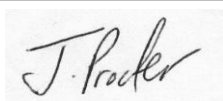


Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Review cycle	1 / 2 / 3 years	Date: December 2025
Approved by	Executive Head teacher	
Changes made in this review cycle		
Signed		Date: December 2025
Position	Executive Head teacher	
Date of next Review	December 2026	

Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Who This Policy Applies To

This policy will apply to all employees working in Pioneer Federation Schools. The MHEW lead across the Pioneer is Heidi West (Head of School at Park Mead)

Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community (World Health Organisation)

At Pioneer we are committed to promoting and supporting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing for all members of staff.

Taking action to prevent ill health and promote good health makes good educational and business sense for the whole school community. Illness absence carries high costs both financially and in terms of the impact on performance, teaching and learning, morale and productivity. It can disrupt or compromise pupil progress and restrict other staff team members in carrying out their duties fully.

Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff are entitled to be treated fairly and professionally at all times. Pioneer takes its duty of care to all members of staff seriously and a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty.

These include:

- ☐ Attendance and Absence Management Policy;
- ☐ Stress Management Policy;
- ☐ Health and Safety Policy;
- ☐ Equality of Opportunity Policy;
- ☐ Anti-Bullying Policy/Procedure;
- ☐ Grievance Procedure;
- ☐ Whistleblowing Procedure.

Other policies contribute to staff wellbeing by providing certainty, fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff in different contexts, including:

- ☐ Pay Policy;
- ☐ Performance Management Policies for Teaching and Support Staff;
- ☐ Information, Records and Copyright: Policies and Procedures;
- ☐ Behaviour Policy;
- ☐ Safeguarding Children;

- ☐ Maternity Policy and Shared Parental Leave Policy
- ☐ Disability Leave Policy;
- ☐ Alcohol/Drug Abuse Policy.

All policies are published on the Pioneer Federation website.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

Promote positive mental health and well-being in all staff by

- ☐ Providing a working environment which enables staff wellbeing to be supported and which enables staff to carry out their duties effectively. Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues.
- ☐ Recognising the key role of Senior Leaders for their responsibilities by enabling access to guidance, training and support.
- ☐ Encouraging staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- ☐ Complying with all statutory requirements.
- ☐ Developing an increased understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- ☐ Promoting an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional wellbeing is taken seriously and in which staff are supported in order that they may seek any help and be signposted to the support they need.
- ☐ Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy through regular promotion on staff notice boards.
- ☐ Identifying the hazards that could lead to poor staff health and wellbeing and reduce these where possible.

Legislation

- ☐ Pieces of legislation that will be considered when promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, including, but not exclusively:
 - ☐ The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
 - ☐ The Equality Act 2010;
 - ☐ Working Time Regulations;
 - ☐ Employment Rights Act 1996;
 - ☐ Employment Relations Act 1999.

Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Lead (Heidi West) and Senior leaders (Heads of School, Exec Head) at Pioneer Federation will:

Ensure this policy is implemented and procedures are in place that recognise and deal with the issue of common mental and physical health problems.

This includes:

- + consideration of organisation of work;
- + health risk assessment where appropriate;
- + early recognition for staff with common mental and physical health problems (which may require training);
- + Interventions that include short-term rehabilitation and return-to-work plans and shorter and/or longer-term reasonable adjustments.

In addition, they will....

- ☐ Demonstrate recognition and acceptance of common mental and physical health problems by creating an environment where staff feel comfortable in asking for help.
- ☐ Enlist the support of East Sussex County's HR function and Occupational Health, when appropriate, and ensure staff are able to access this support.
- ☐ Ensure that staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- ☐ Attend regular training on health and wellbeing in schools.
- ☐ Ensure that all of Pioneer policies are assessed for workload impact and consider the equality implications of any policies introduced. All policies to be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- ☐ Foster a supportive work environment, operating in a fair and consistent manner and act early in order to provide consistent support.
- ☐ Promote a healthy workplace and practices that ensure that members of staff are able to develop a healthy mind.
- ☐ Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- ☐ Communicate work-life balance practices to all staff and manage pressures which may affect staff and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.
- ☐ Understand the differing needs of staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required. This may include support for pregnant women, older women during the menopause, and those with caring responsibilities.

- ☐ Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems.
- ☐ Ensure that a return-to-work policy is established in the workplace that is supportive of staff both while absent and upon return to work.
- ☐ Carry out a risk assessment, where necessary, and especially when concerns have been raised, as soon as possible.
- ☐ Carefully plan and agree work-life balance solutions including flexible working practices where possible and appropriate.
- ☐ Demonstrate commitment, via systems and practices in place at Pioneer to employees maintaining a good work/life balance, and ensure that such practices are communicated to all staff.
- ☐ Conduct an annual/ bi-annual survey of staff, including a section on health and wellbeing, and share and act upon results.

