Policy C33 - Wellbeing

University of Brighton Academies Trust

1. Statement of intent

1.1 The Trust is committed to delivering excellence for its' pupils and their families, employees and the local communities it serves. It seeks to fulfill this commitment by ensuring the health and wellbeing of its' workforce is a key strategic priority and is vital to the ongoing and future success of its family of academies. The Trust recognises that the happiness and attainment of pupils is directly impacted by the level of employee wellbeing across the Trust.

1.2 The Trust aims 'To establish UoBAT as the employer of choice for existing and potential new employees at all stages of their career' (Strategic Plan, 2018-2023).

1.3 The Trust aligns itself with the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personal Development) definition of wellbeing:
     'creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation'.

1.4 This policy has been developed with reference to the Thriving at Work report (Stevenson/Farmer, 2017) which sets out what employers can do to better support the wellbeing of staff, including support for those with mental health problems to remain in and thrive in work.

1.5 This policy supports the Trust in fulfilling the responsibilities of The Mental Health at Work Commitment and The Mindful Employer Charter which demonstrate the Trust's commitment to improving and supporting better mental health at work.

1.6 This policy also supports academies in meeting aspects of the leadership and management judgement in the Ofsted 'Education Inspection Framework (EIF)'.

Achieving excellence together

1.7   The first Trust-wide staff Wellbeing Survey (2021) afforded greater insight into the Trust's workforce. The findings have aided the development of this policy and provided a benchmark to measure future survey outcomes and ensure continued focus and investment in staff wellbeing.

1.8   This policy applies to all staff, including those who work on a temporary basis as far as reasonably possible. Where applicable due consideration should be given to the policy aims when dealing with people outside of the organisation including for example volunteers and contractors

2.   Aims

2.1   The aim of the Wellbeing Policy is to facilitate a culture that proactively supports the health and wellbeing of its workforce and one where all staff feel motivated, engaged, included and able to give of their best, and in return feel valued, recognised and rewarded for the contribution they make regardless of their role or location.

To meet this overarching aim, the Trust will strive to:

2.1.1   Provide a supportive work environment where employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance, acknowledging that the needs of both the Trust and individuals may change over time.

2.2.2   Provide robust wellbeing support structures for all staff through: robust policies, procedures and related guidance; developing leadership and management practise and behaviours; providing access to internal support mechanisms and signposting to external support services; and creating employee opportunities to connect across the Trust and to learn from and support each other.

2.3.3   Increase awareness around issues associated with mental health and wellbeing to reduce stigma and the potential for discrimination.

2.3.4   Encourage staff to disclose any relevant health or wellbeing matters including known disabilities, to enable the Trust to provide appropriate support including reasonable adjustments and solutions (see Guidance on Disability Disclosure).

2.3.5   Provide opportunities for all staff to take part in health and wellbeing related activities, including continuing professional development, to support health and wellbeing, encourage social interaction and aid in the ongoing development and maintenance of a positive, supportive and inclusive and supportive workplace community and culture.

3.   The four pillars of wellbeing

3.1   Wellbeing has a wide range of determinants and the Trust intends to take a holistic approach to supporting health and wellbeing by actively endorsing the four key pillars, widely recognised as being key to overall wellbeing:

- Physical Wellbeing
- Mental / Emotional Wellbeing
- Financial Wellbeing
- Social Wellbeing / Connection

3.2   Current initiatives across the four key pillars are set out in Appendix 1.

4.   Responsibilities

4.1   All staff, whatever their role, have a collective responsibility to contribute to the successful implementation of this policy by:

4.1.1   Taking positive action to maintain their own health and wellbeing, striving to achieve a healthy work life balance, for example by taking regular breaks and annual leave.

4.1.2   Where relevant, informing their line manager of health and wellbeing issues and raising concerns about work-place pressures so that appropriate support can be put in place.

4.1.3   Treating each other with dignity, empathy and respect and contributing towards a positive, supportive and inclusive workplace community and culture.

4.1.2   Communicate openly and transparently with all members of the Trust community.

4.1.4   Ensuring their actions or behaviours do not negatively affect the health and wellbeing of others and, where applicable, challenging inappropriate actions and behaviour.

4.2   Line managers at all levels have a responsibility to role model behaviours that promote and support wellbeing, including:

4.2.1   Support the wellbeing of their team and individual staff through best practice people management such as regular one to one meetings and team meetings, and by promoting information about internal and external support services.

