Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

LINKS TO POLICIES: Sickness Absence Management Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy, Equal Opportunities, Performance Management, Whistleblowing, Flexible Working/Work:life balance, Anti-bullying/Harassment

DATE: February 2022

POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: Trust HR Officer

TRUSTEES/GOVERNORS COMMITTEE: People and Performance

AUDIENCE: All members of the Trust community

STATUS: Ratified (non-statutory)

DATE RATIFIED: February 2022

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: February 2023

Contents

1.   Aims

1.1   The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Quantock Education Trust (QET) prioritises and maintains a continued commitment to being proactive as well as responsible in its promotion of the mental and physical wellbeing.

1.2   The QET oversees this policy but the Local Governance Committee of each school within the Trust is responsible for the implementation of the policy.

1.3   The QET aims to ensure that each school in our Trust:

- Promotes positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and students
- Supports staff in keeping a healthy work/life balance
- Makes staff and the student body feel valued
- Recognises the importance of a happy team
- Provides support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provides support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

1.4   We expect all staff to show respect and empathy for each other and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

2.   Legislation

2.1   Academies have legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the health safety and welfare of their employees whilst at work. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees.

3.   Context

3.1   The 'Thriving at work' Stevenson / Farmer review of mental health and employers explains clearly that the UK faces a significant mental health challenge at work. Poor mental health has a huge impact on an individual's life and those around them, as well as a huge impact and a cost to employers. The CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) states that promoting wellbeing can help prevent stress and create positive working environments where individuals and organisations can thrive. There is a positive link between staff wellbeing and long-term organisational health. The growing awareness of work-life balance has also made us aware of the relationship between our mental and physical wellbeing and the job we do (ACAS). Good staff wellbeing is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school, for retaining and motivating staff and for promoting pupil wellbeing and attainment.

3.2   Well-designed, organised and managed work is good for us but when insufficient attention to job design, work organisation and management has taken place, it can result in work related stress. Work related stress develops because a person is unable to cope with the demands being placed on them. Stress, including work related stress, can be a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked with high

levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and other issues such as more errors and poor relationships amongst staff

3.3   Work related stress

3.3.1   This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as "the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is an important distinction between 'reasonable pressures' which stimulate and motivate and 'stress' where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

3.3.2   The CIPD report *Health and Wellbeing at Work (May 2018)* states that the most common cause of work-related stress is workload. We also recognise that there are many sources of work related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or students.

3.3.3   The Health and Safety Executive have produced a number of Management Standards (see Appendix 2) which cover the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:
- Demands – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment
- Control – i.e. how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- Support – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- Relationships – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- Role: – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- Change – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation

3.4 The Causes of Workplace Stress

3.4.3   Stress can hit anyone at any level in an academy and recent research shows that work related stress is widespread and is not confined to particular sectors, jobs or industries.

Common causes of work related stress are:-
- Excessive workload, work patterns, and a poor work environment ;
- How much say the person has in the way they do their work;
- A lack of encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the academy, line management and colleagues;
- Poor relationships with management, colleagues and students;
- Poor understanding of role and expectations; and
- Change (large or small) and the way it is communicated and managed at the academy.

- It is important to notice when and where such conditions are evolving within the academy; this is particularly relevant for those in managerial roles who can have a direct impact on these conditions.

3.5 Signs of Workplace Stress

   3.5.1 The emotional signs of stress may include:-
   - Sadness;
   - Irritability;
   - Apathy;
   - Tiredness;
   - Poor attention;
   - Over self-medicating, drug abuse; and
   - Alcohol abuse.

   3.5.2 The ill-health related to stress may include:-
   - Sleep issues; too much, too little resulting in physical exhaustion;
   - Weight issues; gain, loss;
   - Headaches or migraines;
   - Digestive problems;
   - General aches and pains; and
   - Increased general sickness because the immune system is low.

   3.5.3 Prolonged workplace stress increases the level of cortisol in the bloodstream. This can result in:-
   - Impaired cognitive performance;
   - Suppressed thyroid function;
   - Blood sugar imbalances such as hyperglycaemia;
   - Decreased bone density;
   - Decreases in muscle tissue;
   - Higher blood pressure;
   - Lowered immunity and inflammatory responses in the body, slowed wound healing, and other health consequences; and
   - Increased abdominal fat, which is associated with a greater amount of health problems and can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and the development of metabolic syndrome, higher levels of "bad" cholesterol (LDL).

