



Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

School Review	September 2026
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Reviewed by	OD
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Policy owner	OD
Location	Trust Website

1. Policy Purpose and Aims

Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) is committed to providing an environment where staff are fully motivated to contribute to and deliver the highest quality education, achieve job satisfaction, and where learners enjoy and thrive in their educational environment in order to achieve better outcomes.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- DfE (2024) 'Education staff wellbeing charter'
- DfE (2024) 'Improve workload and wellbeing for school staff'

Staffordshire University Academies Trust's Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy's aim is to:

Policy Focus Area	Aims
Positive Wellbeing Culture	• Shape a positive mental health and wellbeing culture and advocate the sharing of good practice. • Provide an open and positive ethos surrounding mental health and wellbeing, offering a network of mutual support and respect between colleagues and across the Trust, to support the calibre of staff needed for an outstanding education system. • Promote Academies as hubs within the community which strive to support the development of positive mental health and wellbeing for all stakeholders.
Inclusive and Cohesive Community	• Encourage and develop a cohesive educational community with accessible and inclusive mental health and wellbeing arrangements.
Staff Health and Wellbeing	• Encourage staff to maintain and develop their physical and mental health and wellbeing, to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle to reduce risks of mental ill health associated with individual lifestyle choices. • Recognise that staff may need to take time off work due to ill health or receive appropriate health related support and assistance to enable them to fulfil their role effectively.
Awareness, Training and Communication	• Develop an awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing matters for all staff by providing appropriate training, support programs and channels of communication. • Raise awareness of the potential adversities that can affect mental health and wellbeing and promote strategies that can build resilience and self-management.
Prevention, Early Intervention and Self-Care	• Ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of staff is maintained through the prevention, early intervention and promotion of self-care, taking proactive measures to prevent absence due to mental ill health and ensuring that staff and pupils perform to the highest possible standard. • Maintain a safe environment, taking reasonable care to implement

Policy Focus Area	Aims
	strategies and mechanisms to prevent mental ill health from occurring within the workplace.
Resilience and Personal Responsibility	Promote positive mental health and wellbeing, offering strategies and initiatives, including self- help techniques to develop and preserve resilience by proactively promoting personal responsibility.
Support and Reasonable Adjustments	Support those experiencing mental ill health to return or remain in work, by making reasonable adjustments, in a confidential and supportive manner.
Organisational Effectiveness	Improve SUAT's effectiveness by actively reducing absenteeism and staff turnover, developing a more motivated workforce with high morale, improving teamwork, staff development and co-operation.

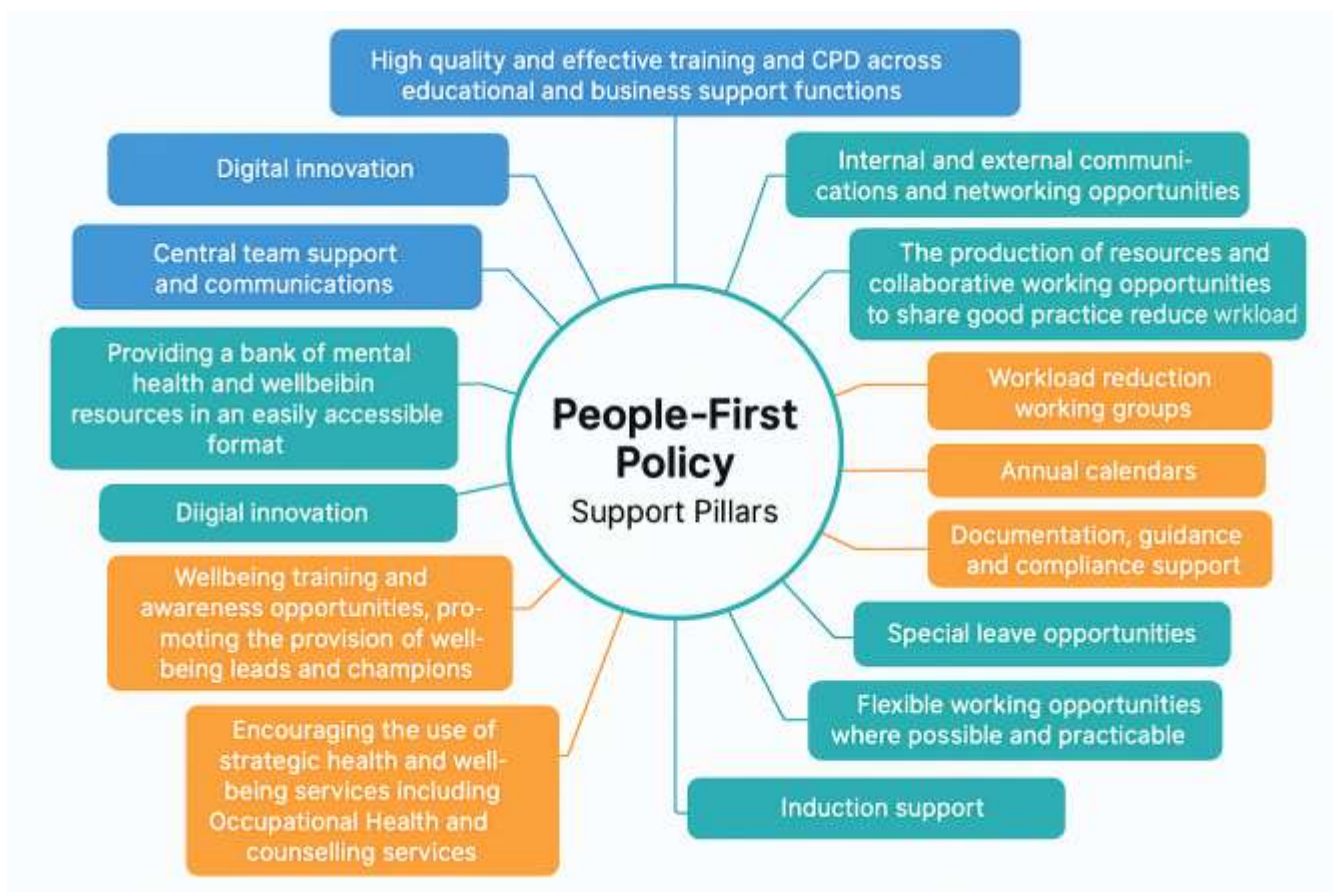
2. Vision and Strategy

SUAT's vision is to achieve better outcomes for all of our children and young people by providing an outstanding set of inclusive and aspirational learning experiences; one of the ways in which we will realise this vision is by constantly developing our ability to support the wellbeing of all staff and pupils.