4.2.2   Maintain positive relationships with their team and value each individual's contribution, ensuring their efforts and successes are recognised and celebrated.

4.2.3   Monitor workloads, be alert to signs and symptoms of stress and regularly check in with staff about workloads, their work life balance and wellbeing.

4.2.4   Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system for their team, treating all discussions with employees around health and personal issues as confidential unless it is necessary to involve others to support with the issue and the employee gives verbal or written agreement to disclosure if required.

4.2.5   Understand that health, personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary or long-term effect on work performance and take that into account during capability discussions.

4.2.6   Agree and implement reasonable adjustments and monitor and review regularly.

4.2.7   Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles or working practises that may give rise to physical injury, work related stress, physical or mental impairment or impact on health and wellbeing.

4.2.8   Monitor and manage sickness absence in accordance with the Sickness Absence Policy keeping in touch with employees during periods of short or long term absence and conducting 'Return to Work' discussion to support and welcome individuals back after a period of absence.

4.2.9   Seek the advice and guidance of the Trust's Health & Wellbeing Partner if it is thought a member of their team may benefit from additional support such as Occupational Health, the Employee Assistance Programme or Mental Health First Aid support.

4.3   Senior Leaders have a responsibility to:

4.3.1   Demonstrate their commitment to wellbeing, proactively seeking to create a workplace(s) that provide(s) both a safe working environment and a positive, supportive and inclusive workplace community and culture.

4.3.2   Proactively seek and listen to staff views and consult on aspects of employment that may cause stress or impact on wellbeing, including workloads.

4.3.3   Encourage staff engagement with Trust-wide and local surveys to aid the monitoring and improvement of staff health and wellbeing.

4.3.4   Provide timely information around meetings, deadlines, and events to enable staff to manage their workload.

4.4   The Board of Trustees and Executive Team have a responsibility to:

4.4.1 Set and demonstrate the standards for professional conduct and inclusive practises which support a positive, supportive and inclusive culture that proactively promotes and supports health and wellbeing.

4.4.2 Set and monitor wellbeing indicators and review the need for additional measures to improve wellbeing.

4.4.3 Allocate sufficient resources to enable and empower leaders and managers at all levels, and the People and Estates and Facilities Management departments, to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy.

4.5 The People Department have a responsibility to:

4.5.1 Ensure robust policies, procedures and guidance are in place to support health and wellbeing.

4.5.2 Implement and embed best practice wellbeing practises across the full spectrum of the employee experience (e.g. recruitment and onboarding, induction, line management).

4.6.3 Provide specialist advice and guidance and training to enable line managers to fulfil their responsibilities.

4.6.5 Analyse and report on health and wellbeing related data and use this information to inform strategic and operational decisions.

4.6.6 Keep up to date with best practice in health and wellbeing and use this to inform recommendations and decision making.

4.6 The Estates and Facilities Management Team have a responsibility to:

4.6.1 Ensure robust policies, procedures and guidance are in place to protect the health and safety of all employees in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.

4.6.2 Provide specialist advice and guidance in relation to health and safety legislation, policy and procedure.

4.7 The Wellbeing Champions have a responsibility to:

4.7.1 Signpost colleagues to wellbeing support and resources including Mental Health First Aid.

4.7.2 Promote wellbeing initiatives in their academy / nominated department(s).

4.7.3 Contribute to reducing stigma associated with mental health by promoting discussion around mental health and, where appropriate, challenging behaviour.

4.8 The Trust appointed staff Mental Health First Aiders (i.e. Mental Health Ambassadors) have a responsibility to:

4.8.1 Support colleagues with a mental health issue, condition or disability to thrive at work.

4.8.2 Signpost colleagues to internal and external sources of support and resources to help maintain mental health.

4.8.3 Contribute to reducing stigma associated with mental health, where appropriate, challenging behaviour.

5. Legislation and regulation

5.1 The Trust as an employer has a legal duty, alongside its' moral duty to manage the health, safety and welfare of its' employees as far as reasonably practicable. In addition to reducing physical risks, this means operating in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, which includes work related stress. This might include ensuring the demands of job roles are acceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals who experience mental ill health at work. 5.2 The legal frameworks most pertinent to health and wellbeing are:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Mental Health Act (2007)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Mental Health (Discrimination) Act (2013)

6.   Related policies

6.1   The Wellbeing Policy is complemented by all other policies relating to staff which can be found on The University of Brighton Academies Trust website.

