Thinking Schools Academy Trust
"Transforming Life Chances"

Wellbeing Policy

This policy was adopted on	November 2020
The policy is to be reviewed on	September 2024

Contents

1 Well-being Policy Statement

This Policy covers the Trust's commitment to employee health, safety and wellbeing; the responsibilities of Trust leaders, school leaders, line managers and others for maintaining psychological and physical health; health promotion initiatives; communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

Wellbeing is defined by the UK Department of Health as feeling good and functioning well, and comprises each individual's experience of their life and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values. Wellbeing can be both subjective and objective.

The Trust recognises that there is a relationship between healthier and more positive staff, pupil achievement and academy improvement.

The Trust has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The Trust will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

The Trust will mitigate as far as practicable factors that could harm employee's physical and mental wellbeing, which includes work related stress. This duty extends only to those factors, which are work related, and within the Trust's control.

2 Responsibilities

2.1 The Trust's Senior Leaders:

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within their academy and the wider Trust.
- Champion good management practices including establishing a work ethos within the Trust, which discourages assumptions about long-term commitment to working hours of a kind likely to cause stress and which enables employees to maintain a reasonable "work life balance".
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the Trust and our schools, to management structures and working arrangements at all levels.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and well-being.

2.2 The SLT & Middle Leaders:

- Treat individuals reporting to them with dignity whilst promoting a culture of mutual respect.
- Be familiar with the Trust's policies to be able to tackle behaviour that does not meet Trust expectations.
- Ensure that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications.
- Keep employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload
- Ensure that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management
- Work with the Facilities Department to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles or working practices that may give rise to work-related stress.
- Encourage their staff to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the Academy or Trust to promote well-being and more effective working.

2.3   Employees:

- Raise issues of concern regarding stress or mental ill-health with their Line Manager, Human Resources or utilise the Trust Employee Assistance Programme (Smart Clinic)
- Take responsibility for their own health and well-being by adopting healthy lifestyles
- In conjunction with their line manager take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, thus helping to avoid causing stress for themselves and their colleagues.
- Attend training as required

2.4   Human Resources Department:

- Develop and support implementation of Trust-wide policies and procedures to promote and protect the wellbeing of employees.
- Provide guidance to line managers in supporting their teams
- Develop arrangements to enable managers and staff to achieve the necessary skills to manage wellbeing
- Liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the aim of helping employees to maintain good psychological and physical health.
- Collate the appropriate management information to enable the Trust to measure its performance in relation to employee wellbeing

3   Arrangements for Implementation

3.1 Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments specifically in relation to stress at work and in the context of the HSE Management Standards have been set up and will be carried out by each academy as and when required. (See **Appendix 1**)

The Management Standards, which cover the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed; are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.

These are:

- *Demands* – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- *Control* – i.e. how much say the individual has in the way they do their work.
- *Support* – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the Trust, line management and colleagues.
- *Relationships* – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- *Role* – such as whether people understand their role within the Trust and their School; and whether the school ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- *Change* – such as how change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the Trust.

Where gaps in arrangements are identified, the Facilities Team/Line Manager will consult with SLT, Human Resources and other relevant departments so that the necessary action can be taken to address any shortcoming in policies and procedures.

3.2 Management Practices:

The Trust's efforts will be concentrated on the promotion of health and wellbeing in the workplace. This will include deploying other Trust policies and procedures as appropriate (for example, the policies on Absence Management, Dignity at Work, Flexible Working Policy, etc.) which can all be found on the Trust website.

The following management practices are undertaken to support health and wellbeing in the workplace:

- Fair recruitment and selection procedures with clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers, to be cascaded through to all levels of management and supervision.
- Training and Development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Ensuring staff feel valued and are rewarded fairly through the Trust's Performance Management procedures that can be found on the Trust website.

- Capability and absence management and return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness alongside suitable adaptations for disability.
- Robust harassment, equal opportunities and anti-bullying procedures that are shared with all staff.
- Effective mechanisms for communicating with employees on the work of the Trust and issues affecting their work.
- The arrangements will be updated and augmented as required and when deemed necessary by the findings of stress risk assessments.
- New staff are supported with an appropriate trust wide and local/school level induction.
- A transparent management support system that responds quickly to problems.
- A welcoming and tidy staff room that is sensitive to issues of race, gender, homophobia, culture and disability.
- The quality of staff facilities and accommodation e.g. access to refreshment, adequate seating and toilet facilities.
- The regular and systematic monitoring of staff absences, staff/pupil/parent relationships and the recruitment and retention of staff.
- The provision of Wellbeing Ambassadors in every academy alongside allocated time in Academies for wellbeing initiatives
- The use of the Wellbeing Wheel, supporting 6 ways to wellbeing with termly initiatives

4   Raising a concern

If an employee believes that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing, or others, at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager.