4. Statement of Intent

4.1 This policy aims to promote the good mental and physical health of all staff and will outline the support available for those who may need it. All aspects of wellbeing will be promoted including physical health, mental health, good lifestyle choices and financial wellbeing.

4.2 The QET will implement its duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as reasonably practicable. It is also required to have in place measures to mitigate as far as practicable

factors that could harm employees' physical and mental wellbeing, which includes work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the Trust's control.

Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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. (World Health Organisation)

4.3   The Trust takes the wellbeing of staff very seriously and it recognises that the prevention and effective management of work-related stress is crucial. It recognises that stress can hit anyone at any level. Stress might not be directly work related, and all stress will never be able to be eradicated from the workplace, but we are committed to preventing and addressing work-related stress where we are able to. Staff are asked to report stress to their manager. Staff are also encouraged to develop a balanced and responsible approach to work and personal lives, informing their manager if personal stress is affecting their work.

4.4   The Trust is committed to the provision of training and support to help managers and staff to understand and recognise the nature, causes of work-related stress. It commits to regular risk assessment and the monitoring of response to referrals.

4.5   The Trust commits to an annual review of its policy and procedures and expects its school senior leaders to keep their local governors informed of progress relating to the action plan as well as any concerns.

4.6   Workload

The Trust is committed to ensuring staff have a manageable workload. Workload is a regular agenda item in SLT meetings. For example:

- The Trust aims for timetables to reflect a fair and reasonable balance of work between different members of staff.
- Calendars are carefully planned with meetings arranged in advance and in line with directed time rules.
- Staff are consulted as much as possible about changes.
- Training and CPD is provided for all classroom staff
- SLT use DfE resources to support teaching staff in managing their workload, for example the review of marking and assessment.
- Staff wellbeing is a key focus for the Trust.

4.7   Sickness absence caused by stress

4.7.1   According to the CIPD, stress, acute medical conditions and mental ill health continue to be the most common causes of long-term absence. It is important for staff and managers to work together to prevent stress-related issues and address them as soon as they arise. However, there may be times when stress impacts so negatively on a member of staff's health that they need to take time off work. Staff are encouraged to discuss their mental health with their line manager and seek support. The Trust has a sickness absence management policy which covers sickness absence and return to work. The procedure

for sickness absence is the same for physical health and mental health, and staff will be treated equally whether their sickness absence is for a mental health or physical health problem.

4.7.2   On return, a structured return to work interview will be held. If appropriate, a stress risk assessment will be carried out.

4.7.3   Support will be provided for the member of staff and if appropriate a structured return to work will be planned with the member of staff. Staff are encouraged to seek advice and support as soon as they can, either from their GP or another source. The Trust provides staff with an employee assistance programme through CareFirst and this includes a counselling service.

4.7.4   This policy operates alongside the sickness absence management policy.

4.7.5   The Trust will promote the wellbeing of staff by:

- Promoting positive mental health in all staff and students
- Encouraging staff to get support early if struggling with a mental health problem
- Supporting staff who have been away from work with a mental health problem
- Providing line managers with basic training and information on the effects of common mental illnesses and helpful responses
- Sharing with staff education and awareness initiatives on mental health and wellbeing
- Ensuring work deadlines are reasonable and properly scheduled
- Creating a culture in which bullying and harassment will not be tolerated (see the Trust Staff Code of Conduct)
- Recognising that staff need to balance their work and home lives and responsibilities
- Creating a working environment where potential work-related stressors as far as practicable are avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health
- Engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships both within teams and across the Trust
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing
- Encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.
- Senior management will consider flexible or part time working where appropriate as part of the steps to prevent, recognise and manage work-related stress.

5   Responsibilities for implementing the Staff Wellbeing Policy

5.1   The Trust executive, Trustees, Local Governors and senior leaders will:

- Ensure that health and wellbeing is a strategic priority for the Trust and that it becomes embedded across its operations and culture

- Act as role models for others including on work-life balance
- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the Trust
- Champion good management practices, and the establishment of a work ethos which enables employees to maintain a reasonable "work life balance"
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting and supporting employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements at both a Trust-wide and departmental level
- Support a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and wellbeing.

