

# SWA Staff Well-being Guidance



## 1. Rationale and Aim

At Samuel Whitbread Academy, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and well-being of our staff. Our termly staff well-being survey shows that we have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and their contribution is valued. At Samuel Whitbread we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and, at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. Since the creation of our Staff Well-being Committee (2016) we have endeavoured to put staff well-being on the agenda, taking the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

The committee considered a range of definitions of well-being including that of the WHO, MIND and other organisations, and together created and agreed upon our own definition of well-being: *'having a sense of connectedness with other staff, having a sense of fulfilment, enjoying a positive working environment, feeling valued, feeling cared for as an individual and having a sense of community within the organisation'*.

## 2. Guidance

This guidance supports the BEST stress and well-being guidance which has been constructed using relevant legislation, but not exclusive to, include:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Working Time Regulations;
- Employment Rights Act 1996;
- Employment Relations Act 1999

## 3. Procedure

To support staff well-being including: promoting a sense of connectedness; having a sense of fulfilment; fostering a positive working environment, including managing staff workload; feeling valued; feeling cared for as an individual and having a sense of community, within Samuel Whitbread Academy we:

- conduct a termly staff questionnaire exploring levels of well-being at the academy;
- ensure the outcomes of the staff well-being questionnaire inform the actions of the senior leader leading on staff well-being and bring about real change that improves staff well-being;
- include staff well-being actions in Department Development Plans;
- help staff feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries by having a visible and active staff well-being committee (regular committee meetings; staff bulletin well-being section), whistle blowing policy and mental health staff first aider;
- encourage staff to discuss mental health (through our Return to Work procedure, Referral to Occupational Health provider, access to staff counselling, having a visible and active well-being committee and an active and available mental health staff first aider who triages staff members to relevant organisations including to our staff counsellor);

- provide CPD and coaching to support staff workload (through subject-specific CPD; managing staff workload Development Day sessions; access to exam board professional development courses, staff well-being training and outside speakers on mental health and anxiety, CUREE-trained coaches and mindfulness courses provided by BEST);
- provide opportunities to plan for workload 'hot-spots' and ensure that workload matches job descriptions, experience and skill including calendared meetings with many having a pre-published agenda so that staff can prepare in a timely manner; department-led assessment schedules to support marking (teachers); 3 data drops per year group each year; having optional after school intervention limited to 2-3 nights per week and finished by 4:15pm; having no demands for written lesson plans; having a HoD-driven curriculum review (teachers);
- discourage 'all staff' and weekend emails in order to support staff workload (through the weekly staff and sports bulletin; IYS group emails);
- support career development through both external and internal leadership programmes and apprenticeships (through the BEST and SWA);
- aim to improve communication through the weekly staff and sports bulletin; recorded online meetings; HoDs leadership task list (teachers).
- put work/ life balance and staff well-being on the development day schedule, HoDs/KS5 leaders briefing agenda and as the first agenda item on SLT department link meetings;
- create opportunities for staff to discuss concerns, and enable them to do so in a supportive environment where stress is not considered a weakness (including discussion with Line Managers; confidential conversations with our Mental Health First Aider; contact with any member of the well-being committee including the senior leader; exit interviews; return to work conversations);
- promote school values and encourage a sense of staff connectedness (through regular staff events; staff gym sessions; charity quiz nights; coffee mornings; staff yoga; staff choir, secret friend initiative, SWA book club and more);
- staff praise ('star of the week' published on the weekly bulletin; include staff praise on the SLT weekly meeting agenda; praise postcards; half-termly staff praise during staff meetings and staff praise 'superstars' as an agenda item on SLT link department meetings; collaborative classroom fortnight praise; google link for staff praise);
- provide access to appropriate support that meets the psychological and emotional needs of our staff (mental health staff first aider triage system; access to staff counselling and staff well-being newsletter with hyperlinks to well-being podcasts, healthy options and other initiatives);
- ensure all staff understand their role and are equipped to carry it out effectively (explicit job descriptions and person specifications; appraisal; pre-published staff calendar of assessment, data and reporting, events);
- provide new staff with a clear induction process and staff who are returning to work from maternity/paternity leave with a supportive return to work package.

#### **4. Links with other Policies**

This staff well-being guidance should be read in conjunction with school policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including policies on special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, violence at work, whistle blowing, equal opportunities and employees training and development.

The Governing Body/Trust of the academy takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer to all members of employees and a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty. These include:

- BEST Managing Sickness Absence Policy for Schools Based Staff
- BEST Leave of Absence Policy and Guidelines
- BEST Flexible Working Policy and Guidelines
- BEST Grievance Policy and Procedure
- BEST Health and Safety Policy
- SWA Equality Policy
- SWA Anti-Bullying Policy
- BEST Stress and Well-being Guidance
- BEST Whistle blowing Policy

This guidance does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. All policies are published on both the Trust and academy websites.

#### **5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Staff voice is surveyed termly and has been surveyed annually since 2016 with corresponding recommendations and actions.

#### **6. Implementation and Review**

This guidance can be found on the Academy's website and will be reviewed annually.

#### **7. Author and Date**

Katie Bridge - January 2021

Updated KBR – November 2021

Reviewed by Emma Foreman - Nov 2022

Date ratified by Principal - November 2022

Next review date – December 2023

#### **8. Appendices**