



Stress Management Policy

Review Due:	May 2023
Last Review	May 2020 (template update March 21)
Applicable to:	All Trust Schools
Reviewed By:	SD
Approved By:	

Comments:

This policy has been drafted to comply with new HSE recommendations around employers' responsibilities to support the mental health of employees. The policy has been reviewed by Trust Leaders and a risk assessment template has been added as a result. Draft approved by external solicitors.

The template has been updated, no further changes.

	Contents	
	Work-related stress policy	
1.	Scope	2
2.	Introduction	2
3.	Definitions	2
4.	Policy statement	3
5.	Responsibilities	3
5.1	Headteachers/School management	3
5.2	Line managers/supervisors	3
5.3	Employees	4
	Appendix one – stress risk assessment template	5

1. Scope

This policy defines work-related stress and The Partnership Trust’s responsibilities with respect to work-related stress under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This policy is also accompanied by a work-related stress risk assessment. It adopts the approach recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which is based on a set of ‘Management Standards’ primarily concentrating on 6 key areas; Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Roles and Change

2. Introduction

An employee’s mental and physical health can be affected by a number of factors which may or may not be work-related. Work-related stress is a significant cause of illness and disease and is known to be linked with high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and also with a negative impact on teams and the organisation.

The Bath and Mendip Partnership Trust believes that its members of staff are its most important asset and is committed to promoting a positive working environment for all colleagues. The Trust recognises that under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, it has a legal duty to assess the risks of stress-related ill health arising from work activities and to take action to control that risk.

3. Definitions

Work related stress is distinct from reasonable pressure and challenges at work. The Health and Safety Executive defines work-related stress as:

“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.”

There is a clear distinction between pressure, and work-related stress, which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive and exceeds the person’s capacity and capability to cope. The stage at which excessive pressure leads to work-related stress will vary between individuals as each person has different tolerance levels. People may also be affected by nonwork related issues which can lead them to react to work pressures adversely.

4. Policy statement

It is the policy of the Trust to take all reasonable and practicable steps to safeguard the health and safety of employees while at work. The Trust is committed to:

- Identifying workplace sources of stress through a process of risk assessment.
- Reducing the risk of work-related stress as far as reasonably practicable through the development of good working practices, based on the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards.
- Supporting managers, supervisors and individual employees to recognise work-related stress and the appropriate actions to take.
- Providing central and local support to employees who are experiencing work-related stress to enable them to remain in work or support them in returning to work; and
- Defining responsibilities in relation to the management of work-related stress.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Headteachers/School Management

Headteachers/School Management are responsible for ensuring that arrangements for risk assessments are adequate for the school/service and are communicated effectively including a risk assessment for work-related stress. The risk assessment should use the Health and Safety Executive’s management standard as a framework (see template as appendix one)

5.2 Line managers/supervisors

Line managers/supervisors are responsible for identifying where possible, and responding appropriately to work-related stress issues within their teams. This may include:

- addressing potential work-related stressors;
- taking appropriate action when a member of their staff indicates that they may be experiencing symptoms of work-related stress
- proactively managing employee absence and gaining appropriate advice from HR.
- review workplace conditions to ensure that they do not contribute to work-related stress
- monitor working hours and overtime to ensure employees are not overworking
- monitor holidays to make sure employees are taking their full entitlement
- review factors that might indicate stress in the workplace, such as high rates of absenteeism or staff turnover;

5.3 Employees

All employees are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others likely to be affected by their actions;
- informing their line manager if they believe that they are experiencing work-related stress or have concerns regarding other team members;
- working with their line manager to identify work-related stressors and any possible control measures that may be put in place to reduce work related impact.

Members of staff who do not feel able to speak to their line manager or who feel that their manager is not adequately addressing their concerns may speak directly to HR. Employees may also seek advice and support from their Trade Union representative or any Employee Assistance Programme that may be in place.

Appendix 1

Stress Risk Assessment

The stress risk assessment is a combination of the employee's and manager's perceptions of workplace stressors compared against the HSE's management standards.

Although some stress risk assessments will be retrospective, i.e. following a case of stress, it is recommended that the assessment becomes part of the normal performance management process. Managers will then be able to work proactively with staff to manage workplace stressors.

STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

PART ONE: Employee Perception of Workplace Stressors

Employee Name:

Date:

Demands	Examples	Possible Solutions
Work planning Excessive working hours Unrealistic deadlines/ performance targets Working beyond competence Flexible working and leave		
Control		
Timing and pace of work Input into work scheduling and delivery Task priorities		
Role		
Understanding role in team Work matches job description Performance standards		
Relationships		
Bullying or harassment Unacceptable behaviour		

Support		
Management support		
Work-life balance		
Regular appraisals		
Change		
Communication of changes		
Involvement in change process		
Opportunity to voice opinions		

STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

PART TWO: Manager Perception of Workplace Stressors

Manager Name:

Date:

Demands	Examples	Possible Solutions
Work planning Excessive working hours Unrealistic deadlines/ performance targets Working beyond competence Flexible working and leave		
Control		
Timing and pace of work Input into work scheduling and delivery Task priorities		
Role		
Understanding role in team Work matches job description Performance standards		
Relationships		
Bullying or harassment Unacceptable behaviour		
Support		
Management support		

Work-life balance		
Regular appraisals		
Change		
Communication of changes		
Involvement in change process		
Opportunity to voice opinions		

STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

PART THREE: Action Plan

Issue	Action to Resolve Issue	Action By	Date Completed
1. Demands			
2. Control			
3. Role			
4. Relationships			
5. Support			
6. Change			

Action plan developed by:

Date:

Agreed by (Line Manager):

Date:

NEXT STEPS

Following the completion of the risk assessment, it may be useful to hold a meeting, or series of meetings, with individuals or groups of staff in order to devise an action plan for tackling the particular issues in your school which are causing stress. It is essential that the consultation with staff leads to concrete action for reducing stress, based on what have been identified as the key stressors. Without this the risk assessment will not be complete. All that remains is for a review process to be established. This could involve including stress as a regular item on the agenda of health and safety committee or staff meetings, so that new stressors can be identified and addressed.