Working in cohesion to achieve our vision will take many different forms; Staffordshire University Academies Trust and its Academies recognise that one size won't fit all in relation to what we do with regards to positive mental health and wellbeing strategies. Where it makes sense to do so, we will integrate services, collaborate to share good practice and learn from others, and work together for the purpose of improving outcomes for the children of Staffordshire. It is essential that we preserve and develop the wellbeing and job satisfaction of staff in a profession which has the extensive potential to positively impact young lives and protect our workforce.

Positive mental health and wellbeing for both staff and pupils must be at the forefront of our approach; ensuring optimum physical and mental health will provide the foundations of high aspirations and excellence for all. Developing a strong partnership between the staff, pupils, and the wider community will support academies in delivering an outstanding learning experience for everyone and the creation of independent learners fit for the demands of the 21st Century.

Our Trust approach and strategy for wellbeing includes but is not limited to:



Leadership

The Head Teacher / Principal and Leadership team have key roles in promoting Academy and Trust culture and in turn should discuss issues or concerns with the Local Academy Council and Trust. Being instrumental in maintaining their own health is key as a positive demonstration of a Trust ethos surrounding mental health and wellbeing and commitment to such developments.

The Trust and LAC shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the workload and wellbeing of the Head Teacher / Principal and leaders is reviewed, provide appropriate guidance and seek external support where this would be beneficial to improve the wellbeing of the Head Teacher / Principal / leaders.

Due regard is taken by the Trust to support the MH&W of Headteachers and other senior leaders. Strategies to support and promote MH&W include though are not limited to:

- Headteacher networking meetings
- Support for Headteachers new to post via designated working groups
- Supportive school improvement model
- Wellbeing surveys
- Education improvement partner support
- Additional support networks
- Mental health and wellbeing hub network
- Central team support and contact

3. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub

The overall purpose of our Trust Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub is to:

- Support and promote effective mental health and wellbeing provision across the Trust.

- Support the Trust and academies to provide a working and learning environment whereby individual and organisational wellbeing is embedded in everything that we do.
- Support the workforce which is happy, healthy, resilient and productive, to thrive personally and professionally.
- Support children to flourish and improve their life chances.
- Drive Trust wide mental health and wellbeing strategies, forming a key role in communicating with and providing supervision for Academy Wellbeing Leads.

Further information regarding the responsibilities of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub can be found in Appendix C – Roles and Responsibilities.

The role of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub Leaders is fulfilled by three mental health and wellbeing trained leaders in academies from:

- Hub One – North
- Hub Two – Middle
- Hub Three – South

The Hub Wellbeing Leads shall meet along with trained Trust wellbeing leads on a half termly basis. Meetings with Wellbeing Leads shall take place twice yearly, with informal interim contact as required.

The Hub and Trust Wellbeing Leads shall be involved in ongoing CPD for mental health and wellbeing, attending sector and county wellbeing events, identifying appropriate training and CPD for Academy leaders, analysing mental health and wellbeing data across the Trust, to inform strategy, providing supervision, developing wellbeing policies, information and resources, providing support and signposting to quality mental health and wellbeing provision.

SUAT recognises that a wide range of factors can impact the mental health and wellbeing of staff and that the overall mental health and wellbeing strategy to promote and support positive mental health and wellbeing must be reflective of local information, the risk factors to mental health and wellbeing and staff voice, which will be encouraged via the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub.

Academies will tailor strategies to improve and develop mental health and wellbeing initiatives to their own individual setting and needs, which shall be documented locally and can be shared via the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs.

SUAT's Strategic Plan for Mental Health and Wellbeing considers the eleven aspects of the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter and is informed by data from staff wellbeing surveys. As a member of the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, it is key that SUAT's wellbeing strategy aligns to local objectives alongside the commitments of the Charter which can be found below:



4. Concerns for Safety and Identifying Warning Signs

If a member of staff is expressing thoughts of self-harm or suicide, or it is believed they are an imminent threat to themselves or others, urgent action must be taken. Any member of staff can provide help to others by:

- **Contacting 999 and asking for immediate help for a crisis situation**
- **Asking the person to attend any GP surgery**
- **Asking the person to attend A&E or a walk in center**
- **Contacting Samaritans and asking for help, via 116 123 (for free) - <https://www.samaritans.org/>**

Staff members who are supporting others where there is a concern for safety should inform their line manager / designated senior leader and access supervision and support for themselves.

Our Trust recognises that individuals will react differently to stressful situations and become stressed by different situations and stimuli throughout their working lives. Because of this, it is important that staff understand the different factors that may cause themselves or their colleagues' stress.

The Trust recognises that home and personal lives can also prove stressful for staff; bereavement, separation, financial and family problems make people more vulnerable to stress at work. It is common that a combination of stress at home and work can make people particularly stressed. As a Trust we will strive to identify and deal with symptoms of stress quickly in order to maintain a healthy workplace. There is also a legal requirement to actively respond where any employee displays symptoms of work-related stress.

