

OVERVIEW OF IDEAS TO PROMOTE STAFF MENTAL HEALTH



UNIVERSAL SUPPORT FOR ALL:

- Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy including workload reduction, and links to other policies e.g. anti-bullying (of staff), equality & diversity etc.
- Mental Health Sick Days (in policy)
- Induction information for new staff around mental health support available
- Regular feedback and ideas via anonymous questionnaires or feedback boxes, partly to gauge if policies are being lived in practice
- Staff training or outside speakers/visits about aspects of mental health e.g. strategies to manage stress, reducing stigma and misconceptions, and responding to colleagues in mental/emotional distress
- Be discerning about organising meetings, & invitees
- Consider "No emails in evenings or on weekends" policy except when urgent (emails can be scheduled)
- Protected PPA time - including possible (half) day out of class for all staff each week e.g. every Friday all pupils go home early
- Wellbeing Lead/Team to model healthy practices
- Regular drop-in sessions for colleagues
- Parental behaviour policy if it's an issue
- Risk assessments pertaining to work related stress for staff - see hse.gov.uk for template
- Join Mindful Employer Charter / DfE Charter etc.
- Wellbeing events offered to colleagues
- Welcoming staff room/s

TARGETED SUPPORT WITHIN SCHOOL FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS:

- Training on aspects of mental health and wellbeing according to individual's or team's needs, and needs of their role
- Supervision (individual or group)
- Counselling sessions offered in/via school
- Coaching or mentoring sessions
- Peer support model with regular mental wellbeing check-in meetings
- Making accommodations to support the mental health of individual colleagues as needed
- Wellbeing events

SPECIALIST SUPPORT OUTSIDE SCHOOL:

- Employee Assistance Programmes including access to information, hotlines, counsellor etc.
- Referral to Occupational Health
- Signposting (crisis) support and service providers locally, online and nationally/internationally, including wellbeing apps, charities, hotlines etc. (Note: we offer a free weekly mental health and wellbeing tip for school staff delivered by email.)

IMPORTANT THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND TO SUPPORT EMBEDDING A WHOLE-SCHOOL CULTURE TO PROMOTE STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



- As a Senior Mental Health Lead, you and other Senior Leaders need to be modelling good practices around promoting and supporting your own and others' mental health. Embedding a culture around good mental health requires those in leadership positions to lead by example, e.g. validate others' emotions, normalise talking about your own mental health challenges and what helps you, take regular breaks and a proper lunchtime, go home at a reasonable time and encourage others to also, say "no" to more work if it will be detrimental to your wellbeing, etc.
- We're all unique individuals, with different needs for our mental wellbeing, as well as commonalities.
- Let staff know about any changes to the timetable ahead of time as far as possible.
- Consult staff as much as possible about work matters. A top-down leadership style affects staff morale and wellbeing detrimentally across all industries, not just teaching. Feeling a sense of being valued and also having autonomy is important for staff mental wellbeing.
- Encourage a sense of community through various events, whilst also respecting that some staff won't want to be as involved for their own wellbeing. What works for one person won't necessarily work for another.
- Pace the rate of change in terms of implementing new policies and practices. Too much change too quickly feels overwhelming and will likely impact staff mental wellbeing. Your Strategic Plans need to reflect this.
- Regular reviews of mental health initiatives will be important. Talk to staff, and survey them anonymously. What's going well? What's not going so well? What has improved and what hasn't? What tweaks are required?