



# Wellbeing at Work Policy

## Endeavour Multi Academy Trust



## Key people

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team	[Tony Dooley]
Staff Wellbeing Lead (if different)	[Ceri Rowley]
Trust Oversight Committee	[Policy Oversight Committee]

## What is this policy?

A staff wellbeing policy explains and sets out the Trust's commitment to the wellbeing of all staff. It should outline how the Trust will support its staff, its ongoing commitment to staff training, and ensuring that all staff are treated fairly and professionally at all times. It should be also reviewed and monitored against the National Health and Safety standards.

## Who is in charge of Wellbeing?

The Trust recognises the statutory responsibilities related to employment and staff have the primary responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, this policy should also be viewed alongside other policies and procedures in relation to duty of care as an employer to all members of staff. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Managing Attendance at Work Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy (delegated to schools);
- Flexible Working Policy;
- Time Off Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Harassment and Bullying Policy;
- Grievance Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy.

## Why the need for a Staff Wellbeing Policy?

Education Support in conjunction with YouGov carried out a *Teacher Wellbeing Index 2018*, this found that more than three-quarters of teachers surveyed experienced work-related behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms and more than half were considering leaving the profession due to poor health. Senior leaders have been particularly hard hit with 80% suffering from work-related stress, 40% suffering from symptoms of depression and 63% considering leaving the profession – an issue, which unaddressed will leave many schools with no one to lead, motivate staff and maintain and improve educational outcomes.

## **How will this policy be communicated?**

This policy can only impact upon practice if it is a (regularly updated) living document. It must be accessible to and understood by all stakeholders. It will be communicated in the following ways:

- Posted on the Trust website
- Available on the internal staff network/drive
- Available in paper format in the staffroom
- Part of school induction pack for all new staff (including temporary, supply and non-classroom-based staff)
- Integral to updates and training for all staff
- Reviews of this policy will include input from all staff, helping to ensure further engagement

## **Purpose**

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust, as an employer, has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It is also required to have in place measures to mitigate as far as practicable factors that could harm employees' physical and mental wellbeing, which includes work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the Trust/School's control.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as "the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

This policy recognises that there are many sources of work-related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or pupils. The purpose of this policy is to maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and wellbeing by making sure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently.

Endeavour Multi Academy Trust is committed to the physical and mental wellbeing of all its employees and this policy sets out how the Trust will manage those obligations and commitments. The Trust recognises that performance and wellbeing are linked and that striving for a reasonable balance between work life and home life, will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance and success.

## **Aims**

The aims of this Wellbeing Policy are:

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to pupils.
- To help ensure that our Trust and schools promote the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- 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.
- To attract and retain the right people in the right jobs to deliver improved outcomes for young people.
- To support all of the Trust's employees to give their best in a supportive and positive environment.
- To put into place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and support.
- To encourage employees to have honest conversations with their line manager when support is required.
- To ensure line managers recognise the signs of a colleague who needs support and to know how to approach and manage the situation.
- To reduce sickness absence by focusing on preventative approaches.
- To carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions, including flexible working where possible and appropriate, whilst maintaining focus on operational delivery and excellence in teaching and learning.
- To acknowledge the need for the Schools' Leadership Teams (including Board of Trustees and Local Governing Boards), trade unions/staff representatives and employees to discuss wellbeing and workplace approaches.
- To operate fairly and consistent complying with health and safety and equality legislation.

## **Legislation**

Pieces of legislation that will be considered when promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, including, but not exclusively:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010
- Working Time regulations
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999

## **Responsibilities**

### **Board of Trustees / Local Governing Boards**

The Board of Trustees and Local Governing Boards will ensure that the health and wellbeing of all employees is a primary consideration and will ensure that our Trust/schools fulfil the legal duty of care to employees and review the effectiveness of this policy. The Chief Executive Officer, Education Development Officer and Executive Headteacher/Headteachers will be responsible for ensuring relevant policies and procedures are implemented and followed.

### **Line Managers**

Line Managers at our Trust/schools must familiarise themselves with the relevant organisational policies to ensure measures are in place to minimise the risk to employee wellbeing. Line managers can reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring employees understand their role, what is expected of them and how standards will be measured.
- Fostering a team culture where open communication is respected and encouraged, and everyone's contributions are valued equally leading to high motivation and morale.
- Ensuring employees know who to approach with concerns about their work or wellbeing.
- Ensuring workstations and resources are appropriate and fit for purpose.
- Providing the necessary support with work direction and clarification, providing regular feedback and praise and addressing individual workload to ensure a fair and reasonable balance of work between the team.
- Taking responsibility for following the relevant policies when required and taking decisive management action to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing e.g. prompt referrals to Occupational Health and conducting risk assessments.
- Ensure that all staff have access to resources on health and wellbeing in schools, including practical sessions to deal with mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues, and that they are given the appropriate time to undertake this.
- Conduct an annual survey of staff, focused on health and wellbeing, and share and act upon results.