All members of staff should be aware of the warning signs that can indicate that a person may be having trouble managing stress or is suffering from mental ill health. The following can be indications in identifying stress or mental ill health.

Behavioural indicators • Difficulty sleeping • Changes in eating habits • Increased smoking or drinking • Isolation from friends and family	Physical indicators • Tiredness • Indigestion and nausea • Headaches • Aching muscles • Heart palpitations
Mental indicators • Indecisiveness • Difficulty concentrating • Memory loss • Feelings of inadequacy • Low self-esteem	Emotional indicators • Anger or irritability • Anxiety • Hypersensitivity • Feeling drained and lethargic

Where wellbeing matters are raised by staff members, they shall be treated confidentially and shared on a need to know basis, following discussion with the staff member. Where concerns with wellbeing arise, the necessary support and appropriate actions will be considered. This may include support from HR advisers and/or external services, e.g. occupational health. Each setting will continue to provide support where external services are involved, including where staff are experiencing challenging circumstances inside and/or outside of the workplace.

5. Professional Support

SUAT recognises that internal programs of support may need to be supported by external agencies to enhance the effectiveness of the mental health and wellbeing strategy across our settings.

a. Occupational Health

Occupational health is a specialist branch of medicine that looks at health and work together, rather than two separate issues. It deals with the effect that work can have on health and health can have on work. Occupational health works to help prevent people being made ill by their work. It also works with people and employers to try and prevent people with health problems becoming disadvantaged or excluded from the benefits of paid employment. OH looks for reasonable ways to adapt to health problems that are causing problems with someone's work, protecting their ability to contribute and earn their living even if suffering poor health; it is a branch of preventive medicine.

SUAT Academies have access to Occupational Health support via referrals through Staffordshire County Council which can be made upon assessment of an individual's situation by the Academy/Trust and with their consent to do so. Individuals should contact their line manager or Wellbeing Lead to access support.

b. General Practitioner Referrals

The GP's role is to provide care and treatment and help people recognise that getting back to work can be good for recovery and health. They are helped in this by the 'fit note', which focusses on what people can do rather than what they can't do. The fit note helps to improve the flow of information between employers, individuals and GPs by enabling patients to convey information to their employer about when the GP thinks they may be ready to return to work and what adjustments might help facilitate that.

Staff who are experiencing mental ill health can seek advice, support and received referrals to professionals who will provide specific help in relation to the needs of the individual to which the referral relates. A GP will be involved in diagnosing conditions and in prescribing or advising on treatment, and may provide the individual with support such as medication, counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy and psychotherapy.

c. Absence Insurance

Academies have the option to insure their staff against absences from work. Such policies can provide supportive mechanisms including mental health support, counselling services, relationship therapy, nurse advice lines and health checks. Academies inform staff upon induction should such services be available in their setting. The decision to purchase this type of insurance is made by the LAC of that Academy and procurement exercises of this nature are supported by the Trust.

d. Resources and Support

There is a wealth of external resources which are easily accessible. Staff are encouraged, through a program of self-care and proactive management of their own mental health, to access mental health and wellbeing resources. Resources can be accessed via their Academy setting and SUAT's resource bank, which can be found [here](#).

e. Hub of Hope

The Hub of Hope is the UK's largest mental health support directory, offering support for adults and young people.

The Hub of Hope website and app allows users to search a directory of tens of thousands mental health support services across the UK, helping to find the relevant support available in the local area. By using the service's filters, individuals can find services that best meet their unique needs or help others to access support. The hub provides information on mental health services to help individuals choose the support that is right for them, the hub also shares guidance on how to get in touch with services and access help.

Further information can be found here: <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>

Urgent support can be found here: <https://hubofhope.co.uk/need-help-now>

6. Training Programs, CPD and Workshops

All staff have access to mental health and wellbeing training and CPD opportunities within the Trust; this includes informal, formal and awareness opportunities. The approach to training includes:

- A healthy apprenticeship levy is available to all Academies to upskill their team staffing teams, provide confidence in staff and support their role in their individual setting.
- Formal and informal training and CPD, provided via accredited online platforms
- Formal and informal training and CPD delivered in person and remotely, tailored to Academy settings, priorities and requirements, including education improvement, business, finance and operational training.
- Access to internal conferences, providing opportunities for networking and staff development.
- Internally funded CPD programs to reduce training costs in Academies, involving, encouraging and enabling staff to actively manage their own professional and personal development.
- Regular networking and Hub Group meetings for teaching staff, support staff and leaders, for cross Trust support, supervision and sharing good practice.
- Mental health and wellbeing training, which is role specific.
- Access to training programs at a reduced cost to improve accessibility to CPD by Academy staff.

The following mental health and wellbeing training and CPD opportunities are available to employees:

The National College – online training, podcasts and guides which can be undertaken at the pace of employees	https://nationalcollege.com/home
Mental Health First Aid Training	For example, via https://mhfaengland.org/ <i>Please see your Wellbeing Hub Lead for more information</i>
Attendance to the Wellbeing Hub meetings (Academy Wellbeing Leads)	<i>Please see your Wellbeing Hub Lead for more information</i>
Access to Mental Health and Wellbeing qualifications for education staff via Free Courses England	https://freecoursesinengland.co.uk/
Access to CPD, resources and information via the Staffordshire Learning Net	https://www.careersatstaffordshire.co.uk/my-wellbeing/

7. Communication

Each individual Academy has an internal program of support and associated points of contact which will be provided for staff upon induction. Pupils will also be taught about how to access the pastoral support which is available within each setting.

It is accepted that work-related stress is an integral part of human resource management, and its effective management revolves around an open and positive culture of mental health and wellbeing, offering a network of mutual support and respect between colleagues and across the Trust.

