

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Staff Wellbeing Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 As the employer of staff in Bishop Vaughan, Bishop Vaughan's Governing Body recognises the statutory responsibilities related to employment. However, day-to-day management of staff is delegated to the Headteacher and line managers in Bishop Vaughan. Throughout this document, reference is made to the responsibilities held by the Headteacher for operational purposes. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Governing Body.
- 1.2 Bishop Vaughan and the Governing Body are committed to promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and will provide suitable support for all members of staff. Taking action to prevent ill-health and promoting health and wellbeing initiatives makes good educational and business sense, as sickness absence has an impact in monetary terms and in terms of the impact upon performance, teaching and learning, staff morale and productivity, which could in turn disrupt or compromise student progress.
- 1.3 All members of staff are entitled to be treated fairly and professionally at all times. The Governing Body of Bishop Vaughan takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer and a number of policies and procedures have been implemented to provide certainty, fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff in different contexts, including:
 - Leave of Absence Policy
 - Management of Absence Policy
 - Maternity Leave Policy
 - Paternity Leave Policy
 - Stress Policy
 - Teachers' Pay Policy

2. Who This Policy Applies To

- 2.1 This policy will apply to all employees working in Bishop Vaughan.

3. Aims

- 3.1 This policy aims to:
 - 3.1.1 Provide a working environment which enables staff to work in an environment in which staff wellbeing is supported and which enables staff to carry out their duties effectively.
 - 3.1.2 Recognise the key role of the Headteacher/Senior Leaders/Line Managers for their responsibilities by enabling access to guidance, training and support.
 - 3.1.3 Encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
 - 3.1.4 Comply with all statutory requirements.

- 3.1.5 Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety matters.
- 3.1.6 Develop an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional wellbeing is taken seriously and in which staff are supported in seeking any help and support they need.
- 3.1.7 Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy through regular promotion on staff notice boards and electronic systems.
- 3.1.8 Identify the triggers that could lead to poor staff health and wellbeing and reduce these where possible.
- 3.1.9 Recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible, without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.

4. Legislation

4.1 Pieces of legislation that will be considered when promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, including, but not exclusively:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Working Time Regulations;
- Employment Rights Act 1996;
- Employment Relations Act 1999.
- The Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework Guidance 2021

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Swansea Local Authority shall:

- 5.1.1 Provide the necessary professional advice, support and training to the Employer/Governing Body and all School staff as and when required.
- 5.1.2 Assist with the referral of staff to Occupational Health, Stress Management Counselling or mediation when appropriate.
- 5.1.3 Assist in the formulation of return-to-work programmes and provide advice on the implementation of statutory requirements.
- 5.1.4 Maintain updated information on Swansea Staffnet website, relating to staff wellbeing.

5.2 The Governing Body shall:

- 5.2.1 Understand their role in promoting staff wellbeing, including that of the headteacher and senior leader (see Governing Bodies: Powers and Relationships gov.wales)
- 5.2.2 Ensure this policy is implemented and procedures are in place that recognise and deal with the issue of mental and physical health problems, which may include: consideration of organisation of work; health risk assessment where appropriate; early recognition for staff with mental and physical health problems (which may require training); and interventions that include rehabilitation, return-to-work plans and reasonable adjustments.
- 5.2.3 Actively demonstrate recognition and acceptance of common mental and physical health problems by creating an environment where staff feel comfortable in asking for help.
- 5.2.4 Act early and provide consistent support.
- 5.2.5 Ensure the school enlists the support of Swansea LA's HR Service, Stress Management and Counselling Service and Occupational Health and other professional support, when appropriate, and ensure staff are able to access this support.
- 5.2.6 Ensure that staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and followed.
- 5.2.7 Attend regular training on health and wellbeing in schools.
- 5.2.8 Take into account the equality implications of any policies introduced and monitor on a regular basis.
- 5.2.9 Develop a wellbeing strategy.
- 5.2.10 Where possible, provide opportunities for staff to participate in free annual health checks, should they so desire.
- 5.2.11 Ensure the policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed with the recognised workplace unions on an annual basis, in the light of changing needs and legislative frameworks.
- 5.2.12 Ensure that all staff have a pleasant working environment with a satisfactory standard of cleanliness, hygiene and aesthetics.
- 5.2.13 Ensure that Bishop Vaughan 's policies are assessed for workload impact.

5.3 The Headteacher shall:

- 5.3.1 Recognise the value of good management practice with systems in place to effectively manage staff and encourage a partnership approach with staff, trade unions and the Bishop Vaughan's health and safety committee.
- 5.3.2 Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner, in order to promote a healthy workplace.
- 5.3.3 Identify any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to those who show signs of being under stress.
- 5.3.4 Understand the differing needs of staff, and offer the relevant support, if and when required. This may include support for pregnant women, older women during the menopause, and staff with caring responsibilities.
- 5.3.5 Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems.
- 5.3.6 Ensure that all staff have access to regular training sessions on health and wellbeing in schools, including practical sessions to deal with mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues, and that they are given the appropriate time and resources to undertake this.
- 5.3.7 Consider flexible working practices where possible and appropriate to the needs of the school.
- 5.3.11 Demonstrate commitment, via systems and practices in place in Bishop Vaughan, to employees maintaining a good work/life balance and ensure that such practices are communicated to all staff.
- 5.3.12 Manage pressures which may affect staff, including the impact of workload, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible (in line with the needs of the school).

5.4 Senior Leaders/Line Managers shall:

- 5.4.1 Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- 5.4.2 Identify any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- 5.4.3 Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work-related stress and other mental health problems.

