Tudor Grange Academies Trust

Employee Wellbeing Policy

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1. Definitions

"Line Manager"	Any person who provides directions to other more junior TGAT persons and whom the same TGAT person report to. Also used to identify a direct supervisor or other senior manager.
"Principal"	The person responsible for the day to day running of a particular school within the Trust. Also used to identify another senior manager delegated to deal with a matter by the Principal, an Executive Principal, or the CEO.
"the Trust"	Tudor Grange Academies Trust (company number: 07365748) whose registered office is at Tudor Grange Academy, Dingle Lane, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3PD.

2. Introduction

2.1. This Policy is for all employees employed by Tudor Grange Academy Trust (TGAT).

2.2. TGAT recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and understands that wellbeing and performance are linked.

2.3. TGAT are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

2.4. This Policy sets out TGAT's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, physical health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues. This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. TGAT's responsibilities extend to factors that are work related and within TGAT's control only.

2.5. TGAT recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' wellbeing and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at Trust and school level.

2.6. TGAT are committed to balancing the needs of employees and the Trust's educational, business and operational needs.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. TGAT

3.1.1. TGAT has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. TGAT will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

3.1.2. In addition to reducing safety risks, we will operate the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are reasonable and having policies and procedures in place to support employees experiencing mental ill health at work.

3.1.3. TGAT will:

- take overall responsibility for implementing this Policy;
- adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of flexible working arrangements, part-time working, etc. where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the Trust's schools;
- ensure clear procedures are in place that will minimise levels of stress caused to employees when following formal procedures such as the capability, disciplinary or sickness absence management procedures;
- ensure that employees' roles and responsibilities are clearly defined;
- seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

3.2. The Principal

3.2.1. The Principal is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the procedure to ensure that it is communicated to employees and that it is applied consistently.

3.2.2. The Principal will:

- create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns, and enable employees to do so in a supportive environment;
- pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress;
- follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work-related stress and other mental-health problems;
- ensure that contact is maintained with staff while absent and that a return-to-work policy is established in the workplace that is supportive of employees;
- carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible;
- carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate;
- ensure that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and the job description/person specification;
- make sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams;
- demonstrate commitment, via systems and practices in place in each school, to employees maintaining a good work-life balance, and ensure that such practices are communicated to all employees;
- manage pressures which may affect employees, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.

3.3. Line Managers

3.3.1. Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing. Line managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's

stress management standards and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, line managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Line managers must also familiarise themselves with the Trust's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support employees.

3.3.2. In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- creating reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns;
- paying attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in employees and promote sympathetic alertness to employees who show signs of being under stress;
- following agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems;
- carrying out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible;
- seeking agreement from the employee for a referral to Occupational Health if this is required and/or appropriate in the circumstances;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- ensuring that any necessary work stations assessments are completed as appropriate;
- encouraging staff to discuss wellbeing at appraisal meetings;
- take action in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to others;
- ensure return to work meetings are complete and a TGAT Wellness Action Plan (Annex A) is completed as required.

3.4. Employees

3.4.1. Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, exercise, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the school if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with line managers or the Occupational Health service is treated in confidence.

3.4.2. Employees should:

- seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem at the earliest opportunity to ensure effective strategies can be implemented;
- act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace;
- ensure awareness of the Trust's policies and procedures relevant to employee wellbeing;

- assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or colleagues;
- treat colleagues and all other persons whom they interact with during the course of their work with consideration, respect and dignity;
- if required, attend appointments with Occupational Health or other medical appointment/examination by a registered medical practitioner nominated by the school.

4.   Support mechanisms

4.1.   Training and communication

4.1.1. Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. This will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

4.1.2. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and Trust-wide methods. The Trust will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

4.1.3. The Trust will consider special communication media during periods of organisational change.

4.2.   Occupational Health support

4.2.1. Line managers can contact each school's Occupational Health service for advice on managing issues regarding work-related stress and wellbeing. The Occupational Health provider delivers a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This includes preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the HR department, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

4.2.2. Occupational Health professionals can aid in developing rehabilitation plans for employees returning to work after absences related to mental ill health, and work with GPs and line managers on designing jobs and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is successful.

4.2.3. A referral to the Occupational Health team will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their line manager. It may be instigated promptly where work place stress is a factor or where there are concerns regarding mental health. Discussions between employees and the Occupational Health professionals are confidential, although the Occupational Health team is likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the school.

4.3.   Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
The provider of external employee assistance services to TGAT will alert the Trust's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the Trust, drawing on

anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees.

4.4. Counselling

4.4.1. Counselling can be provided where appropriate through TGAT's EAP provider. This will be a confidential, independent service using professionally qualified counsellors.

4.4.2. Employees can access the Counselling Service by contacting the website or using the app.

4.5. Mediation

A mediation service could also be supportive in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. This could be accessed via the Counselling Service or other agency, e.g. ACAS. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.

4.6. Other measures

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

- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour;
- special leave arrangements;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities;
- the Trust's grievance policy;
- a lifestyle management programme via the EAP;
- a stress management/handling pressure programme via the EAP.

5. Relationship with other policies

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, such as special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, and sick pay. TGAT takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer to all employees and a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty:

- Management of Sickness Absence Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Flexible Working Policy.
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

TGAT Wellness Action Plan

A Wellness Action Plan (WAP) reminds us what we need to do to stay well at work and details what lines managers can follow 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 line 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 experiencing poor mental health impact on your work? (For example: you may find it difficult to make decisions, struggle to prioritise work tasks, have difficulty with concentration, drowsiness, confusion or headaches).
5	Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to experience poor mental health? (For example: changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues).

6	What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or help you to manage the impact? (For example: extra catch-up time with your manager, guidance on prioritising workload, flexible working patterns, consider reasonable adjustments).
7	Are there elements of your individual working style or temperament that it is worth your line manager being aware of? (For example: a preference for more face-to-face or more email contact, a need for quiet reflection time prior to meetings or creative tasks, negotiation on deadlines before they are set, having access to a mentor for questions, clear deadlines if you have a tendency towards perfectionism or overworking a task, tendency to have particularly high or low energy in the morning or in the afternoon).
8	If we notice early warning signs that you are feeling mentally unwell, what should we do? (For example: talk to me discreetly about it, contact someone that I have asked to be contacted).
9	What steps can you take if you start to feel mentally unwell at work? Is there anything we need to do to facilitate them? (For example: you might like to take a break from your desk and go for a short walk, or ask your line manager for support)
10	Who would you like us to contact if we have concerns about your wellbeing?
11	Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Employee signature	Date
Line Manager signature	Date