



# **Stress Management Policy**

June 2018

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# **STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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## 1. Introduction

Wimborne First School recognises its duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees. This policy, procedure and guidance take into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and appropriate Regulations under the Act.

We are committed to reducing the incidence and impact of work related stress by addressing the cause of stress in the workplace and providing an appropriate level of support to employees.

## 2. Scope

This policy and accompanying documents apply to all employees within the School and has been adopted by the Governing Body.

This policy does not sit in isolation and depending on the nature and effect of stress should be read in conjunction with other relevant people management policies, details of which can be found at Appendix A.

Issues relating to stress may emerge when matters are being progressed through other HR policies, such as the management of attendance policy, capability or grievance policy. In such cases, referral to the stress management policy and procedure should be made.

## 3. Definition

Stress is defined as ‘the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them’ (Health and Safety Executive). Pressure can improve performance but when demands and pressures become excessive, this can lead to stress. As a result individuals, teams and schools may suffer.

The School recognises that stress related illnesses are rarely the result of work issues alone and that there are often other contributory factors over which the school has no control or influence but which nevertheless may affect performance/attendance at work.

Work related stress is defined as that which is typically caused by factors emanating from work practices/environments. The Health and Safety Executive has identified the following factors that can have an impact on stress:

- **Job Demands** – such as workload and exposure to physical hazards
- **Control** – how much say an individual has in the way they carry out their work
- **Support** – support from peers and line management, training to enable the employee to carry out their duties and catering for individual differences, e.g. disability
- **Relationships** – with other colleagues, covering issues such as bullying and harassment
- **Change** – how organisational change is managed and communicated within an organisation
- **Role** – whether the individual understands their role and whether the organisation ensures individuals do not have conflicting roles

#### **4. Key Principles and Responsibilities**

The aim of the policy is to ensure that when issues of work related stress are identified, appropriate action is taken at an early stage, with employees and managers arriving at joint solutions. The Governing Body will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy and ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively within the School. This will include arranging for appropriate training to be provided to teachers and managers and the monitoring of sickness absence and employee turnover.

##### **Headteachers/Line Managers will:**

- Undertake appropriate training
- Ensure employees undertake appropriate training
- Ensure all teachers and managers are trained as necessary to undertake risk assessments and are aware of their responsibilities within this policy
- Ensure that the policy and procedure is effectively implemented within their school
- Ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken as a result of a risk assessment or the stress reporting procedure being initiated
- Ensure that employees have the skills and tools necessary for carrying out their duties
- Monitor sickness absence
- Provide a supportive 'open-door' policy to employees who wish to discuss and/or report work related stress
- Monitor workloads and working hours
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated
- Ensure employees are aware of other supportive mechanisms in place, e.g. contact details for Employee Wellbeing Service the national Teacher Support Network and Headline (the support line for Dorset Head Teachers) and
- Identify posts where there are potentially high levels of stress, and ensure that additional support is put in place so that high pressure levels will be alleviated, as far as is reasonably practicable

##### **Individual employees will:**

- Be responsible for ensuring their own health, safety and welfare as far as is reasonably practicable
- Initiate the reporting procedure(s) as soon as they recognise that levels of stress are becoming unacceptable to them, and understand that the school would not consider this to be a sign of weakness
- Participate in finding solutions to problems of perceived stress and
- Assist the School by reporting areas for improvement and ensuring their own individual behaviour is appropriate

##### **Recognised Trades Unions will:**

- Co-operate with the School and the Employee Wellbeing Service in the promotion of health, safety and wellbeing
- Assist in identifying high risk areas where priority action may be required
- Assist in monitoring progress towards achieving a reduction in work related stress and in the review of the policy and
- Participate, where appropriate, in finding solutions to problems of perceived stress

##### **The County Council on behalf of the Employee Wellbeing Service will:**

- Ensure the recommendation of the policy to schools
- Provide appropriate training which can be accessed by Headteachers and others which will include the recognition and management of stress in themselves and others
- Ensure the Employee Wellbeing Team, which includes Occupational Health and Counselling Service, offers appropriate support and guidance to employees

## **5. Monitoring/Review**

### **Appendix A – Linked Policies**

Management of Attendance

Flexible Working

Fairness and Dignity

Health, safety and wellbeing

Managing People through Change (if applicable)