

Wellbeing and Mental Health (Staff) Policy

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Approved by:	Mr J Coucill, Chair of Governors 
Lead of Review:	Mr M Hughes, Assistant Headteacher
Last reviewed on:	July 2020
Next review due by:	June 2023

Policy Statement

"I have come that you may have life and have it to the full." John 10:10

Our Catholic ethos underpins every aspect of our approach to staff mental-health and wellbeing. Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community (World Health Organization).

Stated simply, wellbeing is **"feeling good, functioning well."**

EPCHS wants to ensure that staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. We recognise that staff mental health and well-being is important to pupil achievement and the school's performance. EPCHS is committed to making sure that this Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is implemented so that each individual is able to cope successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress.

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and well-being by making sure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently.



This document describes the approach, at EPOCHS, to promoting positive staff mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

The policy aims to:

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high-standard of education to pupils.
- To help ensure that our school promotes the health and well-being of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- To improve staff development, co-operation and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- To make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work related health and well-being issues.
- To make staff aware of the role of the staff wellbeing committee.

Role of Staff

The governing body:

- Will take overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.
- Will adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns etc., where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.
- Will ensure that clear procedures are in place that will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as the Capability or Disciplinary Policy.

The Headteacher:

- Will ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard.
- Will support the governing body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress.
- Will adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons.
- Will ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life.
- Will create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, and will enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness.
- Will, in conjunction with the staff wellbeing committee, monitor and review any measures that are planned, and assess their effectiveness.
- Will appoint a staff well-being committee who are responsible for ensuring that the good health and wellbeing of all staff members is supported, promoted and valued by the school. The committee will also ensure that school policies and procedures reflect this aim.

- Will make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer term reasonable adjustments to work.
- Will ensure staff are made aware of the benefits for staff that are available e.g. Ride to Work Scheme.

The Staff Wellbeing Committee:

- Will include representation from: the senior leadership team, the teaching staff, the support staff where possible.
- Will meet every term to support the governing body and head teacher in achieving the aims outlined above.
- Will be responsible for taking action that promotes positive staff wellbeing.

Staff members:

- Will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.
- Will ask their head teacher, or the wellbeing committee, for help or support if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and so it's important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads.
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.
- Will make themselves aware of the school's policies on Appraisal and Capability Staff Discipline, Staff Grievance and Code of Conduct.

Actions to Support New Staff

Practical actions to support new staff:

- All staff will be given a school induction by the Business Manager.
- All new staff will receive the staff handbook. This will continue to include all important policies, or their location, and will include this policy on health and wellbeing.
- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required.
- All staff are to be issued with a name badge and access cards for the school systems.
- At the end of the first week of employment, new staff will have a review with a senior member of staff.
- All new staff will have a 3-month review interview with their Line Manager. Additional reviews may be scheduled at 6-months and/or a year.

Procedures for Handling Issues of Wellbeing

The Senior Leadership Team must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The Senior Leadership Team should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.

Where additional, professional advice is required, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised. Where necessary,

staff should be encouraged to use the confidential counselling service listed in The Staff Handbook. This service provides staff with serious concerns access to advice and support outside of the workplace. This extends to their immediate family members.

The school will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate.

During this time, the school will ensure that at all times the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity. Staff members will be consulted about the explanation given to parents when they require a period of absence.

Procedures to Promote Staff Well-Being

- Staff wellbeing committee meets once per term.
- Daily communication via morning staff briefings or email system.
- Continuing professional development for all staff.
- Social events – every effort should be made to give at least 1 month of notice before such events and the personal lives of all staff members will be considered.
- Performance management.
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan.
- All staff invited to INSET days.
- Recognition on staff birthdays/special occasions.
- Staff room provided for staff to relax and take breaks in.
- Administrative staff are to support the wider workforce.
- The Headteacher and Business Manager meet with support staff once per half-term to provide the opportunity to voice concerns and to have their views sought.
- An annual staff well-being survey is completed online by all team members.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in June 2023. Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to the head teacher. This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.