



Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

Reviewed: July 2024

Next Review: July 2025

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” [Maya Angelou]



Vision Statement

Our school has a Senior Mental Health Lead who will have an oversight of staff development and training which includes wellbeing and mental health.

What is Wellbeing?

Wellbeing is defined as “the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.” However, it is important to realise that wellbeing is a much broader concept and will have a very personal and individual meaning for each of us. For the purpose of this policy we are considering wellbeing in the broadest sense and not merely reflecting on mental health and emotional wellbeing. We are mindful of the language of stigma that surrounds the term mental health and throughout this document will refer to emotional wellbeing.

What is Mental Health?

Mental Health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely

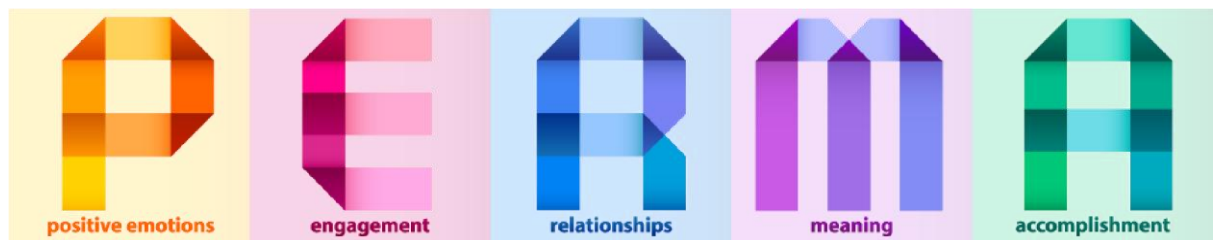
to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case.

At Digby the Tedder, we will:

- Support the wellbeing of all staff to avoid negative impacts on their mental and physical health
- Provide a supportive work environment for all staff
- Acknowledge the needs of staff, and how these change over time
- Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- Help staff with any specific wellbeing issues they experience
- Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims

Why do we need a wellbeing policy?

Core Principles



We use these core principles of The PERMA model developed by psychologist Martin Seligman (2011) and is based on the canons of positive psychology, is about **understanding the conditions under which people thrive and is based on five dimensions: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment.**

We are committed to nurture and inclusion coaching, this is particularly penitent as we are based on a RAF base, we are somewhat unique to other schools in the local area which highlights the needs of our children and their families that they are reliant on the community as family and friends are most often not local and it can be extremely isolating and there is a higher demand and expectation on all of the staff.

What might PERMA look like in our setting?

Positive emotions: how we recognise positive mind-set such as recognising emotions such as joy, gratitude, interest and hope, while providing them with opportunities to feel positive emotions which could be sourced through CPD and initiatives by the wellbeing lead. This may include training the mind to focus on the positives, being resilient and finding ways to “bounce back or bounce forward”.

Engagement: to give our staff the opportunity to find their niche to recognise their expertise and skills to allow them to be working in the right job and carry out tasks to the best of their ability. Allowing our staff to grow and have opportunities which be recognised through succession planning, performance management and CPD.

Relationships: meaningful relationships and holding each other in positive regard is central to all we do and believe. Relationships underpin all of our work. We seek to support our staff to develop strong relationships, with the hope they will be empathetic and responsive to the needs of themselves and others. We recognise the need for all adults to model positive relationships and understand the importance of nurture in the development of wellbeing.

Meaning: staff are encouraged to explore and understand the part they play in their own wellbeing and mental health and wider spheres of community. We want them to feel they belong to and serve something they believe is bigger than then themselves and that they can have a positive contribution and impact in their school and wider communities.

Accomplishment: we want our staff to pursue success throughout tailored CPD programme in line with the SDP. We want them to enjoy the positive feelings that come with their achievements and which will in turn support them to face new challenges. We want our staff to celebrate and know of their accomplishments both in their own work area and the rest of the school.

Who is this for?