5.2   Line managers will:

- Treat individuals reporting to them with consideration and dignity, and will promote a culture of mutual respect in the teams they manage. They will not permit unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when issues are brought to their attention
- Ensure that there is good communication within their team and there are opportunities for individuals to raise concerns about their work, seeking advice from Human Resources at an early stage where concerns are raised
- Follow the sound management principles set out in the Trust Human Resources policies and procedures
- Co-operate with Human Resources to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles or working practices that may give rise to work-related stress
- Encourage their staff to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the Trust to promote wellbeing and more effective working
- Take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.

5.3   Employees will:

- Treat colleagues with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Co-operate with the Trust's efforts to implement the Wellbeing policy
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing or mental health
- Take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by adopting healthy lifestyles
- Take responsibility for their own development skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce of the risk of stress
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, thus helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

5.4   Human Resources will:
- Provide advice to managers of staff and employees on best practice in relation to human resource management, developing policies and procedures as required
- Ensure that there are arrangements in place for communicating the content of the Trust's human resource management policies, procedures and toolkits to managers and staff

- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support individuals experiencing stress, referring them to Occupational Health where appropriate
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to support managers experiencing problems with employee performance.
- Collate management information which will enable the Trust to measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee wellbeing, such as:

  - Sickness absence data
  - Staff turnover
  - Number of referrals to Occupational Health
  - Numbers of grievance and harassment cases
  - Seek the views of staff on the effectiveness of the Trust's Wellbeing policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.

6   Action Plan

6.1   Each school will develop an action plan to be included as part of the School Development Plan.

7   Monitoring and review

7.1   The action plan will be reviewed by the Local Governance Committee on an annual basis. Each school is expected to operate a range of strategies and initiatives for promoting wellbeing and mental health, which are appropriate to their setting. Best practice is identified and shared across the Trust.

7.2   Each school has an identified senior leader for this area. This individual is responsible for keeping the Local Governors informed and updated on progress relating to the action plan and of any major concerns.

7.3   The Trust has systems in place for monitoring stress related illnesses, identifying trends in relation to absenteeism, staff turnover, poor performance and staff relationships. The Trust HR Officer is responsible for this level of monitoring. Where concerns are identified, they are acted upon and actions are documented. When meetings with employees take place, minutes are taken, filed and distributed to the employee.

7.4   The Trustees Welfare subcommittee will review the Trust policy in conjunction with the DFO and CEO and keep the trustees informed of review outcomes and of any serious trends.

8   Reporting

8.1   Where work-related stress issues are suspected or reported by employees, these concerns will be discussed with the line manager or, if this is not possible with the school HR representative. Where the issues may be complex and cannot be resolved simply, they should be referred, with their agreement to Occupational Health. This process will actioned through the Trust central HR Officer. Telephone counselling will be offered (Carefirst) for both personal and work related issues and may resolve issues without any further intervention. Offers of other services may be made if deemed appropriate.

9   Review Date

9.1   This policy will be reviewed in February 2023.

10   Sources of support

10.1   Appendix 1 - Sources of Support

10.2   Appendix 2 – Stress Management Standards

10.3   Appendix 3 – Stress Risk Assessment

10.4   Appendix 4 – Wellness Action Plan

Appendix 1:   Sources of Support

Mental Health support for line managers:

- ACAS: Tel: 0300 123 1150
  https://www.acas.org.uk/

- Mind: Tel: 0300 123 3393

  https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4808/how-to-promote-wellbeing-and-tackle-the-causes-of-work-related-mh-problems_walesv2.pdf

Articles:
- https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/how-to-support-line-managers-in-dealing-with-mental-health/
  https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/managing-mental-health-work-role-leaders-line-managers/

- HSE: Tel: 0345 300 9923

  https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mental-health.htm

- CIPD: Tel: 0208 612 6200

  https://www.cipd.co.uk/about/media/press/260918-manager-mental-health-guide

- Mental Health Foundation: Tel: 020 7803 1100
  https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/benefits-great-line-management-and-good-mental-health-workplace

- NHS:

  https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/mental-health-workplace

Sources of wellbeing support for all staff:

- www.Care-first.co.uk
  Counselling and emotional wellbeing support service.
  Tel: 01452 623200.