### **Employees**

Everyone has a personal role and responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing to ensure they attend work on a regular basis to fulfil their

contract of employment. Employees can do this by adopting good health behaviours (e.g. in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the Trust/school if they believe that work or the work environment poses a risk to their wellbeing.

We are committed to supporting disabled employees and employees with disabling conditions by working with them to remove any disadvantage which may be a barrier for them. Any personal information disclosed about health and wellbeing will be treated sensitively.

- 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 is 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 Trust/school.
- Will apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance and be honest about sickness absence leave.
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the Trust/school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.
- Will recognise difficulties colleagues may be facing and offer support.
- Will make themselves aware of the Trust's policies on Capability, Bullying and Harassment, Staff Attendance etc.
- 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.

## **Occupational Health Service**

Line Managers and employees can contact the Trust's Occupational Health Service on 01785 276284. A comprehensive Occupational Health Service is available for employees who are attending work or are absent due to illness. Occupational Health support the Trust's approach to wellbeing by providing:

- Individual consultations
- Pre-employment screening
- Fitness for work assessments
- Vaccination service
- Training for line managers
- Advice on return to work plans and rehabilitation back into work

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 line manager. A referral to Occupational Health will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with his/her manager. Discussions between employees and the Occupational Health professionals

are confidential, although a report will be provided to the employer so they have advice from a medical professional on how to best support the employee.

### **Support & Counselling Service**

The Trust will provide support to employees who are suffering from the effects of work-related pressure or stress.

Managers will act swiftly and will be understanding towards employees who admit to being under too much pressure ensuring that they provide support where problems have developed, and where necessary refer the person on for further help. It will not be seen as the individual's fault, nor will they be made to feel guilty.

In many circumstances it may be helpful and supportive for an employee to discuss their difficulties with a trained expert who can help to resolve problems or help the employee to achieve solutions for themselves. The Trust can provide a confidential service called ThinkWell which offers early intervention and prevention support for mental wellbeing including counselling. Support from ThinkWell can be accessed by all employees regardless of length of service and is intended to help with mental wellbeing issues arising from work or due to personal issues. The Occupational Health Unit can assist staff with physical and mental ill health.

ThinkWell offers support based on the independently clinically assessed need of the individual. The support on offer includes self-help tools and counselling (online, telephone and face to face). Up to six sessions of counselling can be provided with the potential for an additional 2 sessions where there is a clinical need. If longer term support is required, contact can be made with an individual's GP for support through the NHS.

Support from ThinkWell can take place in normal working hours with no loss of pay. If an individual wants to access support from ThinkWell in work time and requires paid time off this will need to be discussed with their line manager so they can make arrangements. If the individual does not wish to inform their manager they are receiving support from ThinkWell they may identify the time as a "medical appointment" by arrangement with the manager.

The support is confidential and no information concerning the content of the sessions will be provided to any other party without the consent of the individual.

The Trust promotes a "no blame culture" as this is an essential part of this policy and is supportive of individuals who seek assistance with work related stress.

It is recognised that employees do sometimes worry that they may endanger the security of their jobs by seeking help for mental health problems. This will rarely be the case since most episodes of depression and anxiety are of a transitory nature and pose little or no threat to the security of a persons' work.

The Trust's aim is to help, not to condemn and will ensure that there is no allocation of blame to those using the support mechanisms. Sufferers are encouraged to seek help at an early stage.

The Trust has an agreed grievance procedure to effectively deal with stress-related problems such as bullying, racial and sexual harassment and interpersonal conflicts.

Please see **Appendix A** for details of Thinkwell.

### **Healthy Workplace**

Employees that have good wellbeing and are engaged with the Trust will go the extra mile, give their best, have less sickness absence and be committed to their job and their employer.

We are committed to implementing the following factors for wellbeing:

- Values-based work environment and management style with unity of purpose, and being treated with dignity and respect.
- Line managers who are well trained in people management skills and confident in their approach.
- Positive working relationship with good team working, open communication, co-operation and flexibility.
- A reasonable balance between work and home life.
- The ability to negotiate workload and pace without fear of reprisal.
- Managers who promote an attendance culture and know how to use appropriate health services (such as Occupational Health) and manage common health problems (such as mental health and musculoskeletal disorders).
- Personal growth in terms of career and skill development.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an organisation's commitment to take account of its economic, social and environmental impacts in the way it operates, while improving the quality of life of the workforce, the local community and society.

CSR activities demonstrate the organisation's commitment to its values, enhances the relationship between the organisation and its employees, boosts morale, attracts and retains employees and improves the

organisation's reputation. This leads to an increased sense of wellbeing at work.

### **Arrangements for implementing the Wellbeing Policy**

Arrangements for wellbeing and stress prevention through good management practices.

