**Introduction**

Foxfield School endeavours to promote a harmonious and healthy

working environment, to engender trust and co-operation between colleagues and to foster an environment in which staff treat each other with dignity and respect. The School recognises that it has a duty of care towards its staff and a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment. The School believes that its staff are a very important asset and this policy aims to support the School’s commitment to Improving Working Lives

This policy also sets out guidelines for managers to help prevent work related stress in school by managing pressure effectively, and to encourage staff to seek assistance and receive the advice and support they need before they begin experiencing stress. The policy also includes guidance for both line managers and employees to deal with a situation of work related stress.

**Definition of Stress**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as the “adverse reaction people have to excessive

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Foxfield School Stress Management Policy
2020

pressure or other types of demand placed upon them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly and stress which can be detrimental to health.

Excessive stress is a negative and unpleasant condition, which may be experienced when a person perceives that s/he is unable to meet the demands and pressures that are placed upon them.

Unacceptable levels of stress may be associated with a range of adverse effects. These can be physiological and psychological.

**Recognising and Managing Stress**

It is important to recognise the causes of excessive stress so that they can be avoided or minimised. There are however, occasions when the source of a problem is unavoidable and in these circumstances careful management is necessary to avoid staff becoming unwell as a result.

**Responsibilities**

**School**

• The School will promote positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness.

• The School will provide employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes; and will ensure adequate consultation that will provide opportunities for employees to influence proposals.

• The School will ensure that there are policies and procedures in place to adequately support employees

• The School will provide confidential counselling for staff who is known have been affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.

• The School will provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the Stress Management Policy.

**School Leaders**

• Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their jurisdiction.

• Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.

• Ensure adequate employee consultation on changes and provide opportunities for employees to influence proposals

• Ensure that staff are fully trained to undertake their duties.

• Ensure that staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities and CPD to enable them to meet their responsibilities and the required competencies are communicated and understood.

• Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.

• Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.

• Attend training in good management practice and Health & Safety.

• Manage attendance in line with the School’s Managing Attendance Policy; with appropriate and timely referrals to Occupational Health and staff support services thus ensuring that staff receive the most appropriate support to enable them to return to the workplace as quickly as possible.

• Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within the organisation.

• Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside of the workplace e.g. bereavement or separation.

**Occupational Health and Health and Safety Advisors**

• Provide specialist advice and awareness training in stress

• Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their manager on a planned return to work.

• In conjunction with managers, monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.

• Inform the School of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

**Workforce**

• Give guidance to managers on the stress policy.

• Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.

• Advise managers and individuals on training requirements.

• Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to staff support services.

**Employees**

• Raise issues of concern with your Line Manager in the first instance. If you feel unable to speak to your Line Manager speak to Occupational Health or your Trade Union Representative.

• Accept opportunities for staff support when recommended.

• Ensure that you take responsibility for your own health and wellbeing.

• Where possible develop new skills to help you undertake new and challenging pieces of work, ensuring you have the required competencies for the role.

• Accept opportunities to influence proposals relating to organisational and procedural changes.

**Monitor and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed at regular intervals by the Health and Safety Officer and the School Governors who will be responsible for ensuring that any actions identified as part of the monitoring process are completed.

**School Policies**

To ensure a fair and consistent approach to management practice a range of employment policies have been devised including those listed below. School Leaders should ensure that copies are available for reference as required. These documents aim

to improve the quality of our working lives:

* Absence Policy
* Additional Support Assistants policy
* Behaviour Policy
* Continual Professional Development
* Emergency Communications Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Recruitment & Selection Guidelines
* Equality & Diversity Policy
* Performance Management Policy
* Lone Workers Policy
* Internet Policy
* Intimate Care Policy
* Manual Handling Policy
* Reporting Accidents and incidents
* Safeguarding
* Security Policy
* Visitors Policy