

Staff and Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

KWS



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1. Aims

At KWS every individual is valued for who they are and what they contribute to the school. The wellbeing of everyone is extremely important. The wellbeing of students is fundamental to all aspects of school life; the wellbeing of our staff is equally important, not only for their own mental, physical and emotional health, but also in enabling the provision of a consistently high-quality education and standard of care for each of our students. A number of factors contribute to the wellbeing of the staff team including a supportive environment, manageable workload, reasonable expectations, good communications, identified staff facilities and the recognition of individual contributions and achievements. We believe that where staff are happy and positive this will translate to our students, who will then be encouraged to feel the same way thus being in the optimal position to thrive.

This policy aims to:

- › Support the mental health and wellbeing of all staff and students to avoid negative impacts on their mental, emotional and physical health
- › Provide a supportive working and learning environment for all
- › Acknowledge the needs of all, and how these change over time
- › Allow staff to balance their working lives with their personal needs and responsibilities
- › Support and signpost staff when any specific mental health and wellbeing issues are identified
- › Support and refer to other agencies for students where any mental health and wellbeing issues arise
- › Ensure that staff understand their role in working towards the above aims

2. Promoting mental health and wellbeing at all times

2.1 Role of all staff

To support other staff, staff members will:

- › Treat each other with empathy and respect
- › Keep in mind the workload and mental health 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 mental health and wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- › Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- › Use shared areas respectfully, such as staff facilities or offices
- › Take part in training opportunities that promote their mental health and wellbeing

To support students, staff members will:

- Provide a warm and nurturing environment for students to be educated in.
- Deliver daily and weekly keywork sessions in small groups to support, boost and guide students in their choices and development.
- Maintain current risk assessments, passports and support plans for each student, which indicate strategies to be implemented which will promote the optimal environment for their development.
- Deliver a broad and balanced PSHCE curriculum reflecting the needs of our cohorts.
- Build self-confidence and self-esteem not only through our daily practice, but also via our weekly rewards system.
- Teach the children to be aware of their own feelings and giving them the language to talk about emotions.
- Provide many different ways for children to communicate their feelings including an ask it basket, key work sessions, safe adults to talk to and a culture of patience and listening.
- Work with families closely to build a joint working relationship with the child at the centre.
- Use our weekly reflection times to share updates on the students received from other agencies and families, and to discuss any observations made throughout the day that may highlight an area of praise or concern for a student, or indicate a need to update a student's risk assessment, passport or behaviour plan.
- Ensure that if a child is deemed to be at risk of potential suicide or of serious self-harm emergency medical support would be sourced, and emergency services contacted as appropriate, via referral to the DSL.
- Maintain close contact with students and their families during times of extended absence or school closure, so that they still feel supported and a valued part of our school community.

2.2 Role of line managers

To support staff, line managers are expected to::

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any mental health and wellbeing issues that lead to their resignation

2.3 Role of senior staff

Although senior staff work together to promote and support wellbeing and positive mental health for staff and students, the DSL is the designated teacher at KWS for leading in this area and is trained in Mental Health First Aid. KWS has also achieved the School Mental Health Bronze Award (Leeds Beckett University)

To support staff, senior staff are expected to:

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and students, and adhering to agreed working hours

- › Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- › Ensure that the working environment promotes a feeling of being valued and appreciated
- › Monitor the mental health and wellbeing of staff through day to day contact, 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
- › Protect staff PPA time, and if lost due to unplanned demands, ensure it is paid back.
- › Make sure job descriptions are kept up-to-date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes
- › 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
- › Ensure that time set for meetings, parent contact and CPD is within directed time
- › 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 – to include termly Mental Health and Wellbeing meetings
- › Monitor absences and identify strategies to reduce absence rates
- › Support staff remotely during times of unplanned school closure, incorporating face-to-face visits where appropriate
- › Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections
- › Buy in to the HR package which offers free and confidential advice to staff
- › The designated teacher will provide resources to promote staff mental health and wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- › The designated teacher will promote information about and access to external support services
- › The designated teacher will implement and cascade any learning from the Mental Health Award
- › The designated teacher will ensure that their mental health training is current.

To support students, senior staff are expected to:

- › Ensure that the working environment promotes a feeling of being valued and appreciated
- › Monitor the mental health and wellbeing of students through leading or referring to the daily de-brief session and notes, and structured conversations
- › Support staff and students remotely during times of unplanned school closure, incorporating face-to-face visits where appropriate
- › The designated teacher will offer additional support as needed to enable students to cope with how they are feeling, about a life event or any worry or concern that may be affecting them.
- › The designated teacher will work with other agencies to ensure that where students have a more acute need, they may receive therapeutic support from an external specialist such as the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Team (CAMHS) and other local services.
- › In times of loss or bereavement the designated teacher will support the student and their family in a timely manner through an appropriate medium, and to seek their guidance on the support they may want from

us, for themselves or for their family, with an indication of the frequency of our support. A referral to support agencies will also be offered throughout the grieving process.

- › The designated teacher will promote information about and access to external support services
- › The designated teacher will implement and cascade any learning from the Mental Health Award.
- › The designated teacher will ensure that their mental health training is current.

2.4 Role of the Board of Trustees

The board of trustees is expected to:

- › Make sure the school 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 mental health and wellbeing of the headteacher
- › Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff mental health and wellbeing
- › Make decisions and review policies with staff mental health and wellbeing in mind, particularly in regards 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

3. Managing specific mental health and wellbeing issues

The school will support and review expectations with any staff that raise mental health and wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives. For students, these conversations will be the responsibility of the designated teacher for mental health and wellbeing, whilst working closely with the keyworker.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- › Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis, and for students, supporting families where time may be needed to manage any concerns
- › Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- › Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- › Reassessing staff workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise, and for students adapting their timetable to promote optimal wellbeing and access to learning

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff and students will be paramount.

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the DSL and Designated Teacher for Mental Health and Wellbeing. At every review, it will be approved by the trustees.

5. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- › Appraisal policy
- › Behaviour policy
- › Staff code of conduct
- › Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy