



# The Federation of Mill Hill and Woodcroft Primary Schools Stress and Wellbeing Policy

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Co-ordinator responsible for the policy in consultation with the staff and governors:

Head Teachers

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## **Introduction**

Within the Federation of Mill Hill and Woodcroft Primary Schools we are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all staff.

This policy describes the responsibilities that the Head Teachers and Chair of Governors have for assessing stress related issues as set out under the HSE's Stress Management Standards and for carrying out suitable and sufficient risk assessments to reduce and monitor workplace stress. It outlines personal responsibilities that everyone shares to look after themselves and it provides guidance on the implementation of procedures and appropriate control measures.

The Federation intends to implement safe practices at work at all times, It is committed to reducing the risk of injury or ill health caused by workplace activities amongst its employees and all other persons who may be affected by those activities. The Federation will take all reasonable and practicable steps to manage stress in the workplace, ensure that the risk is assessed and that we take suitable precautions and provide sufficient information, instruction and training to support our aims.

It will never be possible to eliminate all stress from the workplace and some pressures are needed to provide challenge and motivation. Stress is not caused exclusively by work or the workplace. It can be caused by the failure to achieve a work-life balance. We encourage all staff to take care of themselves at all times while the Federation takes care of staff at work.

The HSE define stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". This makes important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly and stress which can be detrimental to health.

## **Definitions**

There are various descriptions and definitions of stress and stress related issues. The following definitions are intended to be a simple guide to frequently used terminology:

**STRESS** – the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed upon them, It arises when they worry that they cannot cope.

**WORK RELATED STRESS** – results from a conflict between the role and needs of the individual employee and organisational, personal or ergonomic factors in their workplace. There can also be an unacceptable tension between demands of work and the individual's life outside work. Stress is also often typified by a lack of control over conditions at work.

**WORK/LIFE BALANCE** – is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work, leading them to be able to enjoy an optimal quality of life outside and inside the workplace.

**PRESSURE** – is usually the impetus that gives us drive, motivation, challenge and enthusiasm but in excessive amounts it can cause a loss of control and lead to an inability to cope.

RISK ASSESSMENT – is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, including ill health, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm occurring.

## **Responsibilities**

### Managers

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their jurisdiction
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated in the workplace
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to any staff who are experiencing stress outside of work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Make sure all staff are aware of the Employee Wellbeing Help Line phone number
- Support staff who have been off sick with stress
- Any information gained from staff surveys and other measures of workplace stress must be properly communicated to staff
- Be aware of the six categories of risk factors identified by the HSE (appendix 1)
- Treat all staff with fairness, equality, dignity and without discrimination
- Hold Performance Management to all staff 3 times per academic year

### Employees

- Raise issues of concern with your Line Manager
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended
- Accept the general duty to take care of their own health safety and welfare
- To ensure that they don't put themselves or others at risk
- Use recommended control measures and report any concerns to their Line Manager without fear of reprisal
- Be a supportive member of staff
- Report any medical conditions or health problems (temporary or otherwise) that could affect their ability to work safely

## **Legal Requirements**

Head Teachers and the Chair of Governors must ensure that they or their designated responsible person are competent to carry out the range of risk assessment required and who is suitably trained to take a lead in stress management whenever possible. They must also be able to identify any potential signs of stress by monitoring sickness absence rates, workloads, interpersonal relationships in the workplace and employee feedback.

Training for staff must be provided for managing stress. This can be found on the E-Learning website or an alternative workbook is available from the Admin Manager of each school.

It is important that Head Teachers and Chair of Governors know to seek help and advice from EPS when required. They should also remember that early intervention is the best way of helping staff through any problems they might have.

***HSE Management Standards for Work-Related Stress***

The six management standards are:

**Demands**

Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs

**Control**

Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work

**Support**

Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues

**Relationships**

Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, eg. Bullying at work

**Role**

Employees indicate that the Federation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change

Children's Services Stress Management Staandard Assessment Checklist CSAF-014 is the departmental tool for assessing this area of stress management. This must be completed in the consultation with the employees to which it refers.

To assess performance against the standards and monitor work-related stress, use existing information such as:

- Sickness absence data
- Staff turnover data
- Attendnace trends
- Staff surveys

Monitor personal characteristics such as:

- Productivity changes
- Behavioural swings

Seek out fresh information by using:

- Team questionnaires
- Feedback from one to one sessions
- Feedback from colleagues

Appendix 2

**Action Plan**

<i>Demands</i>	<i>Desired Area</i>	<i>Current state</i>	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Who will take the work forward?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>How will staff receive feedback?</i>	<i>Action completed?</i>