WILDERN ACADEMY TRUST

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the school's commitment to physical and mental wellbeing for all staff. Staff wellbeing is paramount for a safe and effective school. All employees, which means every member of staff can play a part in improving wellbeing in the workplace. Addressing mental health issues can improve the general wellbeing of employees, reduce absenteeism and presenteeism, lower staff turnover, increase productivity, and help promote the employment of those who have experienced mental health problems.

Aims

- To create a workplace culture that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of all staff
- To support staff in regular physical exercise
- To encourage employees to make lifestyle choices

Mental wellbeing

Promoting mental wellbeing by:

- Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues.
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace.
- Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health.
- Providing Staff and students with wellbeing postboxes to voice concerns and ask for guidance.
- Sending out a Wellbeing newsletter to staff, parents and students.
- Implementing the Wonderkind programme of wellbeing activities including buddies, wellbeing raffle and termly quiz.

Physical wellbeing

Encouraging physical health by:

- Promoting physical activity through the use of the swimming pool, gym and fitness classes.
- Supporting a healthy, balanced diet through a wide range of options available in the dining hall.
- Promoting hydration by providing staff with water fountains and tea and coffee facilities.
- Paying for, and where possible, organising flu jabs for all staff.

Leadership and Management

Equipping managers and leaders with the skills to:

- Identify and assist those with mental ill health
- Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the school

Support for Staff

Offering support to Staff by:

- Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of all staff.
- Offering help, support and guidance to those with a mental health issue.
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health, 1:1 meetings with the Headteacher
- Employment for those with mental health issues.

Supporting those coming back to work by:

- Making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment.
- Establishing agreed recruitment practices.
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health.

Implementation

To create a supportive workplace culture, tackle factors that may have a negative impact on mental health, and ensure managers have the right skills to support staff

- Give staff information on mental health issues to help raise awareness.
- Deliver non-judgemental support to any staff member experiencing a mental health issue.
- Providing mental health first aid training for the student services team.
- Give all staff access to the mental health and wellbeing policy.
- Deliver a thorough induction for all new staff, providing an outline of the school, the policies and the role they are expected to play.
- Provide ways for staff to support their own mental wellbeing, for example through social events and wellbeing activities.
- Set realistic targets and deadlines for staff to prevent long working hours.
- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism or or discrimination.
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well.
- Ensure good communication between line managers, staff and teams.

To provide support and guidance for any member of staff experiencing mental health issues

- Monitor the school's policies and the effect they have on mental health.
- Ensure staff members with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement.
- Encourage staff to talk to Headteacher, mental health first aider, HR, occupational health, a counsellor, GP and/or anyone else they feel comfortable with.
- If a member of staff has been on long term sickness absence, ensure a support meeting with the Headteacher and a gradual return to work with support at each stage if needed.
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental ill health in the strictest confidence, and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned.

To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health

- Show a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues.
- Ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Ensure that staff will not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress, or will necessarily take more time off than other applicants.
- Ensure that there are members of staff who have received mental health first aid training within the school, and that line managers have the skills to manage mental health in the workplace.

To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue

- Identify workplace stress factors/scenarios and carry out risk assessments of the school.
- Provide resources to help line managers implement the school's workplace mental health and wellbeing policy.
- Offer support through a suggested counselling service, or qualified mental health first aiders.

To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for managing stress and maintaining mental wellbeing

- Provide a reduced rate gym membership.
- Provide opportunities to talk to Leisure Centre staff about physical activity in relation to managing stress as well as improving mental alertness and concentration.

To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue

- Provide information on local gyms, classes and sports facilities.
- Encourage activity groups, e.g. football, classes, staff quiz.
- Provide details on the UK's Cycle to Work Scheme.