7.   Related guidance

7.1   The Wellbeing Policy is supported by the following guidance:

- Menopause guidance   (in progress)
- Alcohol and substance misuse guidance   (to be developed)
- Occupational Health guidance   (to be developed)
- Making workplace adjustments   (to be developed)
- Supporting Mental Health in the workplace   (to be developed)
- Managing work related stress   (to be developed)
- Line Manager Wellbeing support guidance   (to be developed)
- Disability Disclosure   (to be developed)
- Return to work guidance   (in progress)
- DSE Assessment   (in progress)
- Stress Risk Assessment   (in progress)
- Wellbeing Action Plan (WAP)   (in progress)

8.   Policy status and review

Written by	Health & Wellbeing Partner / Head of People
Owner	Head of People
Status	Approved
Equality Impact Assessment	Initial Impact Assessment Yes ☒ No ☐ Full Impact Assessment Yes ☐ N/A ☐
Consultation date	May 2021 • All staff • JCC (19.05.2021)
Approval date	14 June 2021 (Remuneration & HR Committee)
Review date	May 2024
Comments	

Current wellbeing-related initiatives

The current initiatives, opportunities and commitments in place for all staff, across the four pillars of wellbeing are:

Physical Wellbeing
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Participation in national awareness days through Trust wide initiatives linked to movement and physical health
- Occupational Health support
- Annual flu jab (for all employees who do not receive this via the NHS)
- Physical First Aiders across the Trust

Mental / Emotional Wellbeing
- Network of Mental Health First Aiders accredited by Mental Health England
- Network of Wellbeing Champions
- Trust commitment to meet the Mental Health at Work Commitment
- Trust commitment to meet the and Mindful Employer Charter
- Flexible working opportunities are promoted and due consideration given
- Stress risk assessments
- Occupational Health support
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Financial Wellbeing
- The EAP is available for confidential and expert advice on concerns around personal finance issues
- mylifestyle Benefits - discounted retail offers across the spectrum of lifestyle choices

Social Wellbeing / Connection
- Connect regularly with immediate team and line manager through team meetings, regular one to one meetings with line managers and the bi-annual Professional Review Scheme meetings.
- Opportunity to connect with other employees provided through Trust wide and local initiatives.
- Trust-wide network groups encouraged and facilitated, to support diversity and inclusion.

Sources of support

Providing the right level of support to staff when it is needed is paramount.   The Trust recognises that some issues which impact the health and wellbeing of staff can be supported within the Trust, however there are occasions where advice and support from external services may be required.

Internal Sources of support

Leadership Teams
Line managers, academy leaders and Heads of Professional Services departments, have a responsibility to support the health and wellbeing of all staff and can provide suggestions on further steps and signposting to Trust wide support mechanisms.

Health & Wellbeing Partner
If you would like to talk to somebody within the Trust, but not directly linked to your academy or Department, about concerns for your own or a colleague's wellbeing, the Health & Wellbeing Partner is available for suggestions on next steps and signposting. The Health & Wellbeing partner is a Mental Health Ambassador (see below) and an accredited (Mental Health England) Mental Health First Aid Instructor(Adult).
healthandwellbeing@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk

Mental Health Ambassadors
Trust appointed Mental Health Ambassadors are trained Mental Health First Aiders (Adult) (accredited by Mental Health England) are available for all staff to contact.
Academies Central - Home (sharepoint.com)

Wellbeing Champions
Every workplace location across the Trust has a named Wellbeing Champion who can signpost to sources of support and information about physical and mental health and wellbeing.
Meet your Wellbeing Champions! (sharepoint.com)

Employee Assistance Programme (provided by BHSF)
A confidential and free 24/7 helpline providing advice and guidance across a range of work and personal Issues, including legal advice, financial concerns and emotional support. Support includes a confidential counselling service.
Phone: 0800 015 7287

Occupational Health
Occupational Health referrals are sought when a medical opinion is required to ensure the Trust meets its obligations to support medical conditions in the workplace.
Occupational Health Guidance (in development).

External sources of support and information

Education Support
A UK charity dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the education workforce. Free and confidential helpline available alongside information and guidance.
T: 0800 562 561
www.educationsupport.org.uk

Samaritans
Free 24/7 helpline providing emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide.
T: 116 123
E: jo@samaritans.org
https://www.samaritans.org/

MIND
Advice, information and support to empower anyone experiencing a metal health problem.
T: 0300 123 3393
E: info@mind.org.uk
https://www.mind.org.uk

NHS Mental Health Services
Provides urgent help and advice relating to mental health
NHS mental health services - NHS (www.nhs.uk)