

Employee Emotional Health & Wellbeing Policy

'A state of mind in which an individual is able to realise his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

(The World Health Organisation 2010)

Background

Ofsted's 2019 'Teacher Wellbeing' publication states that while most teachers enjoy teaching and are positive about their workplace and colleagues, self-reported well-being at work is generally low or moderate. The main factors negatively influencing wellbeing were suggested to be high workload, perceived lack of support from leaders and lack of confidence with behaviour management. It was noted that generally, teaching assistants have perceived higher levels of wellbeing, however these were still low in comparison to other professions. Briarwood seeks to ensure that all staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. We recognise that staff wellbeing is important to pupil achievement and the schools performance.

For information on the emotional wellbeing support for pupils please see our Pastoral policy.

Rationale

Briarwood School has responsibility for the wellbeing of all our staff;

- A good wellbeing is central to staff effectiveness and satisfaction, and pupil learning.
- Work-life balance is about helping staff combine work with their personal interests and commitments.
- The governing body has a statutory responsibility to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees.

In order for our staff to be at their most effective they need to have good wellbeing;

- To attract and retain the calibre of staff needed for a 21st century education system;
- To improve the school's effectiveness by actively reducing staff sickness, absenteeism and turnover;
- To develop a more motivated workforce, with high morale, even more able to deliver a better education for our children.
- To improve team work, staff development and co-operation by effectively distributing leadership and creating new leaders;
- To recognise that improving workplace communication has a positive outcome for the workforce.

Ethos

At Briarwood we believe that staff wellbeing is imperative to the success and maintenance of our school. We aim to create an effective wellbeing framework that supports staff to increase their awareness of their emotional health and wellbeing. This is reflected within the 'Briarwood Wellbeing Charter' (Appendix A)

Two key elements to support good mental health are:

- Feeling Good – experiencing positive emotions like happiness, contentment and enjoyment. It also includes feelings like curiosity, engagement & safety.
- Functioning Well – how a person is able to function in the world. This includes positive relationships and social connections, as well as feeling in control of your life and having a sense of purpose.

Aims of the policy

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to pupils.
- To help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- To provide staff with training to deal positively with stressful incidents, and provide them with a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies via training.
- To improve staff development, co-operation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- To make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and wellbeing issues.

Roles and responsibilities

Pastoral Lead

- Will ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard.
- Will support the governing body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress. This includes preventing unnecessary stress and ensuring that any work-based stress employees experience is at a productive, healthy level.
- Will adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons.
- Will facilitate the Staff Wellbeing Forum and ensure outcomes are accessible to all.
- Will ensure clear communication between staff and management with regards to school life.
- Will create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, and will enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness.
- Will ensure that all staff are aware of and trained in-line with the school's priorities and offered opportunities for development.
- Will monitor and review any measures that are planned, and assess their effectiveness.
- Will conduct risk assessment for work-related stress in consultation with senior staff.
- Will make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer-term reasonable adjustments to work.

Staff members;

- Will make themselves aware of the school's policies on Capability, Bullying and Harassment, Code of conduct, managing absence
- Will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.
- Will ask their Line Manager for help or support if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and so it's important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads.

- Will identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school.
- Will apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance and be honest about sickness absence.
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.

Actions to support new staff

- All staff will be given a school orientation by the Head of School or line manager.
- All new staff will receive a staff induction programme. This will continue to include all important policies, or their location, and will include this policy on health and wellbeing.
- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required.
- All staff will be assigned a buddy on their first day
- At the end of the first week of employment, new staff will have a review with a senior member of staff.
- All new staff will have a 3-month review interview with their Line Manager. Additional reviews may be scheduled at 6-months and/or a year.

Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

- The Executive Leadership Team (Executive Headteacher, Head of Education & Skills, Head of Inclusion & Provision, Head of Operations) will encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns.
- The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams will be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.
- Where additional, professional advice is required, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised.
- Where necessary, staff should be encouraged to use the confidential counselling service available. This service provides staff with serious concerns to obtain advice and support outside of the workplace.
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the Education Support Partnership helpline or support from other relevant bodies.
- During this time, the school will ensure that at all times the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.
- All staff have access to external supervision through the Bridge Foundation

Current Objectives

“Ensure teacher workload is reasonable and sustainable”

Curriculum:

- Use DfE workload reduction toolkit to support implementation of updated curriculum areas.
- Development of “ready to use” resources and SOW
- Continuation of vast CPD offer

Assessment:

- Ensure assessment expectations are reasonable, and consideration given to times of year.
- Implement “Assessment Week” (in-class assessment focussed time)
- Learning map Approach – 1 x a year.
- Schedule teachers meeting for assessment time during relevant points of year.
- Introduction of user-friendly app that all staff able to use.

Behaviour:

- Generic frequency chart to support new systems
- Medical and behaviour debriefing system.

Staff voice:

- Develop teacher “workload” committee.
- Identify workload challenges.
- Termly wellbeing drop in sessions.

“Implement a systemic approach to support emotional wellbeing”

- Display additional wellbeing support in all staff rooms – e.g. Action for happiness
- Introduction and implementation of wellbeing accreditation for schools
- Continued clinical supervision for Response Team members
- Work place stress questionnaire and “you said” “we did” feedback

“Implement a systemic approach to support physical health”

- Signpost to Employee Assistance Programme.
- Hep B vaccinations.
- Flu vaccinations.

Wellbeing approach

Staff will have access to training sessions and signposting to approaches and resources that will support their own emotional health and wellbeing with an aim to foster teamwork and create solidarity.

Whole School approach	Education Support Partnership	Wellbeing Charter
	Action for Happiness	Information Sharing
	Library of resources	Posters / Leaflets
		Signposting
		Wellbeing Survey
Whole School offer	Supervision	Sessions provided by trained people
	Social Activities	Wellbeing champions to organise events
	Mindfulness	Programme developed by qualified staff member
	Parental Leave offer is more flexible than statutory requirements, providing support to working parents	Information sharing

	Wellbeing, Counselling, Healthcare package	
	Comprehensive CPD offer including whole school team building events	
	Termly debriefing sessions from qualified staff for staff working in classes with pupils with complex medical needs, or challenging behaviour	
Targeted Support	Significant incidents – debriefing/counselling with a trained professional for all staff involved in a significant incident	
	Due to the nature of the work, occupational health referrals are viewed as supportive and recommendations are always implemented. OH referrals will be made for all musculoskeletal related absence in addition to mental health related absence. Staff will also benefit from stress in the workplace risk assessments where required and targeted support will also be offered to staff with medical conditions. Risk Assessments will support their workplace requirements.	

In addition to the above, as stated in our wellbeing charter, we have taken actions based upon teacher reflections that will reduce workload and support employee wellbeing. Please refer to Appendix A.

Staff Identification

Training and signposting to assessment materials will form the basis for the staff identification. Onus will be placed on staff to self-assess and information for next steps will be available on request.

Staff wellbeing questionnaires will be sent out annually and the analysis of this will help to improve and inform whole school wellbeing approaches.

Monitoring and Assessment

Staff questionnaires and surveys provide an opportunity throughout the year to enable whole school wellbeing assessments to take place to improve practice and monitor outcomes.

The wellbeing working party will continue to reflect and monitor the impact of the actions taken to support staff wellbeing. This will be placed as priority on the agendas for meetings, including governors meetings, and reflected on with commitment to maintenance of wellbeing.

References

Ofsted 'Teachers Well-being at work at school and other further education providers' – July 2019

Department of Health & Public Health England 'Promoting emotional wellbeing and positive mental health of children and young people' – March 2014

DFE 'Mental health and behaviour in schools' – March 2016

Using Mental Health Standards (2014)

World Health Organisation (2010) 'Mental Health: strengthening our responses'

Review Date:

June 2023

Appendix 1

Wellbeing Charter

Supporting staff wellbeing at Briarwood School

TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

- We ensure continuous development of “ready to use” schemes of work and resources to aid preparation time.
- We work hard to ensure assessment expectations are reasonable and consideration is given to times of increased assessment. Teachers have an “assessment week” which allows off-timetable assessment time during the school day. In lieu of teachers meetings, additional assessment time is also provided at various times in the year.
- Our learning maps are completed once a year, so teachers are able to ‘pre-plan’ sessions and know expectations well in advance.
- Our Heads of Schools are readily available to support routines and implementation of learning within classes.
- At least one department teachers meeting per term.

