STAFF WELLBEING POLICY

Introduction and Purpose of Policy

This policy is intended to outline the ways in which the South Farnham Educational Trust, senior leaders and employees can work together to enhance staff health and wellbeing, ensuring that the school is a safe, caring and positive place to work.

The Trust Board has legal responsibilities as an employer under health and safety legislation and its duty of care to support health at work is reflected in a number of policies and procedures.   These include:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Attendance Management Procedure
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Special Leave Policy

These policies, and others which relate to staff, can be accessed via SharePoint or through your line manager.

Policy Statement

The Trust Board is committed to promoting the positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of its staff and recognises that enhancing individual wellbeing offers benefits not just to our staff but also our pupils and the wider community.

In particular, the Trust Board is committed to:

- Identifying and managing risks to the health and wellbeing of staff through putting in place appropriate measures backed up by suitable support and training.

- Promoting a healthy culture in which employees and line managers are aware of mental and physical health issues at work, particularly the demands of workload, and communicate openly and respectfully with one another on a regular basis.

- Ensuring that all employees understand the role they play in demonstrating healthy behaviours, recognising the signs of deteriorating health and being proactive in seeking support for themselves and others when needed.

- Ensuring that members of staff are aware of the sources of support, internal and external, which are available to them and that all health matters will be dealt with confidentially.

This policy applies to all employees working for South Farnham Educational Trust.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board/Local Governing Body is expected to:

- Ensure that the Trust is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment
- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the Headteacher/CEO
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly in regard to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

The Headteacher & Senior Leadership Team are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Establish a clear policy on out-of-hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities

- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support

- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections

All staff are expected to:

- Treat each other with empathy and respect

- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff

- Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance

- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support

- Follow the school's policy on out-of-hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications

- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit

- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices

- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

Wellbeing Strategy and Initiatives

The Trust has put in place a wellbeing strategy which is focussed on addressing those matters which have been identified as priorities for improvement as well as promoting healthier lifestyles. This will be supported by initiatives which aim to raise awareness of wellbeing issues, offer practical support or advice to staff, address training needs and/or seek feedback (e.g. through staff surveys or project groups). These will be reviewed and, where necessary, adjusted each year in line with changing needs.

Support Mechanisms

Various support mechanisms are available to employees and these are periodically reviewed. The following are currently available:

- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which offers practical support, information and resources on stress management, work-life balance, relationship and family issues, financial worries, bereavement, and other life changes.

- Access to occupational health support through our provider, offering independent, impartial advice on the effects of work on an employee's health and vice versa.

More information on the employee assistance is available to all employees from the staff room noticeboards.

The Trust has also appointed in each school a Wellbeing Lead. These individuals are responsible for: The promotion of wellbeing, including distribution of information;

- The promotion of wellbeing, including distribution of information to support emotional and financial wellbeing enabling understanding of the link between financial and mental wellbeing;
- Signposting relevant health and wellbeing services to line managers and employees;
- Signposting external sources of support for financial wellbeing;
- Reporting to the Headteacher on wellbeing issues and initiatives;.

Status of Policy and Review

The content and operation of this policy is reviewed as and when deemed necessary by the Trust Board. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.

External Sources of Support

There are many sources of external support for employers, line managers and employees. A selection of these is provided below:

https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk	Mentally Healthy Schools is a website for primary schools, offering teachers and school staff information, advice and practical resources to understand and promote pupils' and staff mental health and wellbeing.
https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/	Mental Health at Work is an online gateway to resources, training and information with the aim of changing the way workplace mental health is approached. It's funded by The Royal Foundation with Heads Together and developed by Mind and 11 key partners from the world of business and mental health, including the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
https://www.annafreud.org/	The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families is a charity with the aim of transforming current mental health provision in the UK by improving the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of treatment. The centre has produced a useful resource in collaboration with the Schools in Mind learning network, "Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing", which promotes staff wellbeing in schools.
https://mhfaengland.org	Best practice guidance for employers on how to implement Mental Health First Aid in the workplace. MHFA England training is a key component for creating a safe, healthy workplace where the mental health and physical health of employees are valued equally. It gives people the tools to support their own mental health and that of their colleagues and encourages them to access timely support when needed.
https://www.mind.org.uk	Mind is a charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.
https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk	This charity provides a free helpline available to all teachers, lecturers and staff in education (primary, secondary, further or higher education) in England, Wales and Scotland.