The workplace culture should encourage good two-way communications and close employee involvement. SUAT encourages such communication which is made in an appropriate and professional manner, is accurate and timely, where all members of the team can contribute ideas and influences decision making processes as far as is reasonably practicable in the workplace.

Staffordshire University Academies Trust has centrally trained members of staff, in Mental Health and Wellbeing.

SUAT intends to communicate about wellbeing across the Trust by:

- Providing termly wellbeing newsletters for all staff to access
- Holding regular wellbeing hub meetings for the dissemination of information, sharing good practice, providing supervision and support
- Providing resources and support via the website and Teams
- Providing information, resources and training to raise awareness
- Supporting the workforce in having a good work / life balance and to work flexibly where they are able to. There is no expectation of responding immediately if staff receive emails outside of their normal working hours
- Expecting all individuals interacting with employees to do so in a constructive, polite and respectful manner. We do not tolerate aggressive behaviour or communication
- Promoting the clear identification of the duties and responsibilities relating to the employee roles, to aid them in the delivery of their work and managing the expectations of the job, (via job descriptions, appraisals and performance management)
- Providing codes of conduct which clearly outline the expectations of stakeholders
- Providing a 'Wellbeing on a Page' document which identifies local support and initiatives available to staff
- Providing and promoting wellbeing surveys to encourage and receive staff voice
- Supporting staff inductions by providing templates and resources
- Providing tailored CPD, training and support
- Providing support, training and information for bullying and harassment

8. Managing Attendance at Work

Staff attendance at work is supported by the SUAT Managing Attendance at Work Policy, which strives to provide an open and positive ethos surrounding mental health and wellbeing, offering a network of mutual support and respect between colleagues and also across the Trust.

The Managing Attendance at Work Policy outlines what is expected from managers and employees when such situations occur (both short- and long-term sickness absence) in order to ensure that support and treatment is consistent, lawful, fair and equitable.

SUAT expects its employees to take responsibility for managing their own health wherever possible to ensure regular attendance at work, and to engage fully in the attendance management process when sickness absence occurs, and for managers and leaders to provide support and information in alignment with the policy.

9. Surveys

Whole staff wellbeing surveys can be a useful mechanism for identifying trends and/or key areas

which trigger stress in the workplace, therefore impacting on mental ill health. Such surveys will investigate the levels and/or causes of stress amongst the staffing body as a whole and should be undertaken at appropriate intervals to aid the process of risk managing stress in the workplace and implementing suitable control measures informed by the results of the survey.

It is therefore integral to the process of managing stress and mental ill health in the workplace, that employees make such valuable contributions by completing surveys at such intervals.

The data resulting from the surveys will be used to review mental health and wellbeing strategies and update stress and wellbeing risk assessments and will be conducted by the Trust and individual Academies.

The results of Academy stress and wellbeing surveys should be used to inform and update the stress risk assessment, which is reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum.

SUAT shall aim to collect wellbeing survey data periodically to ensure that staff voice informs Trust wellbeing strategies and aims.

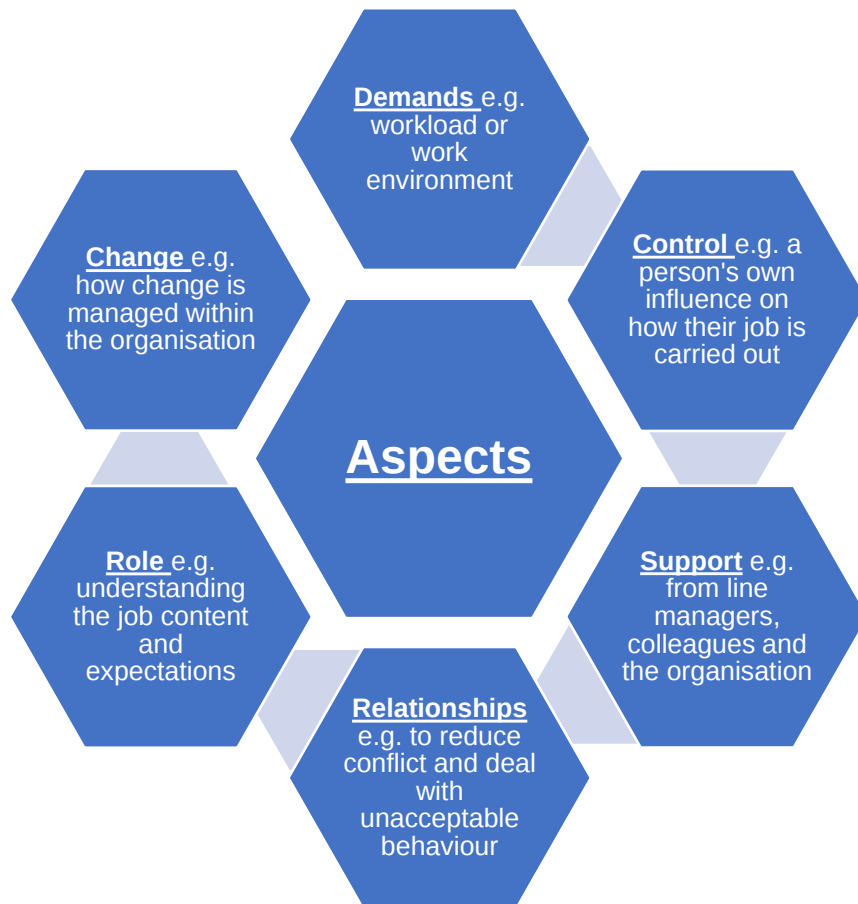
10. Risk Assessments

Employers must carry out risk assessments with regard to any work process which poses a potential risk to the health and safety of employees, therefore, the academy risk management process must consider wellbeing and work-related stress.

