

Duddon Saint Peter's CE School



Mental Health & Wellbeing Staff Policy

Duddon St Peters Primary is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. Preventing stress is a major factor in maintaining the wellbeing of the school's staff, which remains a key priority. In light of this, the school understands the importance of trying to reduce and deal with stress, and the factors that may cause our employees to become stressed.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the school and staff members in supporting wellbeing and promoting mental health, and to advise employees on how to deal with mental health issues and prevent stress. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing: "A state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with stresses of life, to realise their abilities, to learn well and work well, and to contribute to their communities."

The school recognises that individuals will react differently to stressful situations and become stressed by different situations and stimuli throughout their working lives. Because of this, it is important that staff understand the different factors that may cause themselves or their colleagues' stress.

A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help staff become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses six aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands.
2. Helping staff to develop collaborative learning spaces using social relationships, supporting each other and seeking help when they need to.
3. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience.
4. Educating staff on social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.

5. Early identification of staff who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with colleagues and governors.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'.

Aim-

- The school will strive to identify and deal with symptoms of stress quickly in order to maintain a healthy workplace.
- The school has a legal requirement to actively respond where any employee displays symptoms of work-related stress.
- All members of staff will be aware of the warning signs that can indicate that a person may be having trouble managing stress, and look out for the following indicators when identifying stress in themselves or others:

Actions to support staff

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Lead by example and encourage staff to be open if they feel stressed, to take breaks and to have a full life outside of work.
- Assist with prioritising work and help to manage employees' workloads. (e.g. use the minimal Literacy marking policy and live marking in Maths at times)
- Reach out to staff during difficult points in their personal lives, e.g. bereavement, allowing sufficient time off and supporting them when they return to work.
- Daily check ins during the school day.
- Research and implement a wellbeing survey twice a year relevant to the needs of all staff, discussing feedback and regularly monitoring its effectiveness and impact on wellbeing.
- Signpost staff using a graduated approach to specialist support where needed, e.g. bereavement counselling, occupational support.
- A mental health and wellbeing governor will be appointed by the governing board who will be responsible with the support of SHML for monitoring the wellbeing of staff. (reflective space drop ins for staff to share concerns.)
- All staff to maintain a healthy work life balance by not responding to communications out of reasonable working hours.
- PPA will be taken in a place of preference, e.g. home or school.
- All appraisals will include a health and wellbeing target, promoting personal responsibility for self care.
- Educate/train staff on mental health.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our children's MHWB policy and our SEND policy in cases mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also

be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE and SMSC policies and should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Teaching about Mental Health

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help. We encourage support staff to participate in the Place 2 Be Mental Health Champions Foundation Programme as part of their training time.

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals.

Staff training to raise awareness of social emotional and mental health well-being topics have been accessed through CAHMS, Cheshire West Autism Outreach, Bounce Forward, Mymind, Educational Psychology services, therapists and counselling services. We also provide regular 'inhouse' training from 'School' on topics such as trauma, attachment needs and behaviour.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a person is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with a member of the schools MHWB team.

Possible warning signs include:

- changes in mood, activity or eating / sleeping habits
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- becoming socially withdrawn from staff and pupils
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism
- drug or alcohol misuse
- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.

The school's Mental Health Well-Being Team (Head Teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENDCO / Elsa lead/ Senior Mental Health Lead/ Mental Health First Aider Governor are responsible for:

- leading and working with other staff members to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health.
- providing advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- keeping staff up-to-date with information about what support is available

- liaising with the ELSA Leader on teaching about mental health
- being the first point of contact and communication with mental health services
- leading on and making referrals to services.

There are clear links with the Positive Relationships & Behaviour Policy because we believe that behaviour, whether it is withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, is likely to be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider behaviour to be a message.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for staff and part of our targeted provision the school will work with specialist/other agencies to support mental health and wellbeing including:

- SAS counselling 01773 814 400 www.schooladvice.co.uk
- Mental Health and Well being officer Rev A. Friend
A.Friend@dstp.cheshire.sch.co.uk
- Drop in sessions for staff to share concerns with Mental Health and Wellbeing governor.
- Referral support to occupational health
- Education support 08009174055 enquiries@edsupport.org.uk
- Citizens advice

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board and the head teacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

Governors are very mindful to respect the health and wellbeing of staff and this is a regular agenda item at governor meetings.

Date: *May 2024*

Date of review *Spring 2026*

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Schools Advisory Service

Work life Balance Practical Support:

- Consumer Rights
- Family matters
- Employee support
- Financial/Debt Management
- Wellbeing
- Legal matters

- Loss/Bereavement
- Depression/anxiety
- Work related matters

The Key benefits of the Schools Advisory EAP service include:

All services are confidential, clinician-led and managed by our NMC registered nurses.



Contact the EAP SAS Service

Helpline number: 01773 814 400
sales@uk-sas.co.uk
www.schooladvice.co.uk