School recognises that emotional and mental health is as important as physical health. This policy applies to everyone who works in our organisation (including students) and aims to ensure that we all feel supported in our work.

It is the policy of Wellfield School to:

- Promote health and well-being through it's management systems, support services (including counselling and supervision) and health promotions (including alcohol awareness, diet, exercise, self management) and by liaising with external agencies as required;
- Prevent, so far as is practicable, those circumstances detrimental to mental health and well-being.

The Purpose of the Policy:

- Support the effectiveness of our stakeholders in achieving the objectives of the school.
- Enhance the ability of our stakeholders to benefit from provisions made.
- Prevent unwanted developments that affect others' wellbeing when responding to one individual's health difficulties.

Definitions and Terminologies

The term 'mental health difficulties' is one which encompasses a wide range of experiences which can affect the ability of an individual to balance his/her life. These difficulties can range from stress and anxiety through to serious mental health conditions diagnosed and treated by the health services (e.g. in the case of our students, CAMHS). To help staff and students requiring additional support for social and emotional issues the school has a Counsellor who can offer counselling and Supervision as required. The school has also sought support from the Educational Psychologist Department of the LA to offer supervision for members of the Senior Team.

Obviously there are a huge range of such difficulties and it is important to avoid the use of negative terms with stigma attached which may deter an individual from seeking the support required. The inappropriate use of medical terms which may mislead and label unnecessarily must be avoided.

Stakeholders need to be encouraged to respond to the individual's needs rather than labels.

Interactions with other Policies

The Well-being Policy interacts and refines several of its already established policies.

The school's duty of care to its stakeholders is enshrined in legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Human Rights Act (1988), Data Protection Act (1988), Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Disability Act (2001) and Children's Act (2004).

The school exercises its duty of care through this Policy and through related policies including:

- Health and Safety Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Complaints and Grievance Procedures;
- Sickness Absence Policy;
- Capability Procedures;
- Disciplinary Procedures.

This Policy and Confidentiality

While dealings with stakeholders are subject to the school's confidentiality rules it must be emphasised that this is often of paramount importance to those experiencing mental health difficulties. However, it must be emphasised that it may be necessary to breach confidentiality in certain circumstances where the individual is deemed to be a risk to either themselves or other people. If there is a statement between these two statements then it should be stressed that the safety of the individual and/or the safety of other members of the community takes precedence over confidentiality.

This Policy and the School Disability Statement

The Disability Discrimination Act defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities" and defines "long-term" as "12 months or more". Certain mental health difficulties may fall under this definition and will therefore qualify as disabilities.

If a member of staff declares a long term mental health difficulty (and therefore a disability) to a member of staff, this information must be passed on to the relevant Subject Leader and Senior Team Link in order to facilitate support. The school must make reasonable adjustments in order not to disadvantage the individual.

However, most cases are likely to be of shorter duration, in which case:

The situation will be dealt with under the school's sickness absence procedures.

This Policy and the School Disciplinary Procedures

The behaviour of some individuals experiencing a mental health difficulty may be very disruptive and may contravene Disciplinary Codes and/or be detrimental to the wellbeing of other members of the school staff. Formal action may be suspended where an individual has declared to the School effects of the behaviour and to seek to identify suitable support to moderate that behaviour.

Responsibility of the School

- Promote the emphasis towards good health and wellbeing and consideration of this goal within all relevant aspects of its operation.
- Provide central support and advisory services.
- Produce and disseminate guidance notes to the Policy to offer practical step by step procedures and guidance.
- Provide training to staff.
- Encourage a non-stigmatising community to enhance the effectiveness of its actions.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Responsibility of key role holders

- Provide the external health services agencies with clear information on all aspects of work activity for members of staff in order that informed recommendation can be made.
- Advise external health service agencies with regard to the scope of the support services the school can offer to staff.
- Establish effective monitoring processes so as to be able evaluate the impact of the policy
- Make recommendations on developments and improvements to the policy.
- Establish an ongoing effective communication with the school's Human Resources Services provider.

- Ensure the promotion of the policy throughout the organisation.

Responsibility of staff

All staff are expected to:

- maintain a non-stigmatising community.
- treat each member of school with dignity and respect as an individual and not a problem or a condition.
- take advantage of training and information sources.
- uphold confidentiality (wherever safety is not at risk).
- recognise the limits to what they can do.

