



**SUTTON COLDFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**MANAGING STRESS  
AT WORK POLICY**

**DATE: JUNE 2018  
REVISION DATE: JUNE 2021**

## MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Every job brings its own pressures and demands; these are an unavoidable part of working life. Some pressure can be a good thing, keeping individuals motivated and providing a sense of achievement and job satisfaction. However, people have a varying ability to deal with pressure and, if the emotional and physical demands on a person are greater than their capacity to cope, stress and ill health may occur.

Stress can be defined as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to an individual’s health.

### 2 SCOPE OF POLICY

Anyone can suffer from stress and this policy therefore applies to **all** members of staff. This policy does not apply to agency staff or contractors and any issue regarding stress in those cases should be referred to the agency or contractor.

The Governing Body cannot address all potential stressors. A demand-free school is not practicable and could not be effective.

Whilst the policy primarily deals with work related stress, it is recognised that individuals who are suffering from stress for whatever reason, should have support and access to help. The ‘Managing Stress at Work Policy’ has been developed to provide a fair, consistent and supportive framework for the effective management of stress. It also provides a structured procedure for dealing with cases where an employee’s stress is cause for serious concern.

### 3 LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

The relevant applicable legislation and standards include:

- The **Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974** requires employers to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that their workplaces are safe and healthy.
- The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** requires employers to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities.
- Additionally, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have developed a set of **Management Standards** for Tackling Stress to help employers meet their legal obligations. The Management Standards cover areas of work design that can, if not properly managed, represent the primary sources of stress at work.
- In some circumstances an employee who is suffering ill-health due to stress might be defined as having a disability, and therefore fall under equality legislation.

### 4 MANAGING STRESS AT WORK POLICY STATEMENT

In relation to the management of work related stress, the school:

- Identifies and assess significant workplace stressors;
- Provides appropriate opportunities for staff to effectively identify and manage stress within the workplace;
- Takes all reported occurrences of stress seriously and offers appropriate confidential support for members of staff who are suffering from symptoms of stress;
- Consults with members of staff relating to the prevention and management of work related stress;
- Undertakes monitoring of stress related absence.

### 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Governing Body has a responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the school staff and recognises that their well-being is critically important to its success. The prevention and effective management of stress that is work- related is central to the School’s responsibility to its staff and to the role of line managers.**

**The Governing Body wishes to create an organisational culture in which issues of staff stress are taken seriously and the well-being of staff is given a high priority. Taking action to reduce stress can result in better health,**

reduced sickness absence, increased performance and output, better working relationships and lower staff turnover.

**The Governing Body recognises that the pace of change across the education sector and pressure on resources increases the likelihood of work-related stress. Whilst it may not be possible to eradicate all work-based stress, the Governing Body wishes to create an organisational culture in which issues of staff stress are taken seriously and the well-being of staff is given a high priority.**

**The Governing Body, (in the first instance represented by the Chair), Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development) and other members of the Senior Leadership Team ensure that effective action is taken to minimise work related stressors, including:**

- Maintaining effective communication with staff (particularly during any period of change);
- Using meetings of the Senior Leadership Team, Middle Leaders, Senior Support Staff, Staff Forum and one-to-one meetings (including Appraisal meetings) as an opportunity to discuss the issue of stress;
- Monitoring workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded or overworking;
- Maintaining a safe working environment;
- Providing staff with adequate training, instruction and supervision to undertake their duties;
- Promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour;
- Being aware of the signs of stress and responding effectively to members of staff who identify the potential risk of excessive stress levels.

**The Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development), Deputy Business Manager and HR Manager:**

- Provide advice and guidance on the effective management of stress related absence in accordance with the Staff Leave of Absence Procedures.
- Review available data to ensure that the results are used to assist in the management and reduction of stress.
- Report and manage any stress related absence in accordance with the Staff Leave of Absence Procedures. For longer periods of absence, discussion may be appropriate to offer support and encouragement on a member of staff's return to work. This will normally be carried out by the Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development).
- Ensure that appropriate support and advice will be sought from the school's HR provider if work related stress is identified if an individual is returning to work following a stress related absence.
- Where appropriate, make referrals to Occupational Health.

### **The Responsibilities of Line Managers**

Managers try to create a working environment which avoids or reduces potential stressors.

They:

- Ensure effective communication about School/Department performance, change and proposed developments. This recognises that the impact of change can be reduced if staff feel they have been adequately prepared for it.
- Establish reasonable workloads for individuals giving consideration to their post, experience and their capabilities and establish fair and equitable workloads across staff groups.
- Ensure that work deadlines are reasonable and properly scheduled;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- Create a School/Department culture in which it is clear that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and deal promptly with those who are accused of inappropriate behaviour (see Policy on Bullying and Harassment);
- Take seriously staff concerns about inappropriate student behaviour and ensure procedures to support staff are in place;
- Create a culture where all staff know they can raise concerns and their concerns will be treated seriously and sympathetically; and which avoids a blame culture;
- Recognise that employees need to balance their work and home lives and responsibilities;
- Treat all staff equitably.

