



# **Staff Wellbeing Policy**

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Executive Management Group (EMG) and agreed by the Pay, Personnel and Performance (PPP) Committee on an annual basis

**Chief Executive Officer:** Teresa Tunnadine

**Chair of Trustees:** Steve Eddy

**HR Business Partner:** John Sear



## Staff Wellbeing Policy

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### 1. Intent

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing: "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

This Wellbeing Policy for MLT staff has been developed to support the **positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff**. MLT recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving staff members' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and school performance. We also know that in order for our staff to support the ongoing mental health of our students, it is essential that we support MLT staff in the same way.

### 2. **The Policy Aims to set out:**

- the range of services available to help staff maintain health and wellbeing,
- the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining a positive work environment,
- MLT's commitment to providing support for individual staff members.

### 3. School Delivery

Each school within MLT has a responsibility to ensure the working environment is safe and positive for its staff. Each school will ensure that its practices reflect the MLT Health and Safety Policy and are reviewed regularly.

In addition, each school will:

- put in place measures to **support staff with their wellbeing**, provide appropriate training and individual support,
- seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating the principles of this policy into **line manager training**,

- regularly **raise awareness** of positive approaches to mental health and wellbeing.

### **3.1 Responsibilities and key staff members**

#### **Line managers**

Line managers will put in place **measures to support staff with their wellbeing** by:

- being approachable and supportive with team members,
- supporting the effective planning of individual workload,
- providing clarity on roles and responsibilities within teams,
- providing effective induction, probation and appraisal procedures,
- familiarising themselves with the MLT Equalities policy,
- keeping lines of communications open within teams,
- taking stock of individuals' wellbeing to assess the impact of current approaches, through 1:1 meetings, appraisal meetings and check-ins,
- ensuring that staff know who to approach for support,
- participating in training e.g. Educare 'Supporting Staff Wellbeing in School',
- holding return to work interviews, where appropriate.

### **3.2 Human resources**

The HR Business Partner will support the development of trust-wide policies and procedures to support the wellbeing of staff, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, to help support all staff in maintaining their own wellbeing.

### **3.3 Occupational health**

Occupational health is an external professional support service which is provided by the Trust for its employees, where this is needed. It provides a comprehensive service designed to help staff stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing health problems. This will include:-

- preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the HR Business Partner,
- liaising with GPs,
- working with individuals to support them.

Discussions between staff and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team will provide to the school a report on the staff member's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the School / HR Business Partner.

### **3.4 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

The Employee Assistance Programme is provided by MLT for all its employees. It is regularly promoted and can be accessed by all MLT staff via the 24-hour help line which will be answered by a qualified / experienced counsellor. Leaflets and posters are displayed in school staffrooms.

The Programme provides a wide range of support services covering:

Legal, Financial, Counselling, Medical, Consumer, Family, Work, Stress.

In addition, there is an on-line health portal and monthly newsletters.

### **3.5 Staff**

The NHS provides guidance on promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Staff are advised to follow these five steps:

1. Connecting with other people – good relationships are important for mental wellbeing
2. Being physically active – this promotes both positive physical and mental health
3. Learning new skills – this promotes wellbeing by boosting self-esteem
4. Giving to others – acts of kindness can improve mental wellbeing
5. Paying attention to the present moment – mindfulness can positively impact the way we deal with challenges

If staff wish to discuss an aspect of their wellbeing they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager. They can also choose to talk to the relevant member of SLT or MLT's HR Business Partner or their Headteacher.

### **3.6 Communication and Feedback**

Methods of staff communication and consultation are outlined in the MLT Staff Communications Policy with the aims of supporting effective communication and to enable MLT staff to understand the decision making process.

Other measures available to support all staff in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- Qwell free online support and counselling <https://xenzone.com/qwell/>,
- A mental health first-aid programme for key pastoral staff,
- Access to Work. A Government Organisation supporting staff with physical and mental health conditions.

### **3.7 Monitoring**

Schools review staff attendance termly.

Schools receive a six monthly report from their Employee Assistance Programme provider, giving anonymised data in relation to number of phone calls to the help line and access to the counselling service.

### **3.8 Review Process**

In addition to regular team meetings, staff CPD opportunities and check-ins, there is an annual staff survey in MLT schools, which acts as a staff 'temperature check'. All responses are read and suggestions used to inform school improvements for the next academic year.

#### **4. Links to other policies**

Staff Code

Communications Policy

Induction Policy

Appraisal and performance management policies

Staff attendance and leave of absence policy