Castle Bromwich Junior School

Where together we can learn, work and succeed.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Approved by trustees – Full Trust Board 01/03/2023

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This policy sets out the terms of agreement reached by those participating in Solihull MBC's Consultation and Negotiating Framework. This version has been adapted for use by Academy Trusts.

Prosper Together Multi Academy Trust (the 'Trust') refers to all the Trust member schools and the central team.

Document revision dates

Revision	Date	Revision description
1.1	1st March 2023	Transferred on conversion / TUPE. Updated with Trust details and arrangements.

1. Introduction

Prosper Together Multi Academy Trust (the 'Trust') is committed to creating an environment that improves the health and wellbeing of employees and accommodates the personal needs of the workforce. The Trust recognises that when employees feel valued and engaged, they will ultimately be healthier, more productive and a more resilient workforce, being better placed to deal with change. Additionally, the Trust aims to provide a supportive working environment to those experiencing or recovering from reduced physical and/or mental illhealth.

A positive working environment and appropriate support at work can have a significant impact on reducing sickness absence and improving long term outcomes for employees experiencing mental health difficulties. A positive and supportive environment is essentially about good, supportive management practices, characterised by respect and value for employees, meaningful consultation, employee involvement and participation in decision making. This can benefit employees in the following ways:

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○ Improve performance ○ Increase motivation ○ Reduce anxiety ○ Increase job satisfaction
○ Better able to handle workplace/personal stress ○ Improve attendance

2. Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy to:

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high standard of education to pupils.
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to employee health and effectiveness.
- To offer flexible working practices where possible, without damaging opportunities for pupils to succeed.
- To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all employees and to respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of employees.
- Promote and encourage employee participation in regular moderate intensity physical activity.
- Raise awareness and encourage employees to make healthy eating choices.
- Create a workplace environment and culture within school that promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees and provides a responsive and evidence based stepped approach to those who may experience a mental health problem.
- Support and encourage employees to access smoking cessation services, raise awareness of the risks of smoking and help employees to quit or reduce the harm caused by tobacco.
- Raise awareness of recommended guidelines for alcohol intake and encourage employees to drink responsibly.

3. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Trust employees including those on fixed term contracts, agency workers and casual/zero-hours workers.

This policy has been developed in line with the following legislation:

- The **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** requires employers to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that their workplaces are safe and healthy.

- The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 5**, requires employers to plan, organise, control, monitor and review their health and safety arrangements. Health and safety investigations form an essential part of this process.

Additionally, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have developed a set of **Management Standards** for Tackling Stress to help employers meet their legal obligations. The Management Standards cover six areas of work design that can, if not properly managed, represent the primary sources of stress at work.

- **Equality Act 2010** - legally protects employees from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The Trust has a 'duty of care' towards its employees. This places an obligation on the Trust to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of all its employees. To support these objectives, the Trust has a range of policies and guidance in place that aims to support wellbeing in the workplace and to assist in preventing and reducing sickness absence. These policies and guidance documents can be found on Access People Document Library, the work drive or the from the school office:

- Sickness Absence Management
- Drugs Alcohol & Substance Abuse in the Workplace
- Equality & Diversity
- Flexible Working
- No Smoking
- Leave of Absence
- Resolution Policy
- Domestic Abuse
- Health & Safety
- Managing Stress Risk Assessment

The Trust, Headteachers, Human Resources and the Occupational Health provider must ensure that personal data, including information about individuals' health, is handled in accordance with data protection policy and guidance on processing special categories of personal data.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that positive steps are taken in school to promote a healthy work-life balance for all employees. For teachers, the School Teachers Pay and Conditions

Document requires that all teachers and Headteachers/Principals enjoy a reasonable work-life balance:
'Governing Bodies and Headteachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the Headteacher and teachers at the school being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work.'

The same principle is extended to all support staff who work at the Trust. The Trust will make this policy available to all employees.

Each of the Trust schools will have specific arrangements that support employee wellbeing further information can be found on the staffroom noticeboard, intranet, school work-drive and from the school office.

4.0 Preventing Absence

It is necessary to have an understanding of the causes of absence in order to formulate strategies that address sickness absence. The main causes of absence can broadly be categorised as four distinct areas:

Health and lifestyle factors Mental or physical illness or injury/poor health Smoking Excessive use of alcohol Lack of exercise Body weight Lack of sleep	**Workplace factors** Working patterns Health and safety concerns Travel times Excessive hours Lack of flexible working hours Relationships at work
Attitudinal and stress factors Job satisfaction Career satisfaction Intention to leave Organisational commitment Stress Absence 'culture'	**Domestic and relationship factors** Divorce/separation Number of children under 16 Lack of childcare Caring responsibilities Financial worries Bereavement

Clear and consistently applied procedures play an important part in managing attendance. However, these do not necessarily address some of the underlying causes of sickness absence. It is some of these areas where prevention may be more effective including:

- Health promotion.
- Flexible working arrangements.
- Improving the physical working environment.
- Job design.
- Managing performance, behaviour and career expectations of self and others through the support staff appraisal process and teacher appraisal system.
- Supporting employees to have a sense of control, choice and purpose in their job role.
- Building trust and loyalty.

- Monitoring of working hours/taking work home.
- Monitoring of individual workloads.
- Providing extra support to staff at certain times that can be particularly challenging e.g. OFSTED inspections.
- Prevention of accidents and occupational ill health.
- Regular engagement with employees on work-related issues that may affect their health.

The Trust offers Health, Safety and Wellbeing initiatives including Occupational Health support and an Employee Assistance Programme. Each school has designated Mental Health First Aiders.

The Employee Assistance Programme's website run by Health Assured (Wisdom) also contains guidance and information sheets on a range of health and wellbeing topics.

5.0 Health & Wellbeing objectives and priorities

This policy focuses on identifying the objectives and actions the Trust will undertake to implement using the following wellbeing topics: physical activity; healthy eating; mental wellbeing; smoking and alcohol.

5.1 Mental health wellbeing

Objectives:

- Develop a supportive culture, free of stigma, tackling factors that may negatively affect mental wellbeing and supporting initiatives that are known to positively impact upon mental wellbeing in the workplace and to develop management skills.
- Provide an evidence-based stepped approach to supporting employees experiencing mental health difficulties.

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity.

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as being "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them". However, it is important that the difference between "pressure" and "stress" are acknowledged: pressure does not necessarily give rise to stress and pressure can sometimes be a motivator. While acknowledging that pressure and stress may also be caused by a range of issues external to the workplace, the Trust's prime responsibility is to address work-related stress.

Addressing workplace stress and mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health conditions and support them once they are at work.

Important aspects of mental wellbeing include providing information and raising awareness, supporting resilience and self-management, providing managers with skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, providing a supportive work environment, offering assistance, advice and support to anyone experiencing poor mental wellbeing or returning to work after a period of absence due to poor mental wellbeing.

Appendix 1 contains a structured procedure for dealing with cases where an employee's stress is a cause for concern.

ACAS have also produced some practical guidance on wellbeing at work and mental health, please see: www.acas.org.uk/supporting-mental-health-workplace/looking-after-your-mentalhealth and https://www.acas.org.uk/managing-work-related-stress

5.2 Physical activity

Objectives:

- Raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity.
- Support employees in becoming more active in a variety of ways particularly using active travel to and from work.
- Remove barriers and enable employees to be active in and around work.

Physical activity is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability – such as coronary heart disease, strokes, obesity, type 2 diabetes, dementia, hypertension (high blood pressure), colorectal cancer, stress, anxiety, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and musculoskeletal problems – are associated with physical inactivity.

Wherever possible, adults should achieve at least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity. This should be taken in bouts of 10 minutes or more to count towards your weekly total and we should try to be active on every day of the week.

Any activity whether it is connected with leisure, working or travel counts towards physical activity. It includes activities such as walking, cycling, gardening, dancing and housework, as well as participation in sport and formal exercise.

The workplace is an important setting in which people can increase their levels of activity to benefit their health and protect against illness.

Physical activity helps employees manage stress, back pain, weight and some medical conditions. Employees who are physically active also report less illness and recover more quickly from illness.

5.3 Healthy eating

Objectives:

- Implement a healthy eating programme that raises awareness of the benefits of healthy eating.
- Implement healthy eating initiatives that support employees to make healthier eating choices in a variety of ways.
- Remove barriers and enable employees to make healthy eating choices.

Healthy eating is essential for good health and contributes to positive physical and mental wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability – such as obesity, coronary

heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, mental ill health and osteoporosis – are associated with poor nutritional choices.
A healthy, balanced diet contains a variety of different types of food, including: lots of fruit, vegetables; plenty of starchy foods such as wholemeal bread and wholegrain cereals; some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs and lentils; and some dairy foods. We should also be drinking about 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water, or other fluids, every day to stop us getting dehydrated.

The workplace is an important setting in which people can increase their intake of healthy foods to benefit their health and protect against illness. A healthy, balanced diet also helps people to recover more quickly from illness.

The food we eat, and what we drink, not only have a physical impact on our body, but can also contribute to our mental health, resulting in improved levels of concentration, mental alertness and ability to cope with everyday stresses and strains.

5.4 Alcohol

Objectives:

- Raise awareness of health promotion information regarding alcohol and substance misuse.

- Provide support to employees requiring help for alcohol or substance misuse.

The Trust recognises that excessive alcohol consumption can have a negative impact on the mental and physical health, wellbeing and safety of its employees and has a Drug, Alcohol & Substance Abuse policy to reflect its commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of employees. The policy provides links to information and advice as well as access to help for people who may be affected by their own or someone else's drinking.

5.5 Smoking Objectives:

- To have a workplace that is smoke free.

- Provide information and raise awareness of the risks of smoking and ways to give up smoking or minimise the harm caused by tobacco.

The Trust has a No Smoking at Work Policy which recognises its responsibilities to provide a safe working environment to all its employees and pupils.

6.0 Roles & Responsibilities

Wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health.

6.1 The Trust and School's role will be to:

- Take responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and all other School/Trust employees enjoy a reasonable worklife balance.

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- Regularly review the demands on Head Teachers and Senior Leadership Teams and put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing as far as is reasonably practicable. This includes identifying the causes of work-related stress, such as consistently high workloads, unreasonable expectations, introducing changes without sufficient consultation, employee engagement and addressing issues of workplace conflict at the earliest opportunity, with a particular focus on seeking informal resolution.

6.2 The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Seek to identify potential circumstances that may affect the wellbeing of employees and conduct risk assessments.
- Ensure that employees enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard.
- Ensure that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress.
- Ensure all employees take part in a supportive performance management process and ensure their continuous professional development.
- Assist and support employees with mental health problems and those demonstrating symptoms of stress.
- Show understanding to employees' personal circumstances and offer additional support with signposting where appropriate e.g. bereavement, separation etc.
- Be familiar with the Trust's HR policies on, Equality and Diversity, Bullying and Harassment, Flexible Working, Leave of Absence and Tackling Inappropriate Behaviour in order to support employees and ensure that all employees have access to the Trust's policies.
- Report and manage ill health related absences in accordance with the Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure.
- Undertake risk assessments to identify health and wellbeing issues related to work and develop appropriate action plans to manage risks identified.
- Be aware of the support arrangements available to employees, including the Employee Assistance Programme and any wellbeing support from the School's absence insurance provider (where applicable).
- Ensure training and support is available to all employees including agile workers, temporary staff and volunteers.

6.3 Employees

Employees are encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, as far as they are able:

- Make themselves aware of the Trust/School's policies on Sickness Absence Management, bullying and harassment, capability, marking, etc.
- Adopt good health behaviours in relation to diet, exercise, alcohol consumption and smoking.
- Inform their manager if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health and actively participate in completing risk assessments.
- Inform their manager if they feel they are experiencing the adverse effects of poor mental health, so that they may receive appropriate support and advice. Any health related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, HR or Occupational Health is treated in confidence.

- Accept opportunities to attend training and receive additional support if appropriate and when well enough to do so.

- Be supportive of colleagues who may have poor mental health and alert managers should they have concerns regarding the health of a work colleague or their own line manager.
- 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.
- Utilising informal procedures, wherever possible, to resolve workplace issues.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the Trust's employee code of Conduct to ensure a harmonious working environment and do not cause unnecessary stress to others.

7.0 Support arrangements

7.1 Occupational Health

The Trust's Occupational Health provider, Coventry City Council, provides a comprehensive occupational health service which is focused on pro-active intervention to help support employees stay in work or to assist those rehabilitating after a period of long-term sickness absence. Line managers can contact the Occupational Health team directly to discuss the management of particular health conditions.

7.2 Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is an employee benefit designed to help employees to deal with personal and professional problems which could be affecting their home or work life, health or general wellbeing. The programme is run by an organisation called Health Assured (Wisdom).

This is a confidential facility that will provide information, expert advice and counselling by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service gives the employee a place to turn for support any time of day or night, 365 days a year. Support is available for whatever issues they might be facing, personal or work-related, including stress, depression, medical issues, marriage and relationship issues, addiction, bereavement, legal concerns, coping with change, parenting issues, financial and tax problems and much more.

Health Assured can be contacted on 0800 028 0199, at wisdom.healthassured.org or by downloading the Wisdom app.

7.3 School Specific Support to our employees

Employees should refer to the schools' local arrangements which will be available from the school office, on the staffroom noticeboard, from staff briefings and on the intranet.

APPENDIX 1

Risk Assessment Process

Risk Assessments are fundamental to the management of health and safety and will be used to identify and assess the significant stressors that exist within particular service areas. Such risk assessments must be:

- carried out by competent persons;
- recorded using the corporate Risk Assessment Template;
- communicated to those affected; and reviewed and revised, as appropriate.