- https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/
  UK's only charity providing mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff. You can sign up to their newsletter.
  Tel: 020 7697 2750

- https://www.rethink.org/

They provide expert, accredited advice and information to anyone who is affected by mental health problems. You can sign up to their Newsletter and they have published a wide range of mental health factsheets.
Tel: 0300 500 927

- https://www.acas.org.uk/
  ACAS provides a range of guidance, information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems.

- https://www.mind.org.uk/
  Provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

- https://www.remploy.co.uk/
  Remploy exists to improve the lives of disabled people and those with complex needs through the power of work.
  Tel: 0300 456 8110

- https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/
  Provides information on health matters including mental health.

- https://mhfaengland.org/
  Provides resources for mental health and has produced a 'workplace wellbeing toolkit'.
  Tel: 020 3928 0760

- https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/
  They provide a lot of articles on issues related to the education profession.

- https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/
  They help support teachers, parents and students in education.
  Tel: 01227 818263

- http://www.innerspace.com/
  Meditation and personal development.
  Tel: 01245 355654

- https://www.headspace.com/
  Meditation.

- https://www.aheadforwork.com/

Mindfulness.

- https://www.talktofrank.com/
  Confidential drugs advice.
  Tel: 0300 123 6600

Appendix 2: The HSE's Stress Management Standards

The HSE has established six Stress Management Standards (Risk Factors) that should be considered when doing either type of stress risk assessment. To summarize, these are: -

Demands:

Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

- The academy provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work; their skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
- Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of each employees;
- And employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed.

Control:

Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work; and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

- Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work; employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;
- Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;
- The academy encourages employees to develop their skills;
- Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

Support:

Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors.

- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns;
- The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues;
- Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it;
- Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job; and
- Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

Relationships:

Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work.
Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns;

- The academy promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- The academy has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour;

- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.

Role:

Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities.

- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.
- The academy ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible;
- The academy provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities;
- The academy ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear; and
- Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

Change:

Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change. Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

- The academy provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- The academy ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes; and
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

Appendix 3: Stress Risk Assessment

Stress Risk Assessment – Private and Confidential

Part A

Employee Name:		Department:	
Manager/HR Name:		Date:	

Notes to Employee

➔ You are **invited*** to use this form to help you to identify and deal with work-related stress: if you choose to use this form, you're not obliged to share its contents with anybody – however, you can "do your bit" for managing work-related stress by sharing this form (or parts of it) with your manager: if they don't know there's a problem they can't help.

➔ You don't have to answer every question - only answer those questions that you find **helpful**.

If you don't feel able to talk directly to your manager about a work-related concern, **ask** a colleague or other representative to raise the issue on your behalf: other sources of advice and support are listed within this form.

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even if you choose to fill out this form, you're not **obliged to show it to anybody – it's your choice!*

Notes to Manager/HR

You should **offer*** your staff the opportunity to complete a stress risk assessment:

   ✓ When a member of staff has been off sick with work-related stress (as part of the **return to work** interview).

   ✓ Where you believe that an individual or team are likely to be suffering from **work-related** stress;

   ✓ Annually, for example during the appraisal process;

   ✓ To plan for major **change**;

➔ You can give this questionnaire out as a **survey** and collate responses, or use it as a guide during a **meeting** with an individual or a team – use your judgement about what approach might work best for you and your staff.

When you and your staff have completed stress risk assessments, develop **action plan**/s using *Part B* of this form with your staff to address any areas of concern and review this on a regular basis.

Please note: staff are not obliged to complete a stress risk assessment; it should always be their **choice*

DEMANDS: this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment

Do you feel you have just the right amount of work to do? Could you say what work you have too much/too little of?

Guidance: e.g. Unachievable deadlines, intensive work, neglecting important tasks, short-staffed

Desired state =
⟳ There is a full complement of staff and vacancies are filled within a "reasonable" time period

Do you take the breaks you are entitled to at work?

Guidance: Insert link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - E.g Working time regulations, Breaks for junior doctors/bleeps

Desired states =
⟳ Where possible, staff have control over their pace of work
⟳ The Trust provides staff with achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work

What training, if any, would help you to do your job?

