

LONSDALE



Well-Being Policy

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Source:

HfL Employee Well-Being model Policy
Issued April 2020

The Professional Associations/Trade Unions have been consulted on this policy, and HfL recommends it for adoption.

Rationale

At Lonsdale School, we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop both personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils, and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

We believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a document that embraces the many school practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harm from stress and ensure that there is cohesion and progress in working towards the health and wellbeing of all staff.

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1. Introduction & Scope

This policy covers the school's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of school leaders and others for maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

We aim to ensure that our school:

- supports staff mental health and wellbeing
- minimises stress
- helps staff to keep a healthy work-life balance and manage their family and work responsibilities
- ensures staff feel valued
- recognises and promotes the importance of a happy team
- involves staff in decision making
- takes account of equality implications.

Lonsdale School holds the Wellbeing Award for Schools and believes in promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health across the school as well as making our school a place of emotional wellbeing and support by improving mental health provision for all pupils and staff.

This policy sets out how the school fulfils its legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The school recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

This policy applies to all employees of the school. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2. Responsibilities

2.1. School

The school recognises its legal duty of care to employees to promote health at work. The school will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and create a working environment where potential work-related stressors, as far as reasonably practicable are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices.

2.2. Leaders

Leaders should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the appropriate information and support to do their job. Leaders should also familiarise themselves with the school's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff.

In particular, leaders are expected to ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;

- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

2.3. Senior Leadership Team/Governing Body

School leaders in liaison with the governing body will develop school-wide policies and procedures to support the wellbeing of employees. Leaders will assist managers in supporting individuals and liaise with occupational health (OH) as needed, with the objective of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

2.4. Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and must raise concerns with their manager if they feel that there are work issues that are causing them stress or having a negative impact on their wellbeing. Employees must take responsibility for developing their own skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.

2.5. Occupational Health

The school subscribes to an OH service, Optima Health. OH professionals will work with school leaders to provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work or to return to work. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from the school, liaising with GPs and working with schools to help employees to retain employment.

3. Health promotion initiatives

From time to time the school may develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing. We acknowledge the hard work and commitment by contributing to the Herts Rewards Scheme.

We also subscribe to the School Advisory Service (SAS) Health and Wellbeing Services. For further detail please see leaflet scan in Staff Shared, Handbook folder.

Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example lunchtime walking or dancing clubs as well as to engage in staff events to celebrate and recognise achievements.

4. Training and support

Managers and employees should regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to changing job demands, this will usually be focused on internal support, often relatively simplistic in nature and most commonly developed to cover all staff as new initiatives are introduced.

Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress audits and staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example departmental/team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and organisation-wide methods. The school will seek to ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns. The school's appraisal aims to be a supportive process to ensure the above.

5. Occupational health support

If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their manager. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects they find to be a struggle, this may lead to the identification of training/support needs.

A referral to the occupational health team may be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team will provide a report on the employee's fitness to work. This report will contain any recommended adaptations to the working environment, for consideration by the referring manager.

6. Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with the Staff Handbook and other policies, procedures and guidance. These include, in particular -

- Equal Opportunities
- Leave of Absence and/or Career Break
- Pay & Appraisal
- Health & Safety
- Health & Attendance
- Whistleblowing

7. Appendix 1 – links to external organisations

ACAS booklet on health and wellbeing that sets out the components for a healthy workplace
<https://www.acas.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing>

MIND gateway Mental Health at Work: your first stop for better mental health at work
<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk>