



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Christ Church CofE (c) Primary School

1. Why mental health and wellbeing is important

At Christ Church CofE Primary School we believe that good mental health and wellbeing of our staff is vital to our school's success and sustainability. We also know that in order for our staff to support the ongoing mental health of our children, it is essential that we support our workforce in the same way.

A healthy, happy workforce means we can:

- Reduce sickness absence, presenteeism and staff turnover;
- Enhance our reputation as an employer who cares;
- Improve staff morale and performance;
- Better support our children to learn and succeed.

As a school we are committed to the following principles:

- Promoting wellbeing for all staff;
- Encouraging a good work-life balance;
- Tackling the causes of work-related mental health problems;
- Supporting staff who are experiencing mental health problems.

2. Definition of mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing is:

'A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.' The World Health Organisation

At Christ Church CofE Primary School, we want our staff to:

- Enjoy working in a safe, open and supportive workplace environment and culture that supports mental health, wellbeing and prevents discrimination;
- Be aware of mental health and wellbeing issues and behaviours;
- Help reduce the stigma around depression and anxiety in the workplace;
- Feel supported during times of personal or work stress;
- Maintain a healthy work life balance;
- Have opportunities to engage in initiatives that support mental health and wellbeing;
- Feel confident and empowered to talk about problems to colleagues and/or Senior Leaders, as appropriate;
- Have positive and healthy relationships at work.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Supporting activities that enable good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace is the responsibility of all employees. All staff should strive to achieve a healthy work life balance. Some examples of how to do this might be:

- sensibly managing the time spent in school before and after the school day;
- refraining from sending work-related emails out of hours;
- prioritising health with sensible food choices and exercise;
- making time outside of work to prioritise well-being.

Senior leaders in school lead by example. Weekend and evening emails should be kept to a minimum and only sent where it is absolutely necessary for the smooth running of the school or where there is an urgent reason for doing so.



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All staff have a responsibility to promote a positive working environment that aims to help them and their colleagues to feel included, supported and empowered to talk about mental health openly and without judgement. Staff are also responsible for accessing support when they need it and raising any concerns with the Senior Leadership Team or their line manager.

Governors have a responsibility to support and promote good mental health and wellbeing for senior leaders in school, including that of the Head Teacher. Regular contact with senior leaders will help to support this, along with encouragement to access any relevant support if this is needed.

4.Engaging with staff to identify ways in which the school can better support mental health and wellbeing within the workplace

A mental health and well-being survey, takes place in school annually. Time within the school day is dedicated to this so that it is not an additional meeting for staff to attend before or after the school day. The survey is a face to face meeting so that all staff have an opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings, along with discussing any concerns they may have. The meetings are led by Senior Leaders in school. By engaging with staff this way, school continues to develop a greater insight into the needs and requirements of staff and therefore, reasonable adjustments can be made where necessary.

School strives to develop a culture of openness, with all staff feeling empowered to talk about mental health and put forward ideas as to how the school can support this even further.

5.Raising awareness of mental health and positive wellbeing strategies

Christ Church CofE Primary School aims to raise awareness of mental health by embedding mental health into induction procedures and training. School is aware of and will celebrate key dates in the mental health calendar.

To support mental health and wellbeing, school has implemented the following strategies and initiatives:

- Year group staff are released for their PPA session together so that there is joined up thinking and a shared overview of the learning needs across the year group;
- Staff have their own laptops which they are able to take home with them;
- There are spaces around school for staff to work in when released from classroom responsibilities;
- Staff are frequently given release time for their subject leadership responsibility to work on their curriculum area;
- Staff meetings are cancelled when data/pupil progress meetings are taking place so that teachers have additional time to collate the relevant information needed;
- Staff meetings are cancelled when parents' evening takes place;
- Leaders fully support teachers with behaviour issues and challenging parents/carers;
- Staff are consulted about any changes to do with marking and feedback. Any changes made, are after consultations with staff;
- Marking and feedback is kept to a minimum;
- SLT are readily available and listen to any staff concerns which are raised;
- Non-teaching staff have clear line managers whom they can speak to if support is needed;
- Opportunities for staff to socialise at lunchtime, with food provided, take place at least every term;
- Health and safety of staff is always of a high priority;
- Thinkwell and Occupational Health are available for staff to use;



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- Staff have received and continue to receive high quality CPD opportunities;
- High quality resources are available and used across school;
- Staff can ask for leave for specific family events/key events which are paid;
- Emails at unsociable hours are rare and there is no expectation for staff to respond to these out of school hours;
- Leading and working with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

6. Positive working relationships and social connections

As a school we will take positive action to make the workplace a mutually supportive environment where good work-based relationships thrive.

We:

- Promote a culture of teamwork, collaboration and information-sharing;
- Promote positive behaviours to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Encourage exercise and regular social events to boost staff health and mental wellbeing;
- Ensure that staff who are new to school are supported and have colleagues and members of SLT who they can talk to;
- Celebrate the successes of the school where appropriate.

7. Providing the right level of support to staff when it is needed

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional concerns can be supported within school, following advice from external professionals where needed. Some staff will need more intensive support at times. At these times they will be offered the support of Thinkwell and/or Occupational Health.

Staff can also be guided to access other external sources of support. A display, located in the staffroom, also offers guidance and useful contact numbers including:

- NHS Mental Health Services
- MIND
- Samaritans

The Senior Leadership Team will routinely meet with individuals' who have raised concerns with their wellbeing and mental health so that they can feel supported and to discuss the impact of any external support sources that they are accessing. Senior Leaders will try to ensure that these meetings take place within the school day.

If a member of staff is not well enough to come to work and is absent from work for over a week, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will conduct well-being check-in phone calls on a weekly basis, so that school understands and can support their well-being.

8. Recruitment

Recruitment decisions are based on whether candidates have the necessary qualifications and competence for the job, without making assumptions about health or disability. If there are concerns about whether health or disability will affect their ability to do the job, Senior Leaders in school assess these with the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

9. Induction

There is a clear induction process when staff start at Christ Church CofE Primary School. A school handbook is provided to new staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team are always available



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to answer any questions a new member of staff may have. There is a clear transition process where key information is shared and questions can be asked.

10. Responding to disclosure

If a mental health disclosure is made by a member of staff, Senior Leaders will endeavour to have an early conversation about the person's needs. Senior Leaders will find a safe, quiet place to talk to the individual about their needs so that the right level of support can be arranged, including necessary adjustments.

11. Supporting an employee when they are unwell and off sick

School has clear systems in place for when an employee is unwell and unable to come to work. This is shared with all staff at the beginning of the new academic year. Staff understand the Bradford Score system which is used to monitor sickness and absence.

12. Supporting people to return to work

When an employee returns to work after being unwell, a Senior Leader will carry out a return to work meeting. During the meeting, employees are asked how they are and the meeting will allow for any mental health concerns to be identified at an early stage.

13. Workplace adjustments

Workplace adjustments for mental health are often small, simple, practical and cost-effective change. Often the changes may not be physical, but about attitude, expectation or communication. Reasonable adjustments can be made, when Senior Leaders are made aware that something about work is causing a problem for someone with a disability.

14. Links to other policies

This policy links to various HR policies and procedures, including the code of conduct for staff.