The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands, and raise issues such as identified training needs.

The Trust will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to the circumstances.

Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- the employee assistance programme (details are in **Appendix 2**);
- a mental health first-aid programme;
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- subsidised gym/sports facilities;
- special leave arrangements in line with the Special & Discretionary Leave policy;
- opportunities for flexible working in line with the Flexible Working Policy;
- support for employees with disabilities; and the Trust's grievance policy.

Details of all of the above can be found on our Trust wellbeing pages, ThinkingYou and the link and password can be found in **Appendix 2.**

5   Monitoring & Review

The implementation and impact of this policy will be monitored annually through the review of data such as:

- Employee Opinion Survey
- Sickness absence data
- Staff turnover, exit interviews
- Number of self-referrals to the counselling service
- Number of referrals to the Occupational Health contractor
- Numbers of and outcomes of employee relations cases

Please also add here that an equality impact assessment of this policy will be undertaken to ensure that no groups or individuals with protected characteristics are unintentionally disadvantaged by the policy or practice.

Risk Assessment

Workplace Stress

School/Department:

Employee Name:

	Risk Factor	Manager's description of arrangements in place	Role Holders' Comments	Agreed actions to be taken
DEMANDS *Questions to ask:* *Does your workload feel achievable?* *Which Tasks take you the most time?* *Do you have concerns about your work environment?* *What Support could the school put in place to support you?*	What resources, time and authority does the role holder have to carry out their work activities?			*e.g:* *Regular 1 to 1 meetings to discuss workload and priorities* *Identify blocks of time for collaborative planning* *Review quality of resources available.*
	How is it ensured that the role holder has the capability and capacity necessary to carry out their work activities?			*E.g:* *Any additional training/coaching*
	Is the physical environment in which the role holder works comfortable and conducive to a productive atmosphere?			*E.g:* *Review working/classroom environment*
	Is the role holder likely to be exposed to physical or verbal abuse?			*E.g:* *Document measures in place to manage behaviour*

CONTROL *Questions to ask:* *Does Do you feel involved in decisions made around your role?* *Do you feel your skills are used to good effect?* *What support do you think could be put in place to help you?*	To what extent and how is the role holder able to determine for themselves how they complete their tasks?			*E.g:* *Regular 1 to 1 meetings to discuss workload and priorities*
	How is the role holder consulted and able to participate in decisions that may affect them?			*E.g:* *Have an opportunity to put forward suggestions in team meetings or 1 to 1's.*
	How is the role holder supported in their work such that they feel able to make decisions that, if proved inappropriate, will not result in recrimination?			
RELATIONSHIPS *Questions to ask:* *Do you feel that you know where*	What are the arrangements for the role holder to report any bullying or harassment in the certain knowledge that their concerns will be treated seriously and acted upon?			*E.g:* *Reminder to look at Trust policies and opportunity to ask questions*

to go if you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour? *What support do you think could be put in place to help you?*	What arrangements are in place for good, open and regular communications between the role holder and management line at all levels?			
CHANGE *Questions to ask:* *Do you feel that your school handles change well?* *Do you feel involved in the planning of changes in relation*	How is the role holder kept informed during periods of change?			*E.g:* *Time out to explain what the school wants to achieve and what part the role/individual will place.*
	What opportunities does the role holder have to comment and ask questions before, during and after change?			*Document changes to the role : If appropriate/applicable*

to your team or role? *What support do you think could be put in place to help you*	Should the role holder be asked to change their roles how are they provided with adequate information, instruction and training?			
ROLE *Questions to ask:* *Do you feel clear on what your responsibilities are?*	How are the role holder's roles and responsibilities defined and are they understood?			*E.g:* *Review of Job description* *Clarify individual performance objectives*
	Does the role holder have any expectations placed upon them that conflict with the demands of their role?			

