Stress Management Policy

Green Lane Community Special School



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| **Approved by:** | J. Mullineux |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | September 2024 | |
| **Next review due by:** | September 2025 | |

\* Information taken from Warrington Borough Council Stress Management Policy

**Introduction**

Green Lane School aims to provide all employees with a working environment which

is safe and without risks to health, this includes the provision of suitable control

measures in the case of any work activity that may create a risk of work related stress.

Warrington Borough Council acknowledges that employees may encounter stress in

their work as well as in their personal lives and is committed to identifying, managing

and reducing work related stressors.

The aim will always be, as far as is reasonably practical, to identify and resolve

problems associated with stress in the workplace at the earliest stage in order to

support the employee at work.

**Definition**

The Health & Safety Executive has defined stress as:

***“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them”***

There is a clear distinction between pressure and transient stressful periods in a normal work routine, which can be a motivating factor, and adverse stress which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive and, if not controlled and reduced to a tolerable level, can be detrimental to mental and physical health and performance at work.

This policy is intended to focus on the issues surrounding work related stress. However, it is recognised that there may be many situations where individuals suffer the effects of stressful situations which are due to factors external to work. In such cases where it becomes evident that external factors are causing stress related symptoms which are affecting an individual’s ability to carry out their job, it is appropriate for managers to use the mechanisms outlined below to support employees.

1. Any sickness absence which is attributable to stress related symptoms will be dealt with in accordance with the schools Attendance Policy.

**Arrangements**

Green Lane School, through the support of effective line management including the

appraisal process, formal key stage and pathway meetings, one to one communication

and informal monitoring will endeavour to:

* Seek to control issues giving rise to stress, including those caused by management, work colleagues, members of the public, the environment, and work organisation, design and volume, so far as is reasonably practicable.
* Identify possible work related stressors via the process of Risk Assessment required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
* Endeavour to monitor potential stressors by means of the risk assessment process.
* Where the need is identified, provide training in stress awareness, personal resilience, communication, interpersonal skills, time management and problem solving.
* Treat employees who are suffering from stress related conditions in the same way as those with other health problems.
* Provide appropriate support for employees who indicate or exhibit that they are suffering from the effects of adverse stress. Where an employee is off sick due to stress related symptoms, which they believe are attributable to a situation at work, all parties involved should be encouraged to deal with the problem as quickly as possible in order to agree appropriate support measures which will facilitate an early return to work.
* Facilitate the provision of Occupational Health support including counselling for employees suffering from stress related condition where this is recommended by an Occupational Health adviser.
* In line with the school Attendance Policy, take all reasonable steps to ensure the adequate rehabilitation of employees returning to work following absence due to a stress related condition.

**Responsibilities**

Senior Leadership Group

Are responsible for undertaking stress risk assessments which are reviewed at

appropriate intervals. However, in circumstances where either a member of staff

notifies his or her manager that he or she believes that they are suffering from stress

or where a manager believes that a staff member may be suffering from stress, then

a more detailed and personalised examination of any stress factors involved will need

to be undertaken. Advice, if needed, may be sought from Human Resources or

Occupational Health services.

Are responsible for monitoring the working hours, absence levels and

workload of all team members.

A directed time calendar has been shared at the beginning of the academic year to

ensure all staff are clear about their working time and responsibilities.

Are responsible for making constructive use of return to work interviews, as required

under the schools Attendance Policy, for exploring reasons and potential causes of

absence, and for encouraging an open dialogue about employees’ concerns.

Have responsibilities to ensure an understanding of the inherent pressures and expectations of posts within their remit and the requisite skills required to meet them.

Senior Leadership Team

Are responsible for trying to ensure that good communication exists between all levels

of employee in their key stage, especially during periods of organisational or

procedural change.

Are responsible for using the key stage and pathway meetings as a means of

monitoring workload and spotting potential risks and training needs, making sure that

all staff are adequately supported.

Should offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stressful situations outside work e.g. bereavement or separation, where such a situation comes to their attention.

Have a duty to recognise the limits of their skills in counselling employees and the potential conflict of interest with their position. Where an employee exhibits symptoms of stress, a key stage lead should discuss this with the employee and, if appropriate, suggest that the person seeks help. This may involve discussing the issue with the HT/DHT who can determine whether a referral to Occupational Health Service is appropriate.