For more detailed information about risk assessments generally please refer to the **Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure.**

To assist with the identification and assessment of significant risks related to work related stress, the SMBC Health and Safety Team has produced a school's "**Managing Stress at Work Risk Assessment**". This Risk Assessment is available electronically on the Health and Safety Intranet pages on the solgrid Extranet or from the Central Trust office.

This risk assessment is based on guidance from the Health and Safety Executive and examines the six key aspects of work which experts have decided can contribute to stress if not managed properly:

- **Demands** – workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control** – the amount of say staff have in how they do their work
- **Support** – encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the Trust and colleagues
- **Relationships** – positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role** – the understanding by employees and the avoidance of conflicting roles
- **Change** – the organisation and management of large and small change within the organisation

Line managers need to review this risk assessment and amend it to reflect the particular circumstances within their own service area.

To assist line managers to develop their own risk assessment, the Trust's Health and Safety Advisors, Solihull Protect, have produced a **Stress Risk Assessment Questionnaire** that teams can complete to help identify any stressors related to their particular service area. The questionnaire can be found on the SMBC solgrid extranet Health and Safety and HR pages.

The Health and Safety Support Team can provide assistance, if line managers need help to complete the Risk Assessment Questionnaire or to facilitate a team discussion. If the risk assessment does not reveal any significant risk of work-related stress, line managers need only keep the matter under review. However, if the assessment identifies potential workplace stressors, controls must be put in place to eliminate or reduce them to the lowest levels reasonably practicable.

For further information on risk assessments, please contact the Central team or Solihull Protect (SMBC Health and Safety Support Team) on telephone 0121 704 6328.

APPENDIX 2

Further Wellbeing Information and Resources

Further information and guidance can be accessed from the Trusts HR Advisors, SMBC Human Resources, Extranet site or from the school's named HR Advisor.

- **Deana Leonard, HR Manager – Schools (0121) 704 6836**, for any service related queries in relation to the HR Consultancy team.
- **Prosper Together Central Team (0121 779 8096)** for any service related queries in relation to payroll services

Solihull MyLife portal - To help you find information and advice to get fit, give up bad habits and look after your wellbeing, and how to live healthily with the care and support you and the person you care for need.

Solihull Libraries

The Library service has a collection of self-help books called 'Books on Prescription' to help with a range of common conditions such as anxiety, depression, phobias, low self-esteem, insomnia, panic and agoraphobia, obsessive compulsive disorder and eating disorders.

The Books on Prescription scheme is endorsed by health professionals and the collections are available to lend at The Core Library, Chelmsley Wood Library, Shirley Library & Hobs Moat Library.

Other resources:

- **ACAS**
  Health, Work & Wellbeing Advisory Booklet 'Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace'
- **Gov.uk** has some practical advice and tools for school leaders and teachers to help review and reduce workload. See the Workload Reduction Toolkit.
- **Access to work** that can provide advice and an assessment of workplace needs if you have a disability or a long-term health condition and are already in work or about to start. Grants may be available to help cover the cost of workplace adaptations to enable you to carry out your job without being at a disadvantage. For more information, go to www.gov.uk/access-to-work.
- **Mind** is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. Their helpline and website provide information and support to empower anyone experiencing mental ill health and general advice on mental health-related law. For more information, go to www.mind.org.uk or call 0300 123 3393.
- **The Five Steps to Mental Wellbeing** is a set of evidence-based public mental health messages aimed at improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole population.
- **Solihull Mind (for Solihull residents)** www.solihullmind.org.uk. Contact number 0121 742 4941/743 4237, email: contact@solihullmind.org.uk
- **NHS choices** has a website that offers information and practical advice for anyone experiencing mental ill health. For more information, go to www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth.
- **Able Futures** offers a free and confidential Workplace Mental Health Support Service if you are absent from work or finding work difficult because of a mental health

condition. It aims to help people remain in (or return to) their role by building a support plan that suits the individuals needs and daily routine. See www.ablefutures.co.uk.

- **Rethink Mental Illness** is the largest national voluntary sector provider of mental health services, offering support groups, advice and information on mental health problems. For more information, go to www.rethink.org or call 0300 5000 927.
- **Solihull Carers Centre.** Independent information and support for carers. www.solihullcarers.org.
- **Solihull Integrated Alcohol Service (SIAS).** This service helps individuals and their families to overcome drug, alcohol and gambling dependency: www.siassolihull.org.uk
- **Education Support Partnership** offers free, confidential help and support, no matter what the problem. Their free and confidential 24-hour helpline receives over 7500 calls a year from education staff who have reached breaking point and is available UK wide on 08000 562 561.
- **Trade unions** - if you are a trade union member, you can seek help and guidance from your trade union representative.