### **Occupational Health Advisors (as appointed):**

- Provide medical or specialist advice to support effective stress management.
- Facilitate referrals to workplace counsellors or specialist agencies as required.
- Support members of staff returning to work following stress related absence.

### **Health and Safety Support Team Officers (as appointed):**

- Advise on policies, procedures and standards as regards managing work related stress.
- Provide appropriate health and safety awareness and training to staff, when requested.

### **Members of staff have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and must:**

- Take individual responsibility for their own feelings and reactions to stressful situations and their personal methods of coping.
- Take an active part in the development of any stress risk assessment.
- Inform the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development) or their line manager, if they feel they are experiencing the adverse effects of stress, so that the underlying causes may be addressed.
- Accept opportunities to attend training and receive additional support if appropriate.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not cause unnecessary stress to others.

## **6 MANAGING STRESS WITHIN SCHOOL**

The School's approach to managing stress is based on the principles that all members of staff take individual responsibility for:

- Their own feelings and reactions to stressful situations and their personal methods of coping;
- Informing their line manager, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development), if they feel they are experiencing the adverse effects of stress, so that the underlying causes may be addressed.

The Senior Leadership Team is collectively responsible for ensuring that:

- A request is passed to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher (Student and Staff Development) or line manager for further support and advice if stress at work is identified as a problem or is a reason for absence.
- Work related stressors are proactively identified, properly assessed and minimised using the Managing Stress at Work Risk Assessment (a copy of which is in the Staff Workroom)

This risk assessment is based on guidance from the Health and Safety Executive and examines the six key aspects of work which experts have decided can contribute to stress if not managed properly:

- **Demands** – workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control** – the amount of say staff have in how they do their work
- **Support** – encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation and colleagues
- **Relationships** – positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role** – the understanding by members of staff and the avoidance of conflicting roles
- **Change** – the organisation and management of large and small change within the organisation

- If the risk assessment does not reveal any significant risk of work related stress, the Senior Leadership Team need only keep the matter under review. However, if the assessment identifies potential workplace stressors, controls must be put in place to eliminate or reduce them to the lowest levels reasonably practicable.

Should the circumstances leading to the employee's stress involve conflict with other staff, the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team instigates an independent review to provide an objective analysis of the causes of the conflict and possible solutions. This is done in a supportive and prompt manner. In the event of the employee not wishing to reveal the cause of the illness to the School or not willing to be referred to the Occupational Health Adviser, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will remind the employee of the importance of this and will, where appropriate, consult with the employee's representative to better understand genuine reasons why an employee is not responding. However, if the School asks again for this information and the employee does not respond, the School would follow the sickness absence management procedures.

## **7 FURTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

Support can be sought from professional associations and the school's Health and Safety Support Team on 0121 704 6328. There is also a 24 hour phone support service provided by the Teacher Support Agency on 08000 562561 or they can be contacted via their website: [www.teachersupport.info](http://www.teachersupport.info) a See appendix one for further details.

## **Sickness Absence Management Policy**

This policy operates in conjunction with the Sickness Absence Management Policy.

## **8 EQUALITIES**

This Policy has been subject to an initial Equality Impact Assessment review. It was not considered necessary to carry out a full impact assessment.

## **9 REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

The policy will be reviewed every three years .

## Appendix 1

### **ORGANISATIONS OFFERING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

*Reproduced from the NUT, GMB, Unison & Unite publication "Guidance for School Leaders on preventing work-related mental health conditions by tackling stress"*

#### **MIND**

MIND is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales, providing information and support to those affected by mental distress, as well as campaigning to improve policy and attitudes.

**Mind Infoline: 0300 123 3393; Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk) Legal Advice Line: 0300 466 6463; Email: [legal@mind.org.uk](mailto:legal@mind.org.uk) 020 8519 2122 (England); 029 2039 5123 (Wales) [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)**

Mind Model Mental Health Policies and Fact Sheets are available from:

**<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/>**

**STRESS Teacher Support Network** is an independent charity that provides practical and emotional support to trainee, serving and retired teachers and their families

**24/7 Support Line: 08000 562 561 (UK); 08000 855 088 (Wales) Email: [support@teachersupport.info](mailto:support@teachersupport.info) [www.teachersupport.info/](http://www.teachersupport.info/)**

**ALCOHOL Alcoholics Anonymous** offer area support meetings **National Helpline: 0845 769 7555 Email: [help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](mailto:help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk) [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/)**

**Drinkline** offers advice, information and support to anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drinking

**Telephone Helpline: 0300 123 1110 [www.patient.co.uk/support/drinkline](http://www.patient.co.uk/support/drinkline)**

**BEREAVEMENT Cruse Bereavement Care** helpline for bereaved people and those caring for bereaved people

**Telephone Helpline: 0844 477 9400 Email: [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk) [www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)**