Guidance: Training does not have to be courses – consider acting up/taking on more responsibilities and duties, projects, problem-solving activity, job rotation, conferences, working with colleagues, coaching/mentoring, reading/research, meetings/working parties/task groups, visits and secondments, out of work activities, networking, leaflets and information packs

 Desired states =
⟳ People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands and
⟳ Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees

Are there any problems with your work environment? If yes, please describe:

Guidance: Link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - e.g. health & safety policy leaflet

Desired state =
⟳ Staff are able to raise concerns about their work environment

CONTROL: how much say you have in the way you do your work
How could you have more say about how your job is done?
How could you be more included in decision-making in the team?
How could you be supported to use your skills to greater effect at work?
Desired states = ♻ Staff are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work ♻The organisation encourages staff to develop their skills ♻Where possible, staff are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work
SUPPORT: this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the Trust, your manager and your colleagues
How could your line manager better support you to do your job?
How could your colleagues better support you to do your job?
Are there any parts of your job that you find especially difficult?
Do you feel you have a healthy work-life balance? If not, how could it be better?
Guidance: Link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - e.g Flexible working, Course in stress management, sources of support such as counselling, Occupational Health, Human Resources, Chaplaincy and Health & Safety

Desired state =
♂ Staff feel supported at work, and extra support is provided where the need is identified

RELATIONSHIPS: promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
How could communication in the team be improved?
If you feel that you are experiencing bullying or harassment at work, what parts of the Trust's "Prevention of Harassment and Bullying at Work Procedure" could help?
Guidance: Link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - e.g Assertiveness training, Leading effective teams, Harassment and bullying policy / procedure
Desired states =
♂ Employees share information relevant to their work;
♂ Staff feel able to ask for help with conflict, bullying and harassment

ROLE: ensuring that your role is clear and that you do not have conflicting roles
Are you clear about your roles and responsibilities at work? If not, please explain:
Do you feel that there is any ambiguity or confusion (role conflict) in your job? If yes, please describe:
Guidance Link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - e.g. "I have a relevant job description; I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department"
Desired state =
♂ The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon staff are compatible

CHANGE: how organisational change is managed and communicated
How could your line manager better support you during change at work?
How could the organisation better support you during change at work?

Guidance: Link to your local relevant policies/procedures/guidance here - e.g. policy/procedure on organisational and workforce change, courses on change management

Desired states =

♨ The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;

♨ Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs;

♨ Employees are aware of timetables for changes;

♨ Employees have access to relevant support during changes and

♨ If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs.

Appendix 4: Wellness Action Plan

Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

The WAP reminds us what we need to do to stay well at work and details what lines managers can do to better support staff. It also helps staff to develop an awareness of their working style, stress triggers and responses, and enables them to communicate these to their manager.

In cases where someone has had to take time off as a result of a mental health problem, a WAP can be used as part of the return-to-work process to set out what steps they and their manager plan to take to support recovery.

The information in the WAP form will be held confidentially and regularly reviewed by the member of staff and their manager together. The member of staff only needs to provide information that they are comfortable sharing and that relates to their role. This form is not legally binding but it will help staff and managers to agree, together, how to practically support the member of staff in their role and address any health needs.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the data gathered in this form will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the permission of the member of staff.

1	**What helps you stay mentally healthy at work?** (for example taking an adequate lunch break away from your desk, getting some exercise before or after work or in your lunch break, light and space in the office, opportunities to get to know colleagues)
2	**What can your manager do to proactively support you to stay mentally healthy at work?** (for example regular feedback and catch-ups, flexible working patterns, explaining wider organisational developments)
3	**Are there any situations at work that can trigger poor mental health for you?** (for example conflict at work, organisational change, tight deadlines, something not going to plan)
4	**How might stress/poor mental health difficulties impact on our work?** (for examples: find it difficult to make decisions hard to prioritise work tasks)
5	**Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to feel stressed/mentally unwell?** (for example changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues)
6	**What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or to support you to manage symptoms?** (for example extra catch up time with line manager)
7	**If we notice early warning signs that you are feeling stressed or unwell – what should we do?** (for example, talk to us discreetly about it, contact someone that I have asked to be contracted) Please include contact names and numbers if you would like your line manager to get in touch with someone if you become unwell.
8	**What steps can you take if you start to feel unwell at work?** (For example, take a break from your desk and go for a short walk, ask you line manager for support)