

Staff Wellbeing policy

Rationale

The Management and Governing Body of Bromley Heath Junior School, aim to make the work place one that maintains and promotes the health and well-being of employees. New developments and improvements to buildings, feature prominently on school development plans, as we want to provide an attractive, healthy, safe and supportive working environment for all employees.

We are aware that the success of any organisation depends to a great extent on the individual performance of each member of staff, and that this is often related to the health and general well-being of the individual. As a responsible employer, we recognise that our duty of care extends to mental health as well as physical health at work. The school has implemented policies, which both protect its employees and makes clear the responsibilities that rest with each member of staff. Each individual retains primary responsibility for his/her own health and well-being. It is therefore up to us to take reasonable care of ourselves and to draw to the attention of the management any aspect of our work, which is potentially damaging, whilst sharing responsibility for maintaining a healthy environment.

2. Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety policy, which sets, out our position on health and safety at work and identifies the responsibilities of different groups or individuals within the organisation. Risk assessment, emergency evacuation procedures, security, first aid, medicines in school, are all covered by the School's Policy and the Staff Handbook.

3. Smoking

The school recognises the right of employees, pupils and visitors to the school, to a smoke-free environment. No smoking is allowed anywhere on the site. Staff wishing to smoke at lunchtime etc. should do so off premises and should give due consideration to the impact of being observed smoking by pupils and should aim to avoid this.

4. Catering

The school's kitchen provides a selection of well-cooked as well as freshly made food for staff. The meals appeal to a variety of tastes and include a vegetarian option.

5. Harassment and Bullying

A complete and inclusive definition of harassment and bullying is difficult, but defining factors are that the behaviour is offensive or intimidating to the recipient and would be regarded as harassment by any reasonable person.

Common forms of harassment involve offensive conduct and behaviour directed to a person's gender, racial origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, religious conviction, or some other personal characteristic. It can also include the inappropriate use of physical or mental power, more commonly known as bullying.

Other less obvious but equally serious forms of harassment and bullying can occur in 'staff room talk' about colleagues. Expressions of opinion about colleagues, which can be viewed as harmful, malicious, or showing prejudice, are unacceptable anywhere at school. Harassment and bullying of any kind is potentially damaging to physical and mental health not only to the person to whom it is directed but others, who are then subjected to an unpleasant and often hostile atmosphere. The school's Bullying and Harassment policy sets out our position regarding this issue. We recognise also, that complaints may be made with mischievous or malicious intent, and such cases will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

6. Equal Opportunities

The school aims to create conditions where all staff and students are treated with respect and are not subjected to unfair discrimination in any aspect of school life. Details can be found in the school's Equality Policies.

7. Management of Sickness Absence

The school's Absence Procedure, outlined in the staff handbook and the absence policy, takes a positive approach to sickness management, ensuring that staff are treated in a fair and appropriate manner. Staff are reminded that they have a responsibility to colleagues, as absences create extra pressure on those staff working, thereby affecting their well-being.

The policy outlines the role of the employee, the role of the manager and the role of the personnel team. It covers the procedures from notifying absence through to identifying actions in respect of frequent or long-term absence.

8. Possible sources of pressure

Potentially there are many aspects of both our working and personal lives that may place pressure on us. Whilst some degree of pressure can actually improve performance, each of us has a different ability to cope with it and this can fluctuate depending on our personal situation.

Some pressure is inherent in the very nature of the work we do and the size of the organisation. Each job within the organisation carries with it a performance level that the employee is expected to meet.

When staff take up posts with additional responsibility they must expect that with them comes extra pressure.

It is important that individuals attempt to pre-empt pressure and take steps themselves to avoid or reduce it before it becomes a problem. If however pressures increase beyond an individual's ability to cope, it can then become stress. Individuals suffering from stress can be affected emotionally, (e.g. irritability, depression, anger); physically (e.g. raised blood pressure, tiredness, headaches); mentally (e.g. concentration, memory) interpersonally (e.g. relationships become more difficult); or at work (e.g. poor time keeping, accidents, erratic attendance).

9. What to do about it?

If you feel the pressure of work is beginning to affect your health or performance, it is important to take action early, especially if you cannot foresee it lightening in the near future. Whilst the school will try to be sensitive when external pressures are affecting a member of staff, it cannot usually play a role in dealing with those pressures, but it is committed to trying to eliminate or reduce the factors within the institution that may affect the health of its employees.

If you can identify any aspect of your working environment that is adding to your feeling of pressure, e.g. poor lighting, badly sited workstation, gossip about colleagues, these can sometimes be addressed fairly quickly. If the pressure is caused by the nature of your work, the design of your job, or the organisational style, first try to think of a solution to the problem yourself, then discuss it with your line manager. It may be possible to make adjustments in the short or long term, to ease the pressure, and this is much easier to accomplish if you have thought about possible solutions yourself.

Some work pressures are caused by being inadequately trained to do a job, or having insufficient knowledge. If this is the case you should raise the matter with your line manager. The school has well developed training systems to support you.

10. When things can't be changed

Some jobs are just more pressured at some times than at others, so if it isn't possible to change the working practices, it is important to ensure that you are as prepared as possible to cope with that pressure. As a publicly funded organisation, it is not always possible to get the resources or the environment we may wish, at the time we may wish, and that potentially adds to pressure.

11. Preventative/supportive measures at an organisational level

The school will:

- Promote a culture of consultation, participation and open communication throughout the organisation

- Make courses available for all staff on stress awareness and stress management to help them handle pressures they may encounter, and to recognise stress if it occurs, in themselves and others
- Provide behaviour support training for staff
- Help employees identify internal and external sources of assistance
- Provide training and other opportunities directly linked to well-being needs as needed
- Provide employees with a mentor when needed
- Provide space where an employee can have some 'time out' if distressed
- Make arrangements for religious observances wherever reasonable alongside normal duties.
- Implement initiatives designed to encourage staff to achieve a balance between their work and home lives, e.g. part time/job share posts
- Monitor levels of absence due to stress.
- Ensure issues relevant to staff well-being are on the school development plans
- Endeavour to provide a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment.
- Have clear systems of line management
- Recognise the value of each individual's work

12. Staff Responsibility to one another

Staff will:

- Express feelings in an acceptable manner to the appropriate people
- Raise concerns in the correct forum, with a commitment to being part of the solution
- Take advantage of training opportunities on stress management and well-being.
- Report for work in a fit state to carry out duties
- Help maintain a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment
- Use facilities provided appropriately

13. What you can do out of work

Medical advice recommends:

- Eat healthily. Pressure can increase your requirements for certain vitamins
- Exercise. Regular moderate exercise each day will help reduce levels of stress
- Relax. It is important to set aside some time each week to spend doing something you enjoy and to keep a balance between work and leisure.
- Stop smoking. It doesn't help, even if you think it does

- Watch your caffeine intake
- Talk to friends and/or family about what/how you are feeling
- Enjoy a drink, if that is what you like to do, but be sensible

Signed

Chair of Governors

Signed

Headteacher

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