Human Resources

Are responsible for providing guidance to managers on the application of the stress

policy and other associated policies in connection with the health and well-being of

employees.

May be required to advise and support managers on the re-integration of employees

back into the work place following a period of absence due to a stress related illness.

This may involve assisting with identifying suitable, available, temporary or permanent

options to ensure compliance with contractual and legal obligations and the duty of

care. It may also include advice on the provision of a transitional period or phased

return to work following absence.

Will assist with referrals to the Occupational Health Service where appropriate.

Are responsible for providing advice/guidance/support to managers in the

management of absence in accordance with the School’s Managing Attendance

Policy.

Are responsible for working with other areas of the Council and the Council’s

Occupational Health Provider to promote health and well-being including initiatives in

connection with the reduction of stress and mental health well-being.

Risk and Resilience

Are responsible for providing advice and guidance to Managers and head teachers on

the application of the Standard Operating Procedure for Stress Management and any

other Standard Operating Procedure or Guidance Notes produced by the Risk and

Resilience Team in connection with the health and safety of employees. Advising the

Council, its employees and stakeholders on forthcoming changes and developments

to Health and Safety Legislation, Approved Code of Practices or HSE guidance.

To provide advice and guidance to managers regarding the WBC stress risk

assessment process, assisting managers to identify potential stressors, assess risks,

identify and implement suitable control measure to reduce the risk to an acceptable

level.

To advise Managers/head teachers on the process for referring an employee to the

Occupational Health provider, ensuring that the appropriate forms are completed by

the manager and that associated stress risk assessments accompany the referral.

Council’s Occupational Health Provider

Will provide specialist advice on stress related problems and coping strategies,

including counselling where appropriate, and advise on re-integration into work

following absence related to stress.

Will actively encourage employees who are experiencing stress related problems to

seek professional help and to take responsibility for their own recovery.

Will refer/ signpost employees to other appropriate providers for specialist help when

necessary.

Will provide stress related risk assessment advice when requested.

Will work with the Council on health and well-being promotion initiatives.

Employees

All employees have a personal responsibility to be aware of their own levels of stress and to take action to prevent deterioration in their health including raising issues of concern with their line manager/head teacher (or other appropriate manager where they do not feel comfortable speaking to their own line manager).

Where an employee perceives that there is a problem at work which has resulted in them being absent due to stress related symptoms it is expected that the employee will engage with the relevant procedures and any support offered to facilitate a return to work. In such circumstances the employee may wish to seek the advice and support of their Trade Union representative.

Where employees are concerned that colleagues are showing signs of suffering from stress it is appropriate to offer support and/or refer them to a member of SLT.

Employees should recognise their own training and development needs, bringing these to the attention of SLT.

Employees should seek professional help/support as early as possible and engage with measures of support offered by the School.

**Training**

Training is available to all management levels to help them with the implementation of

the Stress Management policy and the conducting of risk assessments.

Personal Resilience Training is available to employees as part of the Council’s

Training and Development Programme.

**Evaluation and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be measured by using data on sickness absence

attributed to stress related illness, quantitative data in relation to Occupational Health

referrals and appropriate qualitative information.

This policy will be reviewed periodically in line with good practice and experience

gained through implementation. Any updates to the Warrington Borough Council

Stress Management Policy will be in conjunction with Trade Unions.

**Confidentiality**

Employees who feel under excessive pressure should seek help and support from

SLT. Initially employees should speak to their key stage lead however if an employee

feels unable to do this they should raise their issues with a member of SLG. All cases

will be handled with the utmost discretion and confidentiality. Advice may be sought

from Human Resources.

Where counselling is provided via Occupational Health provider the detail of

discussions with the counsellor will not be shared with any third party, but general

reports will be provided to the relevant Human Resources Business Partner and

HT/DHT on how employees are progressing.

**Sources of Information and Help**

Warrington Borough Council has a personal wellbeing toolkit that contains a wealth

of information regarding how to keep your mind and body healthy. This information

can be found on the Warrington Rewards website at

<https://warrington.rewardgateway.co.uk/Home>. If you don’t already have a log

in all you need is your payroll number.

Within the toolkit there is a wealth of information, assessments and links to

organisations who can offer specialist assistance from healthy eating, smoking

cessation, coping with pressure to a full employee support provision providing advice

and information on things such as finance, legal advice, wellbeing, counselling and

mental health to name but a few.

Other sources of information:

HSE <http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>