



Staff Wellbeing Policy 2023 -25

Audience:	School and academy staff Local Governing Bodies
Approved:	Date Reviewed: January 2023
Other related policies / procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal opportunities • Performance management/appraisal • Health and safety • Staff attendance policy • Staff leave of absence policy • Whistleblowing • Menopause Policy • Staff Code of Conduct • Staff benefits information
Owner:	Director of Education
Policy / procedure model	<p>MAT policy: all Crofty schools use this policy</p> <p>Aligned: Policy to be adapted to school where indicated</p> <p>School policy: specific to needs of the school</p>

1. Rationale

In Crofty Multi Academy Trust, we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported, and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community.

We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils, and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

We believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we embrace the many practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harmful effects of stress and ensure that there is cohesion in working towards health and wellbeing for all staff. It outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining staff wellbeing and it recognises that

each individual member of staff and their circumstances are different but provides an overview of the basis upon which everyone can contribute and expect to be treated.

2. Aims

We aim to ensure that all Crofty Schools:

- support staff mental health and wellbeing
- minimise stress
- help staff to keep a healthy work-life balance
- help staff to manage their family and work responsibilities
- ensure staff feel valued
- recognise and promotes the importance of a happy team
- involve staff in decision making
- takes account of equality implications.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Within each school the senior leadership team (SLT), governing body and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice.

We expect all staff to show respect and empathy for each other, and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

The Trust executive team are responsible for:

- fulfilling its duty of care as an employer
- monitoring the workload of the headteacher
- receiving any concerns from members of staff
- ensuring that the resources are in place to keep staff workload at healthy levels
- reviewing this policy in conjunction with the headteachers
- considering how its own members are treated and valued
- ensuring that demands are not placed on individual members of staff that interfere unfairly with their work-life balance
- operating a sensitive performance management policy
- ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff wellbeing
- overseeing that change management is operated in a fair and reasonable way.
- providing a set budget for staff facilities, environment and welfare
- ensuring support services are made available or signposted on behalf of members of staff where additional specialist support is needed

The headteacher is responsible for:

- providing personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness, communication
- providing a non-judgemental and confidential support system such as coaching, mentoring and pastoral support for staff
- monitoring the workload of members of staff and being alert to signs of stress
- listening to the views of members of staff and providing a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes

- ensuring that the efforts and successes of staff are acknowledged and celebrated.
- ensuring that staff are equipped with the right training to do the job confidently.
- ensuring that staff feel valued, and that time is set aside for them
- providing meeting guidelines that are agreed upon and followed.
- planning the year's timetable considerably bearing in mind staff commitments
- including in professional development meetings opportunity for staff to discuss their aspirations and career intentions.
- making special arrangements, where possible, to enable staff to combine the demands of family life and work life
- recognising that staff may have experiences in their personal lives that may make them vulnerable to pressures at work, and which may have a temporary influence on their work performance e.g. health issues, bereavement or loss, or personal circumstances
- ensuring the accessibility of SLT to members of staff
- ensuring that there are effective methods of communication.
- SLT maintaining contact with staff during long absences.
- Assign a mentor for each new member of staff and that the staff induction process is put into place
- Conducting risk assessments for work-related stress
- Ensuring relevant time protected for staff such as PPA, staff meeting time for reports etc.

The headteacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and pastoral staff and who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice.

Members of staff are responsible for:

- treating one another with empathy, respect, and kindness
- taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support.
- being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes
- contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit.
- developing and respecting shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax as well as appropriate workspaces.

Within Crofty Staff benefits include (see Appendix C):

- Providing tea and coffee for all staff without charge
- Free annual eye tests with Specsavers
- See Reward membership with access to See Reward Drive, See Reward Community and See Reward Shop and Vectis Card
- Free access to Health and Wellbeing services through Education Mutual
- Discounted membership at Carn Brea Leisure Centre
- Access to Cycle Scheme
- Free Breakfast Club for all staff children attending a Crofty Breakfast Club, and discounted rates on Crofty After School Clubs when you work in addition to your regular hours (TA's only)

Other elements of good practice may include (but are not exclusive to):

- providing lunch and refreshments in Inset training
- carrying out team-building exercises as part of staff CPD
- giving staff the option to plan their own social activities
- celebrating staff achievements
- creative spaces for staff to be able to meet, relax and work quietly
- making refreshments available to staff
- providing creative opportunities for building morale and promoting wellbeing

4. Support in specific circumstances

The school will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to specific circumstances.

In some cases, it may be necessary to seek external services, but the school will continue to support even when external services are involved.

Occupational Health referrals will be made if required.

On return from absence staff will be invited to a return-to-work interview where temporary adjustments will be discussed.

Staff are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, support will be given on an individual basis.

Where possible, staff are supported with their work-life balance and wellbeing outside the school. This could be through providing staff with paid leave for special events and celebrations, or time off to deal with specific family circumstances or crisis.