As part of the general risk assessment process, managers must consider whether staff may be suffering from work-related stress. Stress can be revealed by observations of employee difficulties or employee complaints of difficulties and ill-health. It may also be revealed through the following sources of qualitative and quantitative data; sickness absences, personal development review process, team meetings, stress survey results, high staff turnover/staff leaving, exit interviews, low productivity, focus groups, audit findings, etc.

The Team Stress Risk Assessment is an appropriate tool to help teams identify and consider the risk factors and decide if any control measures can be taken to manage the risks. The team stress risk assessment must be reviewed at least annually and following any significant change. A stress risk assessment is a continuous process which should be refined and adjusted as pressures change; control measures should be monitored and developed if necessary.

Research has identified six aspects of work which, if managed poorly, could create stress in the workplace and should be considered as part of the team stress risk assessment, as advised by the Health and Safety Executive:



Any stress risk assessment must be developed in conjunction with the team as a result of open discussions, and should also consider employee survey information, data analysis of absence, employee feedback and other related information. The outcomes of any risk assessment, including agreed control measures or actions required, must be shared with employees. Managers must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of control measures.

When deciding upon the control measures needed to minimise the causes of negative pressure, it must be approached in the same way as any other workplace hazard.

Managers will need to proactively consider the risks of stress as part of their normal management practices and communications with their teams. 1-2-1 and other management conversations should include the opportunity to identify and develop support plans to address any stress, health or wellbeing issues. Participation as a team in events and activities, however small, can boost team morale and productivity and a sense of belonging. This is particularly relevant where team members are working in a flexible and agile manner.

Communicating well and engaging all employees in what is happening at work can help to support their stress and manage wellbeing, this is especially important during times of change. Stress management competency indicator is a tool to help managers with their personal development in this area. See HSE Stress Indicator Tool <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm>

Supporting an Individual - Individual Risk Assessment

When an individual raises concerns about stress or their mental health, it's important that managers respond to this as soon as possible to ensure that appropriate support is given. Managers should tailor the support provided to an individual based on their discussions and any advice from support services. It is important to ensure that two-way discussion around the support and management arrangements takes place and the individual's needs are listened to and explored.

Individual support arrangements/reasonable adjustments, the contents of the assessment and the outcomes must remain confidential and regular review periods must be agreed. Managers must be aware of the individual's preferences on how these arrangements are communicated to the rest of their team (when and if necessary).

An early referral to ThinkWell should be considered as soon as managers become aware of any mental health concerns. Individuals may also confidentially refer themselves to the service. Additionally, an Occupational Health referral may be appropriate. Generally, this should be completed as a management referral so that the right support can be provided to managers. Self-referral is available, however, no advice can then be provided to the employer.

If an individual feels unable to discuss issues with their manager, they may contact HR or a senior leader for support. An Occupational Health self or manager referral may also be considered though an alternative manager can be identified to support an OH Manager referral.

Mental health first aiders, Wellbeing Hub Leads and Senior Mental Health leaders are available across the Trust. Trained staff are people who have volunteered and trained to recognise, understand and help colleagues experiencing mental health issues to get the support they need. Their role is to listen, reassure, signpost to help and support, and respond in a crisis.

At times, employees may highlight concerns regarding stress that are caused by factors outside of work. Action taken to help or support employees through such time will also be documented within the personnel file through an individual risk assessment, or where a risk assessment is not appropriate, another format of written recordings.

Risk assessments should also be conducted where there is a risk of violent or aggressive behaviour in a setting, in conjunction with the policy for Managing Violent and Aggressive Incidents. Incidents must be reported via the Staffordshire County Council 'My Health and Safety System' and staff should be debriefed following an incident and supported accordingly.

11. Reducing Workload

The format in which individual academies pursue the reduction of workload in their setting will be dependent on the specific operations of each Academy.

SUAT promotes its expectations surrounding workload and emails out of hours and supports its colleagues to have a good work / life balance and to work flexibly where they choose to and where it is possible to do so, and promotes a number of techniques and strategies to reduce workload as detailed in the mental health and wellbeing strategy.

Workload reduction strategies are discussed and promoted by:

- The workload reduction working group
- Mental health and wellbeing hub groups
- Sharing resources, good practice and information via local networks
- Utilising Teams for sharing information and resources, and for collaborative working
- Sharing departmental and good practice guidance for reducing workload, including the use of technology

12. Employee Support

The role that staff play in managing mental health and stress is integral to the effectiveness of our strategies and support, and accessing the relevant support for themselves, or signposting colleagues. Employees can support by ensuring that they:



13. Monitoring and Evaluation

Staffordshire University Academies Trust Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be reviewed regularly and adapted to reflect changes in strategy and practices and the requirements of its stakeholders. This document will be subject to review by the Trust Senior Leadership Team and Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub Leads on a regular basis.

Each Academy will review their own arrangements, strategies and initiatives for effectiveness at least annually, and feed back to the Trust Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee and Local Academy Council. Strategies will be subject to a regular review of effectiveness, informed by wellbeing surveys and intelligence and data formed from Academy settings and via feedback from Hub Meetings.

Appendix A - Identifying Mental Ill Health Conditions

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It's about how we think, feel, act and also how we manage stress. The Health Education Authority defines Mental Health as "the emotional resilience which allows us to enjoy life and survive pain, disappointment and sadness. It is a positive sense of wellbeing which mental health is just as important as physical health and having good mental health can help people to feel better, sleep better and provide support in managing relationships, difficult situations and stress in everyday life." Mental health can affect anyone and whilst most of the time those feelings pass, sometimes they develop into a more serious problem."

It is important to understand that everyone is different. Some may bounce back from a setback whilst

others else may feel weighed down by it for a long time. Mental health doesn't always stay the same; it can change as circumstances change and as people move through different stages of their life.