Are you clear on what your performance objectives are and what success looks like for you, your team and the school? *Do you understand how work is structures in your department and the wider school?*	Does the role holder feel confident to raise any role conflict issues			

EXTERNAL DEMANDS	(i) work-related What work does the role holder carry out that is not related to their employment by the School? [For example other part-time employment, consultancy, own or family business]. What demands does this place on the role holder? (ii) Personal/Family Are there any personal or family circumstances that the role holder would like to be taken into account?			

Risk Score: **LOW (L)** (1-3)   **MODERATE (M)** (4-9)   **HIGH (H)** (10-15)   **VERY HIGH (VH)** (16-25)

(see indexes below)

Any further comments and actions:	

Date of Assessment:	Target date for implementation of remedial measures:
Date for review of assessment:	Signature of Manager: _____ Signature of Role Holder: _____

Severity Likelihood Index

SEVERITY

	1 - Insignificant	2 - Minor	3 - Moderate	4 - Major	5 – Extreme
Scale of potential psychological injury thought to be posed to staff as result of work-related Stress. Based on any existing evidence and experience of similar situations	Apprehension/ Alarm on one off occasion or of short duration requiring no treatment	Minor concern or worry being displayed over a period of time, but responding to local support from manager and colleagues, and not requiring time off work	Significant stress displayed after a traumatic work event or over a considerable time period, causing health issues requiring attendance at GP and/or counselling	Major stress related illness resulting in long term incapacity/requiring medical treatment and/or counselling	Extreme stress related ill health leading to major permanent incapacity, allusions of self-harm or worse.

LIKELIHOOD

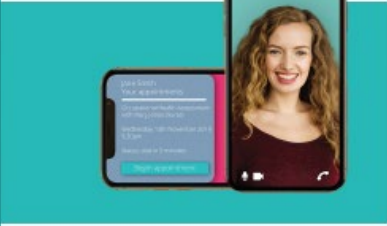|	1 - Remote	2 - Unlikely	3 - Possible	4 - Likely	5- Almost Certain
Likelihood of the potential harm occurring	Will only occur in exceptional circumstances	Unlikely to occur but definite potential exists	Reasonable chance of occurring – has happened before on occasions.	Likely to occur – strong possibility.	The event will occur in most circumstances.

Risk Scores

LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY				
	1 - Insignificant	2 - Minor	3 - Moderate	4 - Major	5 – Extreme
5 – Almost Certain	5	10	15	20	25
4 - Likely	4	8	12	16	20
3 – Possible	3	6	9	12	15
2 - Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
1 - Remote	1	2	3	4	5

Risk Rating

RISK RATING	RISK	ACTIONS
LOW (L) (1-3)	Acceptable	No further preventative action is necessary, but consideration should be given solutions or improvements that impose no additional cost burden. Monitoring is required to ensure that the controls are maintained
MODERATE (M) (4-9)	Action Required	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk, but it is acceptable that the cost of reduction be carefully measured and limited. Risk reduction measures should normally be implemented within three to six months
HIGH (H) (10-15)	Immediate Action required Unacceptable	Problematic new activities or processes should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Considerable resources may be required to reduce the risk. For existing activities or processes, the problem should normally be remedied within one to three months.
VERY HIGH (VH) (16-25)	Immediate action required Intolerable	The activity or process should not be started or allowed to continue until the risk level has been reduced. While the control measures selected should be cost-effective, legally there is an absolute duty to reduce the risk. This means that, if it is not possible to reduce the risk even with unlimited resources, then the activity or process must not be begin, or must remain prohibited.

Appendix 2 - Employee Assistant

smartclinic

24-hour employee assistance line

Access to 24-hour support from a trained counsellor, legal or financial specialist.
Just call 0845 862 2113 and quote Smart Clinic or login to your client area.

Self-support and guidance

A wealth of support, guidance and self-directed training programmes, supporting you with issues including anxiety, sleep issues, weight loss and stress.

App and online client areas

Smart Clinic services available in your pocket, whenever you want us.
To get started, login to your client area and download the Smart Clinic app.

Mental health Therapies

Structured counselling, CBT, online CBT, anxiety management or stress coaching from the Smart Clinic team. Just login to your client area for access.

Online mental health

Online CBT and self-help courses available via your client area whenever you need them.

CPD Accredited courses

...including stress management, assertiveness and time management courses.

The Trust wellbeing pages can be accessed:
https://www.tsatrust.org.uk/about/thinking-you/ and enter the password: Th1nk1ngYOU

This will give you access to a range of resources that are available through the Trust to support your wellbeing.

THINKING YOU