Staff should:

- ☐ Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem, if possible, to a **clearly identified line manager or named individual.**
- ☐ Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves or others whilst in the workplace.
- ☐ Consider attending training on health and wellbeing issues where they feel that this is appropriate. Consider also wellbeing support mechanisms offered by East Sussex e.g. counselling.
- ☐ Be watchful of any indication of changes in behaviour in colleagues and promote sympathetic alertness to colleagues who show signs of stress.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff are aware of what support is available within our school and local community. Relevant resources of support will be displayed in communal areas such as corridors, toilets and display boards in the staff room.

Counselling

- ☐ Counselling can be provided where appropriate through the East Sussex County's provider. This will be a confidential, independent service using professionally qualified counsellors.
- ☐ Staff can access the Counselling Service by contacting First Care which is employee assistance and counselling service. In addition to this they can offer advice on welfare issues. It is a free and confidential service and they can be contacted on 0333 212 8382. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Care first

Confidential support for all staff

0333 212 8382

Available 24/7

The tree diagram features the following topics as leaves:

- General information
- Noisy neighbours
- Wills and inheritance
- Dependent care
- Debt
- Maternity leave
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Conflict
- Stress & Anxiety
- Motoring offences
- Power of attorney
- Relationships
- Landlord/tenant issues
- Gaining control of your finances
- Family issues
- Faulty goods
- Credit cards
- Divorce/separation
- Consumer issues
- Housing
- Management Support
- Bullying & Harassment
- General financial planning
- Bereavement
- Budgeting
- Benefits
- Loans and overdrafts

Are you having a difficult time and feel you need some advice on any of these issues and more?

Our counselling and information service is free and confidential.

Online support
www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk
Username: ~~esccap~~ Password: council1

Confidential support available 24/7
0333 212 8382

Mediation

- ☐ In addition to the Counselling Service there is also a mediation service in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. Where this service is appropriate it will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation.

Teacher Support Network

- ☐ The Teacher Support Network is a group of independent charities and a social enterprise that provides practical and emotional support to staff in the education sector and their families. Information, support and coaching is offered to all staff. The Teacher Support Network provides over 1000 factsheets covering a wide range of issues including money advice, how to cope with bereavement, mental health, diet and nutrition and how to manage stress. To access the free support line, staff can call 08000 562 561, or for more information go to <http://teachersupport.info/>

Occupational Health

- ☐ Pioneer staff have free access to the East Sussex Occupational Health provider. This will enable an employee to discuss any concerns about their health and wellbeing with a nurse or doctor trained in occupational medicine. This is an opportunity to discuss any health condition and get feedback about managing or improving that condition to help an employee to carry out their duties or return to work. The information given is entirely confidential and will not be shared with Senior leaders or other members of staff within Pioneer.

Useful Websites

Acas www.acas.org.uk

Information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace

Alcoholics Anonymous www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to recover from alcoholism.

Carers UK www.carersuk.org

The voice of carers

CBI www.cbi.org.uk

Guidance to businesses on managing stress at work

Department of Health www.gov.uk/government/organisation/department-of-health

Information on dealing with stress and mental health problems, including the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Dignity at Work Partnership www.dignityatwork.org

Information and guidance on bullying in the workplace

The Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com

The commission is working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

Gingerbread www.gingerbread.org.uk

Gingerbread and One Parent Families have now merged to provide better support and a bigger voice to 1.8 million lone parents and their children throughout England and Wales.

HSE <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

Information on the stress management standards

Local Government Employers www.local.gov.uk

Guidance for all councils on stress prevention and management

Mindful Employer www.mindfulemployer.net

Information and guidance on managing stress and mental health in the workplace

NASUWT www.nasuwt.org.uk

Information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing

NHS 111 <http://www.nhs.uk/111>

National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters

Princess Royal Trust for Carers <http://www.carers.org>

Here to improve carers' lives by fighting for equality and recognition for carers.

Relate <http://www.relate.org.uk>

UK's largest provider of relationship counselling and sex therapy.

Samaritans <http://www.samaritans.org>

Offers confidential, non-judgemental support to individuals.

Teacher Support Network

<http://teachersupport.info>

Work Life Balance Centre <http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org>

Exists to help people restore control over their workload and working lives we enable them to cut down overworking and so make new decisions about how they spend their time.

World Health Organisation http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/en/oehestress.pdf

Publication on work organisation and stress