5. Stress management

HSE definition of stress is “The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them”.

It is important to note that every job brings its own pressures and demands; these are an unavoidable part of working life. It is also important to distinguish between reasonable pressure and challenge, which are stimulating and motivating, and workrelated stress which is a distressing reaction to demands, situations or circumstances that the person perceive they cannot cope with.

There are three principal areas of life that may cause people to experience stress:

- (a) Their personal life (Personal Stressors)
- (b) Their working environment, which includes culture and style of management used (Work Related Stressors)
- (c) The level of threat inherent in their job, given the difficult situations they often face and the people with whom they have to deal (Operational Stressors)

Situations/worries at work and/or at home can make people more vulnerable to the effects of stress. Either can exacerbate the other and affect a person’s ability to cope. All work has its pressures but we all vary in our capacity to cope with different types of pressure. Some pressure, even when high, can be motivating and a challenge. Pressures that people can respond to effectively are more likely to lead to job satisfaction. However, pressures at a level we cannot cope with are likely to result in stress. In some cases, too little challenge or pressure will have the same effect.

Causes of stress for any individual or groups of staff in particular schools may vary, but there are a number of common factors, any combination of which may result in feelings of stress. These include the effects of rapid and

far-reaching changes, time pressures, low perceived status, poor working conditions and poor pupil motivation. Other examples are: relationships with pupils, relationships with parents, relationships with colleagues, management and organisational issues, inspection process, new initiatives, work overload, breaks/lunch time not taken, changing societal expectations and concern about roles of school, allegations against staff and a member of staff's personal perspective.

Changes which may indicate stress may be noticed in one or more of 4 major areas:

Physical	Cognitive
excessive tiredness	lowered attention
tense facial muscles	memory problems
increased sickness absence	poor concentration
shaking	confusion
excessive sweating	difficulty making decisions
more frequent trips to the toilet	losing interest in paperwork
ill health	
Emotional	Behavioural
becoming moody and sullen	change in work performance
becoming angry or aggressive	withdrawing from others
over-reacting	becoming less co-operative
becoming impatient	accident proneness
depression	increased alcohol intake
tearfulness	increased smoking
getting upset and flying off the handle	increased/reduced food intake

What actions should Head Teachers / Managers take to manage Stress in their Team?

Head Teachers / Managers need to take action on 3 levels:-

Stress Risk Assessment - identification of potential causes of stress within the workplace and the taking of action necessary to reduce stress "as far as is reasonably practicable". i.e. Risk assessments – for teams & individuals.

Information & Training - raising awareness of stress and helping individuals recognise it in themselves and others. Helping individuals deal with their own stress.

Support and Rehabilitation - providing support and rehabilitation for individuals and access to professional help for workplace, family or mental health problems.

Confidential

Individual Health Risk Assessment (work related stress) EXAMPLE

Name:

Name of Assessors:

Hazzard (stressor)	Identified risk	Risk rating H M L	Existing control	Additional control Measures Required
Observations	e.g Regular unannounced drop ins Planned observations Peer / paired observations	H	Announced observations have an agreed focus. Peer / paired obs are voluntary	Talk to SLT if worried First observation will be announced with an agreed focus. No observations for the first 3 weeks back in September XXX to be a peer mentor, observe before HTs first obs. Feedback after school not at lunchtime.
Not understanding changes to policy practice.	Fear of asking – don't want to be seen as a problem or to be constantly asking questions.	M	Team structure	XXX to be a named first port of call where XXX feels unsure about asking questions.
Changes	Not knowing what's going on, not understanding the rationale for change.	L	Team structure	Give XXX time to consider the impact of changes and to reflect on the personal impact. XXX to check with XXX after any big staff meetings etc.

This risk assessment will be reviewed in one month on _____ or earlier at the request of the member of staff concerned.

Signed:

Work Area or Activity Staff Stress Name _____ Date of Risk Assessment _____

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Risk Findings Low, Medium or High.
Policies and procedures	Members of staff. Stress.	<p>Relevant policies, such as the Trust’s Staff Wellbeing Policy, contain clear guidelines on managing employees’ stress and overall mental health in the workplace.</p> <p>Policies are reviewed on an annual basis, or whenever there is an incident that shows a clear gap in the school’s procedures for staff wellbeing.</p> <p>Policies do not discriminate in any way against any staff member with a health issue, either mental or physical, and procedures are up-to-date.</p> <p>Additional risk assessments are undertaken for staff who have conditions that may affect their levels of stress.</p> <p>Actions which will support staff who are suffering from stress and who are returning to work after taking leave due to stress, are identified at a return-to-work meeting or wellbeing meeting, and control measures put into place.</p>				