Mental health issues are common, including depression, anxiety and those associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol. There can be a stigma attached to mental health problems which means that people feel uncomfortable about them and don't talk about them much. Many people aren't comfortable talking about their feelings, however, it is healthy to know, understand and say how you are feeling, to act as a positive coping mechanism and promote positive mental health.

Mental Health First Aid recommends a strategy of communication for those who identify a person displaying signs of potential mental ill health. This is known as the ALGEE method and comprises of five stages of communication with the individual:

- Assess the individual for the risk of harm
- Listen non-judgmentally, without expressing negative cues
- Give reassurance to the individual, and suitable information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies

Things that affect an individual's mental health can include:

Genes - some individuals are more likely to develop certain kinds of mental health problems.

Upbringing - brings out personality traits and ways of thinking.

Life circumstances - situations, events and changes that happen to us throughout our life, likeliness, relationships, money worries and financial wellbeing, work and employment issues.

Life choices - such as diet and exercise.

Support - how individuals cope can also be affected by how well other parts of life are going and how well supported we feel.

If an individual is experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behaviours can be an early warning sign of a problem:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your children or getting to work or school
- Persistent negative self-talk, uncharacteristic lack of self-belief

Staff should also be aware of potential signs of mental ill health specifically in pupils, and the routes of reporting this to the designated safeguarding lead to ensure a program of appropriate support can be provided for pupils in need:

- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood

- Decline in academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Uncharacteristically avoidant behaviours
- Provoking behaviours towards peers
- Increased arguing and fighting with peers
- Acting out

Appendix B - Recognising Stress

Changes in behaviour or work performance can often be signs that an individual may be suffering from stress. Common indicators of stress (CIPD, May 2015):

Work performance • declining/inconsistent performance • uncharacteristic errors • loss of control over work • loss of motivation/commitment • indecision • lapses in memory • increased time at work • lack of holiday planning/usage	Regression • crying • arguments • undue sensitivity • irritability/moodiness • over-reaction to problems • personality clashes • sulking • immature behaviour
Withdrawal • arriving late to work • leaving early • extended lunches • absenteeism • resigned attitude • reduced social contact • elusiveness/evasiveness	Aggressive behaviour • malicious gossip • criticism of others • vandalism • shouting • bullying or harassment • poor employee relations • temper outbursts
Other behaviours • out-of-character behaviour • difficulty relaxing • increased consumption of alcohol • increased smoking • lack of interest in appearance/hygiene • accidents at home or work • reckless driving • unnecessary risk-taking	Physical signs • nervous stumbling speech • sweating • tiredness/lethargy • upset stomach/flatulence • tension headaches • hand tremor • rapid weight gain or loss • constantly feeling cold

Appendix C - Roles and Responsibilities

Managing and supporting positive mental health and wellbeing is the responsibility of both the employer and the employee. In order for people to feel good and do well it is important that the conditions into which they are born, live and work support their ability to cope with life's pressures, build resilience and promote good mental health. It is crucial that mental health and wellbeing issues are managed with appropriate confidentiality.

Managers and leaders shall be committed to addressing work-related factors which might contribute to excessive stress or undue pressure at work and shall promote a culture where stress and mental ill health is not stigmatised or regarded as a matter of individual weakness, and where staff can talk about feeling under excessive pressure without discrimination.

Managers and leaders shall ensure that team stress risk assessments are completed on an annual basis, and the outcomes of assessments are implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly, with opportunities for staff to feedback regarding the outcomes of the risk assessment. Managers and leaders shall ensure that individual stress risk assessments are completed for employees where a need is identified. Employees are responsible for raising with their manager or senior leaders where they feel that an individual risk assessment will be supportive / beneficial. Employees shall be aware of the strategies available to manage their own stress and support their own wellbeing and that of others.

a) Employer – Staffordshire University Academies Trust:

- Encourage a Trust wide culture that enables employees to be able to talk openly about their mental health and wellbeing.
- Promote equality and diversity in accordance with the Equality Policy objectives, ensuring that mental health and wellbeing strategies and support mechanisms are accessible.
- Advocate the sharing of good practice across the Trust, to encourage and develop involvement as a cohesive community with accessible and inclusive arrangements.
- Promote and support safe and healthy working environments for employees. To fulfil the duty to take reasonable care to prevent issues surrounding the mental wellbeing of staff from occurring within the workplace.
- Aid Academies in taking proactive steps to maintain the mental health of all employees and to assist those with mental health issues to return or remain in work by making reasonable adjustments.
- Support Academies in conducting and reviewing stress risk assessments, the implementation of control measures and reviewing risk assessments to an appropriate frequency to measure the effectiveness of control measures.
- Undertake Trust wide wellbeing surveys which are accessible to all staff to contribute and respond to. Identify the common causes of stress to plan what steps need to be taken to minimise the risk to their employees and analyse the results of wellbeing surveys and adapt mental health and wellbeing strategies accordingly.
- Increase mental health awareness and offer support, resources and facilitate training for staff to be able to recognise the common symptoms and how to support colleagues experiencing poor mental health.
- Prepare and/or advise on procedures and guidance relating to mental health and wellbeing and human resource management.
- Interpret and advise on new legislation impacting on the working environment.
- Be supportive during meetings, as required, to advise on occupational safety issues.
- Lead in conjunction with the Wellbeing Hub, to drive wellbeing strategies and develop provision across the Trust.
- Encourage staff to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle and use self-help techniques to develop and preserve resilience by proactively promoting personal responsibility.