The school recognises that where individuals help a colleague experiencing mental health difficulties, each person has boundaries or limits to his/her knowledge, responsibilities and competence and that these boundaries must be respected. The school will provide for its staff suitable advice and training on:

- Identifying mental health difficulties and making initial referrals.
- Recognising the need to refer an individual to support services.
- Accessing the school's support services.

Resources for staff who provide support for others

The school will provide staff members with information on the support available within the school and will encourage them to access those services through a series of publicity and awareness campaigns and through staff induction procedures.

The school support services have a limit on what they can offer in this regard and the school is committed to working closely with its Human Resources Service Provider, Occupational Health Consultant and Advisors, Health Services and other relevant bodies.

KEY INDICATORS

Physical Health

Studies have shown the regular, daily light or moderate exercise is beneficial for the prevention of heart disease and other life threatening diseases. The provision of opportunities for physical activity is one way workplaces can contribute to promoting health and preventing illness:

- Existences and quality of fitness/exercise activities available for staff (suggested action – conduct a survey to gauge interest in a programme including staff interests).
- Availability of regular individual health assessment for staff (suggested action – consider networking with local health assessment service agencies, GP's and other providers).
- Existence and quality of an ongoing staff health promotion/education programme covering physical health issues (suggested action – develop a plan for dissemination of information and advice and develop a data base of useful contacts and available information – diet alcohol and other drugs, communicable diseases, cancer, heart, smoking and others).
- Existence of other preventative initiatives in the area of physical health (suggested action – develop a co-ordinated approach to conducting these activities – immunisation programme, injury prevention, personal physical safety, providing healthy food choices).

Personal Wellbeing

There are many psycho-social factors which influence personal health and wellbeing. Mental health promotion in the workplace can prevent stress as well as promoting an understanding of mental illness.

- Existence and quality of an ongoing mental health promotion/education programme for staff. (suggested action – develop programme covering life issues – life cycle changes and adjustments, managing change, stress management, assertive communication, problem solving, time management, loss and grieving, other – e.g. financial management).
- Existence and quality of flexible working arrangements to cater for family and other external responsibilities/demands. (suggested action – review meeting times, frequency, school working patterns, and timetable).
- Existence and quality of staff support systems in school. (suggested action – develop data base of resource people, organisation and information).
- Tolerance of diversity among staff (suggested action – ensure awareness of relevant legislation, codes of practice development a process for implementation).

- Existence and quality of effective communication systems (suggested action – review lines of communication and delivery methods).
- Existence and quality of work/life balance and systems within school to help promote this with staff (suggested action – review staff room facilities to meet needs of the staff, scrutiny of school calendar to identify ‘Well-being Family Weekends’).

Organisational Health

Harmonious working relationships created by effective leadership and staff involvement in decision making, together with effective administration systems, are important contributors to staff health and wellbeing. Administrative and professional support can assist staff to undertake their designated role with organisational purpose and direction.

- Is leadership considered to be supportive of staff needs? (suggested action – consider formal and informal communication processes – Wellbeing questionnaire: consider regularly/informally consulting staff for their input and feelings; consider means of recognising staff achievements formally and informally).
- Are staff supportive of each other? (suggested action – consider opportunities for good quality staff interaction e.g. opportunities for team teaching, mentor programs).
- Do staff have a clear understanding and acceptance of their roles and responsibilities in the school? (suggested actions – review perception and actual performance).
- Are the work demands on staff considered reasonable and realistic?

Community Relations

A strong and positive relationship existing between the school and the local community is important for staff support and development as well as for providing for co-operation and access to resources

- The existence and quality of parent involvement in the school (suggested action consider if there is a mechanism for parents’ views about the school to be regularly obtained and made known to all staff).
- The existence and quality of the relationship between the school and local recreation and leisure agencies regarding access to resources and services for staff health and wellbeing (suggested action – make contact with agencies and local recreation agencies and present options to staff).
- The existence and quality of the relationship between the school and local business industry (suggested action – develop a formal communication process – allocate responsibility to staff members).
- Does the school have arrangement with welfare and other community agencies regarding access to services and resources for staff health and wellbeing? (Suggested action – ensure that local agencies are aware of the schools health and welfare policy – develop relationships and conduct regular communication).

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.