



Mental Health and Wellbeing

SUPPORTING STAFF

A GUIDE TO HELP ENSURE THE MENTAL HEALTH AND
WELLBEING OF STAFF WITHIN BENGEWORTH MULTI
ACADEMY TRUST IS EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTED.



Bengeworth
Multi Academy Trust

Why is staff wellbeing important?



“Over the last few years the world has woken up to a simple fact: the best correlate of adult life satisfaction is not income, but physical and mental health. Early intervention focused on child emotional wellbeing is probably the most effective social investment any society could make, both from economic and moral perspectives. The new emphasis on promoting child mental health in schools is a welcome move to help us realise this ambition, and one that the teaching profession has consistently supported.

This raises a key issue. Teaching is a tough job. It can be immensely rewarding but also physically and emotionally draining. Safeguarding and mental health issues can be intense and complex.

Children’s behavioural and emotional problems are increasing. Many schools recognise this and provide support for their staff. The new focus on children’s mental health, though serves as an important reminder to us that we must couple support for school staff with the ambitions we have for children’s wellbeing. If we don’t we will be letting down all school staff

If we want our school staff to do what’s asked of them, then we need to make sure that their mental health and wellbeing is effectively supported.”

Professor Peter Fonagy,

CEO of the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families



What is staff wellbeing?

The term “wellbeing” can be used to describe our holistic health, including our physical, mental and emotional health. When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged and are able to show resilience and “bounce back” from life’s challenges.

School staff often juggle multiple tasks and demands, so a focus on staff wellbeing has become increasingly important. Taking good care of staff both emotionally and practically helps them to perform to the best of their ability and ensures that they are better able to support pupils. Workloads, deadlines and challenging behaviours can all impact negatively on the wellbeing of school staff.

Poor mental wellbeing may impact on their ability to manage during key moments of stress in the classroom or at school. Staff who have good mental wellbeing are more likely to have the necessary resources to be able to manage and plan during or after stressful episodes whether with a pupil, a class, a colleague, an inspector or a parent.

Good staff wellbeing can have a number of benefits for schools including:

- Positive impact on pupils, including improved educational outcomes, as both staff and children and young people are more engaged
- Increased productivity of staff members
- Reduced absences from work in relation to sickness (both short term and long term)
- Staff being able to manage stress better and develop healthier coping strategies
- Improved job satisfaction, which can support retention
- Staff feeling valued, supported and invested in

What can support staff wellbeing?

UNIVERSAL, TARGETED AND SPECIALIST SUPPORT

SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Crisis support
Referrals to occupational health
Education Support Partnership
Human Resources

TARGETED SUPPORT

Training around mental health
Wellbeing check-in at Performance Management
Wellbeing events for staff: Golden Week
Peer Support: wellbeing partner
Staff wellbeing questionnaire
Annual 'Time to Talk' Day - Mental Health Week

UNIVERSAL SUPPORT

Dedicated staffrooms
Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
Staff education on child and family mental health
Culture of no blame and stigma for mental health needs of school community.



RACHEL SENEQUE AND ELIZABETH LANE
are both qualified Mental Health First Aiders
having attended MHFA England Training.



New initiatives for wellbeing

Wellbeing Partner

Staff who wish to be involved will be assigned a wellbeing partner. Partners are responsible for checking in on each others wellbeing.

*Ideas to support your partner:
making cups of tea, writing notes,
covering duties, random acts of
kindness*

Wellbeing Check-Up

A wellbeing discussion will be included as part of the performance management meetings.

Questionnaire

Termly mental health and wellbeing surveys will be sent to staff to complete anonymously.

Golden Week

Once each term, a week will be allocated as Golden Week. During Golden Week there will be no meetings before or after school and all staff will be encouraged to leave early. Staff may also like to share in a buffet lunch one day. In addition a social or sporting event will be planned for Golden Week.

Time to Talk

As part of Mental Health week. Allocating time to prioritise and talk about mental wellbeing.

Looking after your own wellbeing?

RESEARCH INDICATES THAT TAKING THE FOLLOWING STEPS CAN BE IMPORTANT IN THE PROMOTION AND MAINTENANCE OF MENTAL WELLBEING:

1. Knowing personal limits and having the ability to say 'no' when necessary. This helps you to have more balance in life and will enable you to take better care of others.



2. Identifying supportive people that you have in your life. If you would like to increase your support networks then you might consider taking up new hobbies or activities. You can also speak to a professional for more support.

3. Talking. There are times when challenging situations affect us emotionally. If you have had a difficult day at school, try to speak to someone before you leave school as this can then help you to process how you are feeling, ask for support and separate your work and home life.



4. Being flexible around change. Even with the best plans, sometimes unexpected events or situations occur. Our ability to accept change and plan and adapt can help us to manage any potential feelings of stress and anxiety and cope better overall.

5. Self-compassion. If you take some time to stop and reflect on the thoughts in your head, are they more positive or critical? Once you have identified any negative thought, you can begin to introduce more positive thoughts and 'turn the volume down' on the critical voices.



5 Steps to mental wellbeing

IF YOU GIVE THEM A TRY, YOU MAY FEEL HAPPIER, MORE POSITIVE AND ABLE TO GET THE MOST FROM LIFE.

Be Active

You don't have to go to the gym. Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life.

Connect

Connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.

Keep Learning

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. So why not sign up for that cooking course or start learning to play a musical instrument?

Give to others

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

Be Mindful

Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Where can I get help?



Schools in Mind

Network for wellbeing

www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/



Mind

0300 123 3393 or 01789 298615

info@mind.org.uk



Heads Together

Mentally Healthy schools

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk



Mindful teachers

Living, learning and teaching with mindful awareness

www.mindfulteachers.org



Education Support Partnership

The UK's only charity providing mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff and organisations.

www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk



Rethink Mental Illness

Advice Line

0300 5000 927



SANE

SANEline

Helpline

0300 304 7000 (4:30pm-10:30pm)



Young Minds

Resources and materials to build skills in dealing with mental wellbeing

www.youngminds.org.uk



NHS

Self Help Leaflets

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>



Royal College of Psychiatrists

Downloadable resources to support mental health

www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health

CRISIS HELP

NHS – 999 Emergency

nearest A&E department

111 – 25/7 professional health advice

Emergency GP appointment

Samaritans 24/7 Freephone: 116123

Early Intervention in Psychosis Team