Demands	Members of staff. Stress.	<p>Catch-up meetings are held on a regular basis with staff and their line manager or equivalent to discuss workload.</p> <p>During catch-up meetings, deadlines for work are set and reviewed and any concerns regarding workload are shared; this is also a time for any targets to be set and challenges to be discussed.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged by the SLT to have open and honest conversations with their line manager.</p> <p>The SLT will review absences across departments and investigate any trends discovered in their review.</p> <p>Staff coming back from leave due to stress may be introduced gradually at a pace agreed between themselves and the SLT, based on the advice of external professionals e.g., GP, Occupational Health.</p> <p>Staff wellbeing surveys are sent out annually – the surveys ask staff about their workload, job satisfaction and overall wellbeing.</p>				
Control	Members of staff. Stress.	<p>Staff are given autonomy over their working environment, e.g., classroom displays.</p> <p>Working environments are free from disturbances where possible, e.g., no pupils near classrooms during break times.</p> <p>Staff are given the opportunity to use their skills and initiative.</p> <p>Opportunities for CPD are made available, all staff are encouraged to take opportunities to improve their knowledge, skills and performance.</p>				

		Staff are encouraged to share their ideas with their line managers or the SLT, and their ideas are listened to and considered where possible in team meetings.				
Support	Members of staff. Stress.	<p>Each member of staff is assigned a line manager or equivalent who acts as a primary source of support.</p> <p>Staff attend one-to-ones and catch-up meetings with their line manager. The headteacher implements practices that encourage a friendly working environment, e.g., team building activities.</p> <p>Staff are informed, as part of their induction, of who they can turn to for support – there are several avenues they can follow, e.g., line manager, other senior staff, or colleagues.</p> <p>Staff have appraisals that are dedicated to performance, workload, targets, and challenges.</p> <p>Staff are provided with the equipment and facilities required to do their job.</p> <p>The SLT are provided with training on how to support staff who are experiencing work-related stress.</p> <p>The school has an ‘open-door’ policy that encourages staff to talk to others if they are struggling with stress.</p> <p>For staff returning to work after absence due to stress, their return is graduated at a pace that suits them – part-time work is considered, where necessary.</p> <p>On return from absence, staff meet with their line managers to discuss their future course of action with</p>				

		<p>regards to potential triggers of stress, workload, and additional support.</p> <p>The headteacher will conduct a 'return to work' interview with staff and any reasonable adjustments will be made – these will be reviewed monthly.</p> <p>Access to Health and Wellbeing services through Education Mutual</p>				
Relationships	<p>Members of staff.</p> <p>Stress.</p>	<p>The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in the workplace and any reported case of bullying is investigated.</p> <p>Staff are aware of the different routes they can take for reporting concerns.</p> <p>Staff wellbeing questionnaires are distributed annually to determine overall happiness in staff as well as how well they work with their colleagues, and if there are any issues the SLT need to be aware of. Any trends or findings from the questionnaire are acted on where possible.</p> <p>The school adopts a 'lead by example' approach and encourages all staff to act in a positive way towards others.</p> <p>Any disputes or reports of inappropriate behaviour are settled quickly.</p> <p>Staff are aware of their responsibility to help their colleagues and if needed, will pick up delegated duties where possible.</p>				

		<p>Staff have access to information on identifying signs of stress in themselves and colleagues, and how to manage situations where a colleague confides in them.</p> <p>The headteacher shares relevant information, e.g., changes to school staffing structures, with colleagues so that a transparent and trusting working relationship forms.</p>				
Role	<p>Members of staff.</p> <p>Stress</p>	<p>Staff receive a clearly defined job description upon employment that defines their role and responsibilities.</p> <p>The headteacher ensures that staff feel prepared to do their job during their induction.</p> <p>The headteacher provides opportunities and encourages CPD for all staff where possible.</p> <p>Staff know what is expected from them within their role as well as additional duties, e.g., leading by example.</p> <p>Appraisals are arranged annually to discuss staff members' roles within the school.</p> <p>Staff know who to talk to if they have questions regarding their role or any other matter.</p> <p>Staff have ample opportunities to raise issues and complaints.</p>				
Change	<p>Members of staff.</p> <p>Stress</p>	<p>Staff are included in discussions regarding changes to the school and their thoughts and ideas are considered.</p> <p>Staff are informed of changes within the school, as well as the reasons for the changes, as soon as possible.</p> <p>Staff are given training to enhance their performance.</p>				

		Staff are fully supported through changes to the school. Staff are given opportunities to provide feedback and it is listened to and acted upon where necessary.				
Is there a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to ensure equality of opportunity for all children and staff, particularly those identified within the nine protected characteristics? (age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity)	All stakeholders					

Signed _____

Dated _____

Signed _____

Dated _____

You should review your risk assessment if you think it might no longer be valid (eg following an accident in the workplace or if there are any significant changes to hazards, such as new work equipment or work activities)

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* Available to all of our newly assimilated schools from September 2023

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*Clubs must be run by CROFTY staff, not external childcare providers



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