- Recognise that that staff may need to take time off work due to ill health or receive appropriate health related support and assistance to enable them to fulfil their role effectively.
- To assist those with mental health issues to return or remain in work by making reasonable adjustments, in a confidential and supportive manner.
- Provide an open and positive culture surrounding mental health and wellbeing, offering a network of mutual support and respect between colleagues and across the Trust.
- Support the mental health and wellbeing of Head Teachers and Senior Leaders across the Trust via regular visits to academies, monitoring and ensuring that there is a pathway of support for Head Teachers and Senior Leaders. Contact with Education Improvement Partners will be maintained on a termly basis.
- Be a member of the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, monitoring and measuring impact.
- Undertake assessments of the impact of the mental health and wellbeing strategy.
- Review, provide and promote workload reduction strategies and mental health and wellbeing support.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub:

- To support and promote effective mental health and wellbeing provision across the Trust.
- To support the Trust and academies to provide a working and learning environment whereby individual and organisational wellbeing is embedded in everything that we do.
- To support the workforce which is happy, healthy, resilient and productive, to thrive personally and professionally.
- To support children to flourish and improve their life chances.
- To provide SUAT academies with consistent support and supervision in relation to mental health and wellbeing matters.
- As a Trust Hub Wellbeing Lead, act as a first point of contact for Academy leaders and Wellbeing Leads (within their Hub) and central Trust staff for advice, support and direction in relation to personal and workplace mental health and wellbeing matters.
- To be involved in and contribute to the review of mental health and wellbeing policies and strategic plans.
- To drive the mental health and wellbeing strategic plan, taking actions identified within the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, reviewing and monitoring their impact.
- To review the mental health and wellbeing provision in place within the academies in their hub, using data from reviews and audits to feed back into the Hub, share best practice and inform MAT wide approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing.
- To receive and review data from academy stress and wellbeing surveys.
- To attend additional and refresher training and CPD to support them within their role.
- To support, monitor and manage mental health and wellbeing matters across the Hub, meeting academy Wellbeing Leads as appropriate from each academy within the hub.
- To report and feedback to the wellbeing committee as relevant.
- To provide supervision for wellbeing leads in academies through regular contact.
- To support the development of mental health and wellbeing resources and content that is shared with staff, creating resources as relevant to share across the Trust.
- To ensure LAC members, leaders and wellbeing leads are aware of their responsibilities and are able to carry them out effectively.
- To keep informed of current legislation and sector guidance.
- To collate and analyse data on mental health and wellbeing practice across Trust academies.
- To provide regular updates to the Trust community as required.

b) Local Academy Councils:

- Review the results of stress and wellbeing surveys and support the Academy in developing strategies to reduce mental ill health and promote wellbeing.

- Monitor and review the mental health, workload and wellbeing of the Head Teacher/Principal, provide support and guidance.
- Ensure adequate resources for mental health and wellbeing strategies are available, including an appropriate budget to provide mental health and wellbeing support in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- Ensure there is a provision of adequate training, induction and resources to enable everyone in the Academy to work and learn in a safe environment, with access to resources and information regarding supportive mechanisms.
- Review and monitor their Academy's specific mental health and wellbeing initiatives which are documented separately.
- Monitor and review mental health, workload and wellbeing strategies and issues, appointing a Link LAC member for wellbeing.
- Provide a working environment that is safe, healthy and promotes wellbeing.
- Provide adequate welfare facilities for premises occupants.
- Ensure that there is a link LAC member for mental health and wellbeing, and workload, who supports the Head Teacher / Principal, monitors and reviews mental health and wellbeing initiatives and strategies, and workload.
- Promote equality and diversity in accordance with the Equality Policy objectives, ensuring that mental health and wellbeing strategies and support mechanisms are accessible and inclusive.
- Ensure that there is a stress risk assessment in place in their Academy, which is detailed and updated annually as a minimum.
- Encourage a culture that enables employees to be able to talk openly about their mental health and wellbeing.

c) The Principal/Head Teacher:

- Promote a positive and open culture in their Academy, with proactive management of mental health and wellbeing issues.
- Lead by example and encourage staff to be open if they feel stressed, to take breaks and to have a full life outside of work.
- Make the most of team bonding; using INSET days to build positive relationships, as feeling comfortable amongst colleagues will make discussing wellbeing easier.
- Assist with work and help to manage employees' workloads.
- Reach out to staff during difficult points in their personal lives, e.g. bereavement, allowing sufficient time off and supporting them when they return to work.
- Arrange a meeting with all members of staff in which the current working times and practices will be discussed.
- Research and implement an employee assistance programme relevant to the needs of all staff, regularly monitoring its effectiveness and impact on wellbeing.
- Report to LAC members on key mental health and wellbeing issues, including the results of stress and wellbeing surveys, and the approach to mental health and wellbeing initiatives based on the results of such surveys.
- Encourage staff to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle, as a proactive resilience technique to support positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage staff to participate in mental health and wellbeing initiatives and training, utilise the resources available and manage their own health and wellbeing through positive health behaviours.
- Seek advice from other organisations or professionals, such as human resources, occupational health, health and safety advisers etc. and make referrals as and when necessary. Provide advice and support for staff to promote their wellbeing, and assist staff who wish to seek advice or self- refer to mental health care professionals in relation to their work.
- Ensure that all staff have access to relevant policies in relation to mental health and wellbeing, leaders and managers have appropriate information and training to support colleagues, including the identification and facilitation of appropriate training programs.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately inducted to the Academy and have access to key contacts and resources for support.

