

Redfield Edge Primary School



Staff Well Being Policy

Date reviewed	April 21	Next review	April 22
Policy type	non-statutory	Review frequency	Every 2 years
Responsibility	Staff Performance & Pay Committee		
Date approved by committee:			
Signed (Chair of SP&P committee)	Name (Chair of SP&P committee)	Signed (Head Teacher)	Name (Head Teacher) Lisa Robinson
Ratified by FGB on 30 th April 21		Signed (Chair of Governors)	Name (Chair of Governor) Bronwen Kucharski

1. Introduction

Redfield Edge Primary School is committed to protecting the health, Safety and welfare of our employees as far as is reasonably practical. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

This policy will apply to everyone in the school. School's senior leaders are responsible for implementation and the school is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

2. Definition of stress

The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as: ***“the adverse reaction a person has 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 health. Each of us has a different ability to cope with pressure and this can fluctuate depending on our personal situation.

3. Causes of stress

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a number of **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** – workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- **Control** – how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- **Support** – the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.
- **Relationships** – promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- **Role** – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- **Change** – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

There are, therefore, many aspects of both our working and personal lives that may place pressure on us. Some pressure is inherent in the very nature of the work we do and the size of the organisation. Each job within the organisation carries with it a

performance level that the employee is expected to meet. When staff take up posts with additional responsibility, they must expect that with them comes extra pressure.

It is important therefore that individuals attempt to pre-empt pressure and take steps themselves to avoid or reduce it *before* it becomes a problem. If, however, pressures increase beyond an individual's ability to cope, it can then become stress.

4. Effects of stress

Individuals suffering from stress can be affected:

- emotionally, (eg, irritability, depression, anger);
- physically (eg, raised blood pressure, tiredness, headaches);
- mentally (eg, concentration, memory);
- interpersonally (eg, relationships become more difficult); or
- in their work (eg, poor time keeping, accidents, erratic attendance).

5. Statement of Intent

Governors and the School's Leadership Team acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health, and that there is a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote employee well-being as far as reasonably practicable.

The Governors and the School's Leadership Team are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

The Governors and the School's Leadership Team recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' well-being, and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at a school level.

The Staff Well-being Policy expands upon the School's Health and Safety Policy (Section 24 - "Well-being") in setting out how the School will promote the well-being of employees by:

- Creating a working environment where, as far as practicable, potential work-related stressors are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective personnel policies and staff development. Risk assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed.
- Increasing managers' and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health.
- Developing the competence of all leaders so that they manage staff effectively and fairly.
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the School.

- Establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and well-being through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives.
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Signposting staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors to confidential counselling.
- Providing adequate resources to enable managers to implement the agreed stress management strategies.

6. Responsibilities for implementing the Well-being Policy

The Head-teacher

- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Train and support managers to implement stress risk-assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them to manage a planned return to work.
- Refer to counsellors as required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Monitor workload over time to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours over time to ensure that people are not over-working.
- Inform the management team of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

The Senior Leadership Team and managers

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk-assessments.
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements.
- Encourage good management practices and the establishment of a work ethos within the School 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”.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work-related stress and good management practice.
- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the School. Treat individuals reporting to them with

consideration and dignity. They must not permit unacceptable behaviour and must take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention.

- Take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and well-being.

Employees

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Co-operate with the School's efforts to implement the Well-being Policy, attending briefings and raise their own awareness of the causes and effects of stress on health.
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being.
- Take responsibility for their own health and well-being by adopting healthy lifestyles.
- Take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, thus helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

Mental Health Team Leader

- Will be on the Senior Leadership Team
- Will be meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process
- Will be meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress
- Will consult with colleagues on the issue of stress including conducting workplace surveys/ feedback and wellbeing-action plans.

School Business Manager

- Give guidance to managers on the stress policy and risk-assessment procedures.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.
- Advise managers and individuals on training requirements.

7. Important considerations for all Staff

If you feel the pressure of work is beginning to affect your health or performance, it is important to take action early, especially if you cannot foresee it lightening in the near future.

The school will be sensitive when external pressures are affecting a member of staff. Although it cannot usually play a role in dealing with those pressures, it can offer support, for example referring to a counselling service. If there are issues in your personal life that are affecting your mental health and ability to perform your job role, you should inform your line manager.

The school is committed to trying to eliminate or reduce the factors within the school that may affect the health of its employees. If you can identify any aspect of your working environment that is adding to your feeling of pressure, eg, lack of or inappropriate resources, poor lighting, badly sited workstation, gossip about colleagues, these can sometimes be addressed fairly quickly.

If the pressure is caused by the nature of your work, the design of your job, or the organisational style, first try to think of a solution to the problem yourself, then discuss it with your line manager. It may be possible to make adjustments in the short or long term, to ease the pressure, and this is much easier to accomplish if you have thought about possible solutions yourself.

Some work pressures are caused by being inadequately trained to do a job, or having insufficient knowledge. If this is the case you should raise the matter with your line manager. The school has access to training opportunities to support you.

When things can't be changed

Some jobs are just more pressured at some times than at others, so if it isn't possible to change the working practices, it is important to ensure that you are as prepared as possible to cope with that pressure. As a publicly funded organisation, it is not always possible to get the resources or the environment we may wish, at the time we may wish, and that potentially adds to pressure.

8. Practical steps for the implementation of the Well-being Policy

The school will:

- Promote a culture of consultation, participation and open communication.

- Raise awareness for all staff on stress awareness and stress management to help them handle pressures they may encounter, and to recognise stress if it occurs, in themselves and others.
- Help staff identify internal and external sources of assistance
- Provide information about confidential counselling services available to all staff – Interchange.
- Provide training and other opportunities directly linked to well being needs.
- Provide space where an employee can have some 'time out' if distressed.
- Make arrangements for religious observances wherever reasonable alongside normal duties.
- Implement initiatives designed to encourage staff to achieve a balance between their work and home lives, eg, flexible working arrangements.
- Monitor levels of absence due to stress.
- Endeavour to provide a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment – staffroom and washroom facilities.
- Have clear systems of line management.
- Recognise the value of each individual's work.

Staff will:

- Express feelings in an acceptable manner to the appropriate people.
- Raise concerns in the correct forum, with a commitment to being part of the solution.
- Take advantage of training opportunities on stress management and well being.
- Report for work in a fit state to carry out duties.
- Help maintain a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment.
- Use facilities provided appropriately.

What staff can do out of work

Medical advice recommends:

- Eat healthily. Pressure can increase your requirements for certain vitamins.
- Exercise. Regular moderate exercise each day will help reduce levels of stress.
- Relax. It is important to set aside some time each week to spend doing something you enjoy and to keep a balance between work and leisure.
- Stop smoking. It doesn't help, even if you think it does.
- Watch your caffeine intake.

- Talk to friends and /or family about what you're feeling.
- Enjoy a drink, if that is what you like to do, but be sensible and be aware of recommended intake levels.

Interchange

A free and confidential staff counselling service available to all staff. Details of the self referral service are in the staff room.

9. Consultation

- Staff surveys will be used to gather feedback on the Well-being policy.
- The views of individuals will be sought in areas or teams subject to local stress risk assessments.
- Where a Safety Representative has been appointed by recognised Trade Unions under the provisions of Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, the Safety Representative will also be consulted on the development of local stress risk assessments.

10. Review

Staffing and Curriculum Committee to review biannually.