BEHAVIOUR AND PASTORAL SUPPORT

- We have behaviour and medical debrief system in place to support best-practice and consistency. The process highlights any wellbeing needs or signposting requirements.
- We have implemented generic behaviour frequency systems created to reduce workload.
- Our Leaders and Heads of School are visible and available to support on-call duties. Each site has an available manager to support wellbeing and the school has a behaviour and medical response team to support behaviours that challenge, medical emergencies and interventions.
- We celebrate our on-going professional development of staff to understand behaviour systems and functions of behaviour, decreasing anxiety around the management of behaviours that challenge. Including Team-teach, raising feelings of safety and shared responsibility.

ENVIRONMENT

- At Briarwood we aim for a place that staff are able to retreat to during break times, or any other time of need.
- We have wellbeing areas on each site that staff are encouraged to use for moments of respite (and puzzle making!) throughout the day.
- We have staff “Wellbeing” boards on each site, celebrating our colleagues (i.e. “staff shout outs”) and for information sharing about wellbeing support that is available.
- All departments have fans and water coolers to maintain a cool environment.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- Our performance management is viewed as a supportive measure and we value teacher’s ownership over their development.
- Teachers are not graded with ‘old’ terminology and lesson observation format is inclusive with teaching staff, ensuring staff voice is recognised and heard.
- Teachers have opportunity to reach out to their Heads of School for wellbeing support.

STAFF SUPPORT

- At Briarwood we value staff voice and feel every member of staff should be heard.
- We survey staff wellbeing to get honest opinions about how to improve and ask for feedback on our CPD offers to ensure these remain of value.
- Actions are taken as a result of staff voice surrounding workload.
- Stress in the workplace risk assessments are undertaken as required and OH referrals are supported.
- There is a staff suggestions box on each site
- We have a therapist onsite once a week offering 1:1 and group supervision for staff

COMMUNICATION AND MEETINGS

- We hold weekly meetings for all staff to ensure effective communication and cascading of essential information.
- An annual plan of meetings and deadlines is provided to all staff at the start of the academic year.
- Our bulletin handouts are available to all staff, and key issues raised are open for discussion during these meetings.
- Where a meeting can be avoided or finish early, this is permitted to support wellbeing and time management.
- We promote an “open door” leadership style.
- PPA time is available to take from home, with fulltime teachers being given a day every 2 weeks.
- Electronic screens display key messages in each staff room and Reception area.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- We highly value professional development and strive to ensure all colleagues have the opportunity to develop their knowledge.
- We have a vast CPD offer to all colleagues, including external, accredited and internal training opportunities. CPD twilights also include wellbeing support sessions as we regard this highly at Briarwood.

Wellbeing Charter

Supporting staff wellbeing at Briarwood School



- ✓ Cycle to work scheme
 - ✓ Employees can save between 25% and 42% on bikes
 - ✓ Bike repair service information
 - ✓ Cycling events publicity
 - ✓ Map information and route support
- www.betterbybike.info

- ✓ Telephone counselling
- ✓ Advice on work-life balance
- ✓ Mental Health support
- ✓ Practical activities guide to reducing stress i.e. breathing techniques
- ✓ Job-specific wellbeing knowledge and support.



www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/



- ✓ Guide to workplace wellbeing for employees
 - ✓ Bristol City Council connected links and resources for wellbeing
 - ✓ Information on how to improve health at work
 - ✓ EveryMindMatters
- www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk

Additional website Links:

- <http://intranet.bcc.lan/ccm/navigation/people/health-and-wellbeing-at-work/>
- www.actionforhappiness.org
- <http://iapt-bristol.awp.nhs.uk>
- www.verywellmind.com
- www.freemindfulness.org
- <https://bristolmind.org.uk/>



Gender specific support

Bristol Women's voice – Women's health support, including menopause support.



Man Up Man Down – Men's charity, sharing advice, support and experiences.