At our school this policy works alongside the Safeguarding, Inclusion, Equalities & Diversity and Wellbeing. This is for all staff including:

- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Lunchtime staff
- Volunteers
- Outside agencies

Staff Development & Training

A commitment to staff development and training to enhance and progress our policy and support our provision is key. Our training needs will be established through scheduled review of provision and practice. Although there is not a prescriptive approach to staff development, there is a common understanding that our school have undertaken or will undertake training and development work in the following broad areas:

- Emotion Coaching
- Trauma Informed Approaches
- Attachment Aware Schools

- Emotional Based School Avoidance
- Restorative Approaches
- Relational Approaches (*to support social and emotional wellbeing*)
- Collaborative Problem-Solving Approaches - Circle of Adults/Circle of Courage

Staff Wellbeing

We understand the importance of promoting our staff's wellbeing. We recognise that our staff are our most important and vital resource. Staff are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within our caring, purposeful school community. Reflective spaces for staff including Supervision for teams and individuals is developing practice in our school.

We recognise that there is a direct link between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils, and that the culture and values of our school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a common vision. We believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a supportive and valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that promotes a healthy work-life balance.

We will ensure to promote wellbeing at all times, this will be as follows:

Role of all staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff
- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or resource areas
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

Role of the Headteacher with the support of the Bursar will be expected to:

- Maintain positive relationships with staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide and manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance

- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation
- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

Role of the governing board

The governing board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher and all staff
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

Managing specific wellbeing issues

The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise
- At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.

Digby the Tedder buy in and committed to provide an employee support and counselling service (ESCS) to support our employees' health and wellbeing. The service is a confidential counselling programme that helps employees with:

- stress
- mental health issues
- other matters such as menopause

We strive to ensure employees are healthy mentally, emotionally and physically.

The ESCS is here to provide help for a slight feeling of worry or a more severe problem. We want employees to feel free to reach out to the service.

The service helps employees with problems that have the potential to affect:

- work performance
- jeopardise the health and wellbeing of the individual
- fellow workers

- our children, parents / carers

The service provides employees with confidential sessions. It helps employees to work through a range of work-related and personal issues.

Principles

ESCS can help employees who experience problems that affect their wellbeing and work performance. Examples include:

- personal worries, doubts or fears
- grief (for example, death, mourning, separation)
- work-related stress or problems with colleagues
- addiction (for example, substance abuse, gambling, smoking)
- domestic violence
- caring responsibilities
- health issues
- financial problems
- retirement

The service supports anyone who experiences problems that affect their wellbeing and work performance.

Eligibility

All employees are entitled to support and counselling services. Relevant schools can use the service if they have selected it from us. Access to the service is confidential and voluntary.

It is without prejudice to employees' job security or personal development. Although participation in the service will not prevent:

- capability
- disciplinary
- other performance management procedures

Contact

Employees can make the first contact by telephone or email. After a referral has been made and accepted, a counsellor may offer an assessment. This will be via Microsoft Teams or telephone, whichever the employee prefers

The counsellors are members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. The counsellors abide by their code of ethics and practice.

- Telephone: 01522 555440 and leave a voicemail
- E-mail: emp.supportandcounselling@lincolnshire.gov.uk

A counsellor will advise on the number and frequency of sessions. The number of sessions is limited and will be discussed with the individual.

We need at least 48 hours' notice to cancel an appointment. Employees may contact them via email or telephone to avoid losing one of the sessions.

Referral to the service is voluntary but may be encouraged by:

- colleagues
- headteacher
- friends and family

The headteacher may suggest to employees that they participate in the service. However, an employee's participation remains voluntary, referrals will only be accepted from the employee themselves.

Management information

The ESCS will give regular usage and activity reports to HR. The HR department uses this information to evaluate the programme. They use this to highlight areas of the business where usage suggests particular 'hotspots'. The data is used to inform health and well-being initiatives.

Data protection

The service provider will ensure the safe and secure processing of employees' data. Contact between employees and the service is confidential. The provider abides by a code of conduct to maintain the security of counselling records.

A counsellor may have to consult with an outside agency if they have: □

concerns that somebody is at risk of harming either themselves or a third party

□ concerns about a child

The counsellor would usually talk with the employee about this first.

The practitioner or counsellor will tell employees of their confidentiality policy. They must do this during the initial contact. We do not place the information gained by the service on the employee's personnel file. All counselling sessions are held away from the workplace.

Important Links to other Policy & Practice

This policy does not exist in isolation and has clear links to existing policy and practice in our school. The broad nature of a Staff Wellbeing Policy means it is informed and will inform the following areas:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour & Relationships Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Menopause Policy