These include the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures.
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Formal accreditation such as workplace charter.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers, to be cascaded through to all levels of management and supervision.
- Training and Development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Promotion and reward procedures.
- Managing performance procedures.
- Capability and absence management & return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness.
- Suitable adaptations for disability.
- Harassment and anti-bullying procedures.
- Procedures for communicating with employees on the work of the Trust/school and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements, and contact days with staff on maternity leave.
- The arrangements will be updated and augmented as required and when deemed necessary by the findings of stress risk assessments.

### **Legislative Framework**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act the Trust has a legal duty to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires the Trust to:

- Assess risks to health and safety from hazards at work. This includes the risk to employees from excessive levels of pressure at work.
- Apply the principles of control to the levels and type of pressure, to prevent the development of work-related stress or ill health from exposure to excessive pressure.

- Review whether the health and safety systems implemented are adequately controlling the risks.

The Working Time Regulations place limits on the length of the working week and stipulates the rest periods that employees must receive.

## Appendix A

### What is ThinkWell

There are times when life feels like an uphill struggle but getting help early can make all the difference.

ThinkWell provides friendly, confidential, fast track access to prevention and early intervention services which meet the needs of individuals who are struggling with their emotional wellbeing.

The support available includes self-help courses, access to on-line and independent counselling.

Colleagues who work for schools or academies who buy the Occupational Health SLA can request support for themselves directly from ThinkWell by completing a self-referral form. These self-referrals are strictly confidential and managers will not be notified or receive reports.

Complete the self-referral form and email it to [Think.Well@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Think.Well@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Or phone **01785 276284** during office hours.

For those times when life feels like an uphill struggle...

**...getting help early  
makes all the difference**

# ThinkWell

offers friendly, confidential  
help to keep your mental  
health on track



Find out more online or talk  
to your line manager

 [www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ThinkWell](http://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ThinkWell)

 01785 276284

 Staffordshire  
County Council



### CALM Self Help

Part of the prevention services available from ThinkWell is an online multimedia health information and self-help package called CALM. Using interactive assessment tools and personal multimedia programmes, CALM is designed to let the individual take control again, whether they are feeling down, worried sick, under pressure or having sleepless nights.

CALM is designed to be used when it is convenient for the individual and can be accessed completely confidentially 24 hours a day, 365 days a year from any PC with internet access. To create a secure personal account you will need to create a username and password. You will also need to provide a postcode from within Staffordshire (this does not need to be your own postcode) or you can use any SCC work location postcode.

Access Calm by visiting:  
[www.sccthinkwell.calmyou.com](http://www.sccthinkwell.calmyou.com)

To find out more about ThinkWell visit:  
[www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ThinkWell](http://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ThinkWell)

### Staffordshire Employee Wellbeing



**Take Notice** - Reflecting on experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you and others and allows you to act to improve life at work and home.



**Be Active** - Being active makes us happier as well as being good for our health. Discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.



**Keep Learning** - Learning new things gives a sense of accomplishment, boosts self-confidence and can improve our social networks.



**Give** - Doing things for others - whether small, unplanned acts or regular volunteering - is a powerful way to boost our own happiness as well of those around us.



**Connect with people** - Connect with the people around you - family, friends, neighbours or make new connections.

### Living Life Well

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, Audio disk, British Sign Language or any other language please contact us on: 01785 355777

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For those times when life feels like an uphill struggle...

**...getting help early makes all the difference**

# ThinkWell

offers friendly, confidential help to keep your mental health on track



### ThinkWell Service – supporting you to care for your emotional wellbeing

There are times when life feels like an uphill struggle but getting help early can make all the difference. ThinkWell provides friendly, confidential, fast track access to prevention and early intervention services which meet the needs of individuals who are struggling with their emotional wellbeing. The support available from ThinkWell includes self-help courses, access to on-line, telephone and individual counselling from independent counsellors.



### Manager referrals

To ensure individuals get the help they need, managers are expected to make referrals to ThinkWell at the earliest signs that the emotional wellbeing of an individual might benefit from support.

A manager must discuss with the individual a referral to ThinkWell where they are absent from work for a reason which could be described as having a psychological basis including anxiety, stress, depression or bereavement. Clinical evidence has shown that the earlier support is made available the better the chance of a speedy recovery.

Getting quick access to the support only requires a manager to complete the referral form, including the employee's signature and forward this to ThinkWell. The individual will then be contacted for a telephone assessment as soon as possible. The assessment will provide immediate confidential advice for both the individual and the manager about how to support their wellbeing.



### Getting help directly

Colleagues can request support for themselves directly from ThinkWell by completing a self-referral form or telephoning. Anyone accessing ThinkWell in this way will receive all the same benefits as those who are referred by their managers. These self referrals are strictly confidential and managers will not be notified or receive any reports.