- 5.4.4 Ensure that a supportive return-to-work procedure is established in the workplace.
- 5.4.5 Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as reasonably practical.
- 5.4.6 Attend regular training on health and wellbeing in schools.
- 5.4.7 Communicate work-life balance practices to all staff and manage pressures which may affect staff and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.
- 5.4.8 Demonstrate commitment to staff by encouraging a good work/life balance.

5.5 Staff should:

- 5.5.1 Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem, if possible, to a clearly identified line manager or named individual.
- 5.5.2 Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.
- 5.5.3 Access wellbeing support mechanisms offered by Bishop Vaughan or nationally, such as Mind Cymru ([Mind Cymru - Mind](#))
- 5.5.4 Consider attending training on health and wellbeing issues where they feel that this is appropriate.
- 5.5.5 Where possible, be watchful of any indication of changes of behaviour in colleagues and promote sympathetic alertness to colleagues who show signs of stress.
- 5.5.6 Attend Occupational Health and Stress Management appointments as recommended/arranged.
- 5.5.7 Communicate with each other in a respectful and supportive way.
- 5.5.8 Understand their role in supporting their own mental health and wellbeing.

6. Support Mechanisms

6.1 Counselling/Stress Management

- 6.1.1 The LA has employed a Stress Management Counsellor specifically to support school staff. Further information can be found at [Swansea Staffnet - Stress management advice and counselling](#)

- 6.1.2 Counselling may be provided where appropriate. This will be via the LA employee counselling service which offers confidential counselling, provided by qualified counsellors who abide BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) ethical principles and guidelines.

Further information can be found at [Swansea Staffnet - Stress management advice and counselling](#) and referrals can be made by emailing: confidential.counselling@swansea.gov.uk

6.2 Mediation

- 6.2.1 Mediation can be offered in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.

- 6.2.2 Use restorative practice to assist in conflict, where appropriate.

6.3 Teacher Support Network

- 6.3.1 The Teacher Support Network is a group of independent charities and a social enterprise that provides practical and emotional support to staff in the education sector and their families. Information, support and coaching is offered to all staff. The Teacher Support Network provides over 1000 factsheets covering a wide range of issues including money advice, how to cope with bereavement, mental health, diet and nutrition and how to manage stress. To access the free support line, staff can call 08000 562 561, or for more information go to <http://teachersupport.info/>

6.4 Occupational Health

- 6.4.1 The School has access to the LA's Occupational Health department. Occupational health is concerned with the promotion of health in the workplace and protecting the health of the worker. This may be achieved by an occupational health adviser working together with employees to develop programmes to meet the needs of individuals. They will offer an impartial consultation whilst maintaining confidentiality.

- 6.4.2 The service is based at the Guildhall and is available during office hours. Contact number 01792 636230 or 636499 or 636627 (see Swansea Staffnet).

6.5 Wellbeing Website

- 6.5.1 A dedicated website has been created to support the wellbeing of school staff in the county.

****FURTHER INFORMATION/RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING APPENDIX****

Appendix 1

Useful Websites

Welsh medium websites

<https://meddwl.org/cymorth>

- **Gwefan defnyddiol yn y Gymraeg - syniadau hyfryd ar gyfer ymarferion ymlacio, loga gyda Tara Bethan, strategaethau hunan-ofal, ymarfer corff, dyfyniadau positif i ddechrau'r dydd ayyb.**

English medium websites

- Acas www.acas.org.uk
Information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace
- Action for happiness www.actionforhappiness.org
Positive quotes and thoughts
- Alcoholics Anonymous www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to recover from alcoholism.
- Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families – mentally healthy schools
www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk
- Carers UK www.carersuk.org
The voice of carers
- Caritas <https://www.csan.org.uk/guidance/catholic-mental-health-project/>
Catholic mental health project
- CBI www.cbi.org.uk
Guidance to businesses on managing stress at work
- Department of Health www.gov.uk/government/organisation/department-of-health
Information on dealing with stress and mental health problems, including the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Dignity at Work Partnership www.dignityatwork.org
Information and guidance on bullying in the workplace

- Education Support www.educationsupport.org.uk
Advice and information about financial and personal matters.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com
The commission is working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.
- Gingerbread www.gingerbread.org.uk
Gingerbread and One Parent Families have now merged to provide better support and a bigger voice to 1.8 million lone parents and their children throughout England and Wales.
- HSE <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>
Information on the stress management standards
- LGBT information [LGBT Foundation - Home](http://www.lgbt.foundation.org.uk)
- Local Government Employers www.local.gov.uk
Guidance for all councils on stress prevention and management
- Menopause information
www.menopausematters.co.uk
- Mind CYMRU www.mind.org.uk
- Mindful Employer www.mindfulemployer.net
Information and guidance on managing stress and mental health in the workplace
- Mindful teachers www.mindfulteachers.org
Living, learning and teaching with mindfulness
- NASUWT www.nasuwt.org.uk
Information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing
- NHS www.wales.NHS.uk
National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters
- Princess Royal Trust for Carers <http://www.carers.org>
Here to improve carers' lives by fighting for equality and recognition for carers.
- Relate <http://www.relate.org.uk>
UK's largest provider of relationship counselling and sex therapy.
- Samaritans <http://www.samaritans.org>
Offers confidential, non-judgemental support to individuals.

- Teacher Support Network
<http://teachersupport.info>
- Work Life Balance Centre <http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org>
Exists to help people restore control over their workload and working lives we enable them to cut down overworking and so make new decisions about how they spend their time.
- World Health Organisation
http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/en/oehstress.pdf
Publication on work organisation and stress

In addition, support can be provided via the school chaplaincy.

Copies of this policy are available on our website, in policy folders on the school network and can be made available on request.

Date: September 2024

Policy Next Review Date: September 2025