- Devise and implement wellbeing strategies appropriate for their setting, staff and pupils, with the support of the leadership team and staff, including the implementation of initiatives to reduce workload which are appropriate to the Academy's individual setting and needs.
- Share good practice with colleagues throughout the Multi Academy Trust.
- Ensure that whole Academy risk assessments, including team stress and wellbeing risk assessments, are reviewed at least on an annual basis.
- Ensure that risk assessments are conducted with individuals who are experiencing ill health in relation to their mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure return to work interviews are conducted.

d) Senior Leaders / Academy Wellbeing Leads:

- Promote a positive and open culture in their Academy, with proactive management of mental health and wellbeing initiatives and leading on initiatives to reduce workload.
- Keep up to date with new developments in mental health and wellbeing initiatives for their Academy and support the Head Teacher / Principal in driving such initiatives.
- Ensure employees receive appropriate formal and informal training and supervision to support them in their role, an induction for all staff will be undertaken and records of such induction will be maintained. Leaders should include information regarding academy initiatives for workload, wellbeing and positive mental health.
- Ensure the whole Academy and individual risk assessments are accurate, appropriate and reviewed at suitable intervals.
- Carry out investigations into accidents, incidents and violent occurrences which may negatively impact staff members and pupils. Produce reports / statements and amend risk assessments in accordance with findings and communicate these to staff.
- Provide exemplary practice, guidance and support to staff on mental health and wellbeing issues, including undertaking training as required to support their role and develop their approach to mental ill health. Ensure availability and open-door policy to staff who can approach them with concerns.
- Seek advice from other organisations or professionals, such as human resources, occupational health, health and safety advisers etc. making referrals as and when necessary.
- Support staff by ensuring that the working environment is assessed to remain appropriate and fit for purpose.
- Keep staff updated, as appropriate, with developments at work and share an understanding of how this may impact on their job and workload.
- Support the Head Teacher / Principal to devise and implement wellbeing strategies appropriate for their setting, staff and pupils, with the support of the staffing structure as a whole.
- Manage or seek appropriate advice for staff reporting concerns relating to workload, wellbeing and mental ill health.
- Encourage staff to participate in mental health and wellbeing initiatives and training, utilise the resources available and manage their own health and wellbeing through positive health behaviours.
- Facilitate and support returns to work following absence due to ill health, conduct return to work meetings where this is part of their role.
- Provide support for staff to promote their wellbeing and assist staff who wish to seek advice or refer to mental health care professionals in relation to their work.
- Appropriately manage and supervise any disclosures and subsequent referrals.
- Appropriately manage, report, debrief and support staff who have been subject to challenging incidents.
- Appoint a wellbeing champion or lead for their Academy to raise awareness and promote positive mental health strategies and initiatives.
- Ensure that risk assessments are conducted with individuals who are experiencing ill health in relation to their mental health and wellbeing.
- Take account of departmental workload reduction guidance.
- Talking to hub groups about how guidance has been used and sharing good practice.
- Using workload reduction and wellbeing toolkits where appropriate for their setting.
- Measure staff wellbeing and identify workload issues through staff voice, surveys and discussion, and other strategies as the leaders identify.

- Address the workload issues that have been identified where possible and evaluate the impact of the actions taken.

e) Academy Staff:

- Read the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.
- Report accidents, injuries and incidences of ill health to the appropriate person and in a timely manner.
- Are encouraged to participate in mental health and wellbeing initiatives and training, utilise the resources available and manage their own health and wellbeing through positive health behaviours.
- Are encouraged to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle, as a proactive resilience technique to support mental health and wellbeing.
- Comply with the Academy's health and safety arrangements, including the adherence to risk assessments, health and safety procedures and policies.
- Are encouraged to be supportive of colleagues and others who may be experiencing mental ill health, utilising techniques from training and support from line managers.
- Are encouraged to attend or be supported by sessions with professionals to improve and develop wellbeing, where this would provide beneficial outcomes and improve mental health.
- Provide accurate, timely and appropriate communication, maintained by professional relationships based on trust and shared values. Work proactively as a staffing team, in collaboration with each other and the leadership team.
- Are encouraged to participate in / provide feedback surrounding wellbeing initiatives, and support the Academy in identifying and making improvements to the working environment and mental health and wellbeing strategies.
- Ensuring that whilst they are absent from work due to ill health, they do not undertake anything that could unnecessarily exacerbate or prolong their ill health/absence.
- Recognise the potential symptoms of mental ill health in staff and others, communicate, support the individual and escalate concerns in an appropriate and confidential manner.
- Communicate issues or concerns to an appropriate member of the leadership team, and in a timely manner.
- Read and contribute to the stress risk assessment.
- Are encouraged to participate in mental health and wellbeing initiatives instigated by the Academy and offer feedback to improve the quality and success of such programs.

Staff can make changes to avoid and prevent stress and/or poor mental wellbeing, as it is a problem that should be tackled and not ignored. Staff should be prepared to speak to their colleagues and senior staff if they are struggling with their mental wellbeing, or feeling stressed in their personal lives or at work.

Staff are encouraged to take action to manage their own mental wellbeing. Actions can include but are not limited to:

- Keeping active as a way of releasing emotional intensity and any negative feelings; exercise will also help to clear thoughts and deal with problems more calmly
- Managing their workload, and establishing and maintaining a healthy balance between work and life
- Prioritising their workload throughout the workday, leaving the least important tasks until the end of the day and concentrating on the work that will make the biggest difference
- Avoiding unhealthy habits, such as drinking and smoking
- Taking advantage of the wellbeing initiatives, training and support offered in the workload
- Speaking to the Headteacher, their line manager or a wellbeing lead about any concerns they may have regarding their workload, stress, or mental wellbeing

f) The Premises Manager (or the member/s of staff assigned to that role):

- Support staff by ensuring that the working environment is assessed to remain appropriate and fit for purpose; ensure that any work that has health and safety implications is prioritised.
- Maintain the premises in a condition that is safe and suitable to work in and without significant risk and report any concerns regarding unresolved hazards in the Academy to the Senior Leadership Team immediately.
- Ensure that the premises are clean, and the working environment is comfortable for staff and pupils.
- Ensure that all staff have access to academy risk assessments and health and safety documentation.
- Ensure that staff and pupils have access to welfare facilities which are maintained to a clean and safe standard.