

VERNON EDUCATIONAL TRUST LIMITED
Danes Hill School, Leatherhead Road, Oxshott, Surrey, KT22 0JG

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING OF EMPLOYEES

Danes Hill School

September 2018

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1. Introduction

The school has developed an employee wellbeing policy to manage its obligations to maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers the school's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers 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 the school's commitment to handling individual issues.

2. Objectives

The aim of this policy is to describe the school's commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting 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 the school's performance overall.

3. School commitment

3.1 The school has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees. In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

3.2 The school will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. It will also seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

3.3 The school has invested in mindfulness training each term with an accredited trainer, in retreats, and in self-help books for participants on "*kindfulness*" (a hybrid of mindfulness and self-compassion) and on achieving a better work-life balance. The school offers confidential occupational counselling to all staff for any work-related stress or personal issues with an accredited BACP counsellor in Esher who also acts as an independent listener.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 School

The school has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The school will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

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4.2 Line managers

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards, and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the school's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

In particular, line managers must 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 workstations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

4.3 Bursar providing HR services

The Bursar will develop school-wide policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with 3rd party occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

4.4 Occupational health intervention

From time to time, and on a case by case basis, the Bursar may seek advice from Occupational health professionals to provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

4.5 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, keeping fit) and informing the school if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with line managers is treated in confidence.

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5. Training and communications

Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of change

6. Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering *inter alia* flexible working, the management of short and long-term sickness absence, sick pay, dignity at work (bullying and harassment), equal opportunities, performance appraisal, and staff training and development.

If you have any concerns over your mental health and wellbeing which are not being addressed by your line manager please make contact immediately with the following:

Contacts

Senior management responsibility for the wellbeing of all employees:	William Murdock - Headmaster wmurdock@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk Rob Andrews – Deputy Headmaster randrews@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk Ruth Samson – Head of Bevendean rsamson@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk Richard Quinn – Bursar rquinn@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk
Chair of the Governors	Hugh Monro ahughmonro@hotmail.com
ACAS advice on health & wellbeing in the workplace	http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1361

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