**DEBT StepChange Debt Charity** provides help for anyone in debt or concerned they may fall into debt **Freephone 0800 138 111 [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org) (including all mobiles) Email:**

**[www.stepchange.org/Contactus/Sendusanemail.aspx](http://www.stepchange.org/Contactus/Sendusanemail.aspx)**

**DRUGS UK National Drugs Helpline** is a free 24-hour service for drug users and solvent mis-users, their families. Friends and carers

**Helpline: 0800 776 600 [www.urban75.com/Drugs/helpline.html](http://www.urban75.com/Drugs/helpline.html) Email: [www.urban75.org/blog/contact/](http://www.urban75.org/blog/contact/)**

**GAMBLING Gamcare** offers confidential counselling, advice and information for anyone affected by a gambling dependency

**Helpline: 0808 802 0133 [www.gamcare.org.uk](http://www.gamcare.org.uk)**

**HOUSING Shelter** offers confidential advice on housing problems Co-operative Academies Trust – Stress at Work Policy (Issue 1)

**Helpline: 0808 800 4444 [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)**

**MEDICAL Terrence Higgins Trust** offer advice, practical support and counselling for HIV and AIDS **Telephone: 0808 802 1221 [www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk) Email: [info@tht.org.uk](mailto:info@tht.org.uk)**

**Bi-Polar UK** is a national user-led organisation and registered charity for people whose lives are affected by Bi-Polar. **Telephone: 020 7931 6480 [www.bipolaruk.org.uk](http://www.bipolaruk.org.uk) Email: [info@bipolaruk.org.uk](mailto:info@bipolaruk.org.uk)**

**Rethink Mental Illness** (formerly **National Schizophrenia Fellowship**) is the largest mental illness charity in the UK and is dedicated to improving the lives of everyone affected by severe mental illness, whether sufferers, carers or professionals working in the mental health field

**Advice Line: 0300 5000 927 [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) Supporter Care: 0121 522 7702 Email: [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)**

**PARENTING Family Lives** offers support for anyone parenting a child, including grandparents and step-parents  
**Helpline: 0808 800 2222 [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk) Email: [www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/email-support/](http://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/email-support/)**

**The Information, Advice and Support Services Network** (formerly **Parent Partnership**) offers support and advice to parents with children who have particular needs in schools across England.

**Telephone: 0207 843 1900 <http://www.iassnetwork.org.uk/contact-us/> Email: [iassn@ncb.org.uk](mailto:iassn@ncb.org.uk)**

**RELATIONSHIP COUNSELLING Relate** offer relationship counselling and mediation for individuals and couples

**Telephone: 0300 100 1234 [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)**

**SUICIDE AND EMOTIONAL CRISIS SANE** offer emotional and crisis support for people suffering from mental health problems, their friends and families

**Telephone: 0845 767 8000 [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk) Email: [www.sane.org.uk/resources/contact\\_us](http://www.sane.org.uk/resources/contact_us)**

**Samaritans** offer 24-hour confidential and emotional support for anyone in crisis **Telephone: 08457 909090**

**[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk) Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**

**SMOKING Quit** offers friendly help, advice and support on how to stop smoking **Telephone: 020 7553 2100**

**<http://www.quit.org.uk/> Email: [stopsmoking@quit.org.uk](mailto:stopsmoking@quit.org.uk)**

## INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of policy/activity/project:

Managing Stress at Work Policy

Is this a new or an existing policy/activity/project?

Policy introduced following conversion to Academy status

Scope/timescales for project or activity (including review date):

Updated in May 2018 and to be reviewed in 2021

Policy/project lead:

Mrs L. Long, Deputy Headteacher

Author of Equality Impact Assessment:

Mrs L. Long

Outline of main aims of this activity/policy/project:

To provide guidelines for all members of staff about the management of stress in the workplace.

Who will benefit/be affected by this policy/activity?

Employees of Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls

If an existing policy/activity, do you have any data of use by or impact on different groups which may raise concerns over an equality impact?

N/A

Does the activity have the potential to impact differently on groups due to a protected characteristic (eg race/ethnicity, gender, transgender, disability, religion & belief, age, sexual orientation, maternity/paternity) for:

(a) Students and members of the community? (Eg The Governing Body, students, contractors, visitors, hirers of the premises, agency staff, suppliers etc). Which groups are likely to be affected?

N/A

(b) Employees?

No

Does this activity make a positive contribution to the School's general or specific duties under the Equality Act 2010? If yes, please detail.

Yes – the Policy applies to all employees equally

Having reviewed the potential impact of the policy/activity listed above, **I believe a full impact assessment is required / NOT required** (delete as applicable with justification below)

### **Full impact assessment is not required**

Justification:

The policy is of equal benefit to all school employees, regardless of gender, race, religion, maternity/paternity, sexual orientation etc.

Name: Mrs L. Long      Date: May 2018