

All Hampstead Hill School Policies are always to be read and considered in conjunction with Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies. This Policy of Hampstead Hill School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.



# Hampstead Hill School

## Stress Management Policy

### Introduction

Hampstead Hill School is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees and recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

The school will identify workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress where it is identified.

These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.

This policy will apply to all employees in the school.

### Definition of Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health.

### Policy Statement

In seeking to ensure the effectiveness of this policy, the School will:-

- Ensure that legal requirements are complied with as far as is reasonably practicable
- Promote best practice, and improve knowledge and skills in stress management
- Identify, as far as is reasonably practicable, all workplace stressors, and conduct risk assessments to eliminate or reduce stress, or control the risks from stress. Risk assessments will be regularly reviewed
- Consult with staff representatives on the implementation of all proposed school wide action relating to the prevention of workplace stress
- Provide adequate resourcing to ensure the implementation of this policy
- Maintain a robust risk management process to ensure that principal risks are reported to the Principal

## Legal Framework

Although there is currently no specific statutory legislation dealing with stress, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 employers must take all reasonably practicable measures to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees at work. There is, however, a growing legal framework in which the courts and tribunals have adjudicated on stress cases.

Additionally, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to assess health and safety risks and to introduce prevention and control measures based on those risk assessments.

## Management Standards

There are six Management Standards, which cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

- Demands – such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- Control – such as how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- Support – such as the encouragement and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.
- Relationships – such as 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 in the organisation.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for the effectiveness of this Policy are set out below. It should be noted that, in each instance, the list is not exhaustive:

### School's Responsibilities

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their area of responsibility
- Utilise the Health and Well Being Service and Staff Counselling Service for both advice and referrals
- Ensure good communication with employees, particularly where there are, for example, service provision and procedural changes
- Monitor workloads with reference to the potential impact on individual employees' stress levels
- In accordance with the School's Managing Attendance Policy, conduct "return to work interviews" immediately after all periods of sickness absence
- Monitor working hours and overtime, taking account of the provisions of the Working Time Regulations
- Attend training related to good management practice and health and safety in general

- In accordance with the School's Bullying and Harassment Policy, ensure that such behaviour is not tolerated within their area of responsibility, also ensuring that the provisions of the policy are fully implemented
- Be vigilant and offer support to an employee who is experiencing both work and/or non work-related stress
- To try to identify 'hot spots' within school that need urgent intervention and/or support.

## Employee's Responsibilities

- Take personal responsibility for seeking to manage stress at a personal level, for example by managing their workload as far as possible within the constraints of their job and not work excessive hours on a regular basis
- Be vigilant and offer support to a colleague who is experiencing both work and/or non-work related stress
- Raise issues of concern through, for example, their manager, a health and safety or trade union representative
- Use policies and procedures such as Grievance, Bullying and Harassment in order to raise concerns and issues
- Participate in the Performance Development Review process, and engage in meeting identified training needs and their Personal Development Plan
- Utilise the Health & Well Being Service at the instigation of the manager
- Access the Staff Counselling Service on a self-referral basis by telephoning 01302 737045
- Utilise any other training and support offered by the School
- Not cause unnecessary and/or unreasonable stress to others.

## Procedure

The procedural section of this policy provides guidance on the completion of risk assessments.

It is accepted that any job can cause stress and also that it is not just about overwork. Boredom and monotony can also be stressful. Some of the most common causes of stress are:

- Dealing with clients or the public
- Reduction in resources, reorganisations and lack of job security
- Poor working conditions
- Threats of violence, harassment and bullying
- Lack of childcare or flexibility
- Lack of control over work
- Too demanding a job or too high a workload
- Monotonous or boring work
- Lack of training
- Excessive hours and shift work
- Working in isolation
- Working relationships
- Unreasonable expectations

The above list is, however, not exhaustive.

## Staff Survey

Annual staff surveys will include a number of questions to help identify stress levels of staff. These statistics will then be used to identify any 'hot spots' within schools, which require particular advice and/or intervention. See Appendix A.

The results of the staff surveys will be analysed and the results communicated back to employees, specifically identifying common stressors across Directorates or the whole organisation.

The analysis will also identify hot spots.

Following the analysis of the results, focus groups will be set up to explore how the organisation can tackle identified stressors. Focus groups will contribute to the creation of a corporate stress action plan.

## Action Plans

The School will be required to complete a Stress Action Plan following analysis of the survey data.

The action plan should be completed taking into account feedback and consultation with staff.

The action plan will be broken down into the 'desirable states' within the six Management Standards.

A copy of the completed Action Plan must be forwarded to the Principal and the Local Authority.

## Individual Stress Risk Assessment

Where managers are concerned about an individual's level of stress, e.g. highlighted by high sickness absence, stress documented as the reason for absence by a General Practitioner, or if an individual identifies that they are under undue stress, they should ensure that the individual completes an Individual Stress Risk Assessment.

The individual should complete the first two columns of the assessment based on their own feelings. The impact of different circumstances or potential stressors will vary from person to person based on their individual 'stress threshold'. Managers should not ask individuals to change any of the information in these columns, even if they personally do not agree.

The manager and individual should then meet to complete the action columns and to agree who will take what action in order to address the causes of the stress.

Attention is drawn to the facility for the individual to discuss the completed Stress Risk Assessment with a nominated person other than their manager where they identify the relationship with their line manager as a stressor.

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that all agreed actions are followed up by the agreed date. If actions or stressors are beyond the control of that manager, they should ensure that these issues are passed up through the line management structure.

Actions to be taken in order to reduce the stressor(s) should be documented on this tool and reviewed in accordance with the timescales agreed.

On the agreed review date it will be necessary to consider whether all action points have been met. Where they have not, then a further review date and actions should be agreed.

Once all actions have been completed, the individual may choose to recomplete the Individual Stress Risk Assessment to see whether the stressors have been effectively reduced.

Date adopted: September 2016

Updated September 2016

Name: Andrea Taylor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Signed:

## Appendix A - Staff Survey: Stress in the Workplace

It is recognised that working conditions affect worker well-being. Your responses to the questions below will help us determine our working conditions now, and enable us to monitor future improvements. In order for us to compare the current situation with past or future situations, it is important that your responses reflect your work in the last six months. Please select a response between Never (1) and Always (5).

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. I am clear what is expected of me at work	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can decide when to take a break	1	2	3	4	5
3. Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know how to go about getting my job done	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have unachievable deadlines	1	2	3	4	5
7. If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am given supportive feedback on the work I do	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have to work very intensively	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have a say in my own work speed	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	1	2	3	4	5
12. I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department	1	2	3	4	5
14. There is friction or anger between colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have a choice in deciding how I do my work	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am unable to take sufficient breaks	1	2	3	4	5
17. I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am pressured to work long hours	1	2	3	4	5
19. I have a choice in deciding what I do at work	1	2	3	4	5
20. I have to work very fast	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am subject to bullying at work	1	2	3	4	5
22. I have unrealistic time pressures	1	2	3	4	5
23. I can rely on my line manager to help me out with a work problem	1	2	3	4	5
24. I get help and support I need from colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
25. I have some say over the way I work	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have sufficient opportunities to question managers	1	2	3	4	5
27. I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
28. Staff are always consulted about change at work	1	2	3	4	5
29. I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me about work	1	2	3	4	5
30. My working time can be flexible	1	2	3	4	5
31. My colleagues are willing to listen to my work-related problems	1	2	3	4	5
32. When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice	1	2	3	4	5
33. I am supported through emotionally demanding work	1	2	3	4	5
34. Relationships at work are strained	1	2	3	4	5
35. My line manager encourages me at work	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for completing the questionnaire.