

<b>Adopted date:</b>	February 2024
<b>Signature of Headteacher:</b>	
<b>Signature of Governing body:</b>	
<b>Next review date</b>	February 2025

# **STRESS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE**

## **Stickland's CEVA Primary School**

**Aspire, Believe, Belong and Achieve.**

**Let your Light Shine. Mathew 5:16**

# **STRESS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE**

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## **1. Aim**

The aim of this procedure is to ensure that issues of work related stress are raised by employees as soon as possible, that appropriate action is taken at any early stage and that employees and managers together arrive at solutions.

The School recognises that excessive levels of stress can have a negative effect on mental and physical health. It will therefore seek to take all reasonably practicable steps to protect employees from high levels of stress and support them as appropriate. It will not consider reporting of work related stress as a weakness but a mechanism to ensure support through a systematic managed approach.

The School recognises that stress related illnesses are rarely the result of work issues alone. There are often other contributory factors over which the school has no control or influence but which nevertheless may affect performance or attendance at work. In these circumstances there may be temporary adjustments to working patterns, for example, which would assist in reducing stress. Headteachers have the discretion to agree such adjustments at any time. There are also statutory obligations that the School complies with, such as Parental Leave and Time off for Dependents.

Where pressures have been identified on particular posts which may lead to stress, the School will ensure that additional support is put in place and that high pressure levels will be alleviated, as far as is reasonably practicable.

## **2. Stage 1 – Informal Discussions**

Concerns relating to stress may be raised either by an employee or their Line Manager/Headteacher but irrespective of who initiates the discussion, the use of an informal approach is often regarded as the best option in the first instance. A template for use can be found at Appendix A.

Managers are responsible for monitoring workloads and any consequent pressure through the normal supervision process and should discuss any concerns with the employee at the earliest opportunity. If a member of staff is experiencing symptoms of stress, they are encouraged to discuss this with their line manager at an early stage, particularly if they feel the issues are work related.

Where the causes of stress are not directly work related, the individual may also find it helpful to have an informal discussion with their line manager so that their line manager is aware of the pressures they are experiencing outside of work. They may be able to agree some temporary adjustments to support the employee at a difficult time.

Every effort should be made to include the Line Manager/Headteacher as the first point of contact/discussion when issues are raised. However, in the event that the employee feels unable to approach their Line Manager contributing to the symptoms, then an informal discussion should be held with the Headteacher. Where the Headteacher is the line manager then an informal discussion should be held with the Chair of Governors (CoG).

Where a Headteacher identifies stress, an informal discussion should be held with the CoG or another nominated Governor.

Informal discussions will often result in an agreed way forward but to be effective, solutions must be mutually acceptable. Employees should therefore be invited to contribute solutions which are mutually acceptable

A timescale for implementing any agreed actions should be put into place and a note made of the proposals. Arrangements should then be made to review at regular intervals the effect of any measures in reducing the employee's stress levels.

If informal measures are not effective and the stress is work related, a more structured risk assessment and action plan will be required as outlined at stage 2 of this procedure.

### **3. Stage 2 – Stress Risk Assessment and Stress Action Plan**

Where the informal approach is not successful in resolving the stress related issues that have been raised or the employee is absent from work due to work related stress or has just returned to work following a period of absence for work related stress, the Stress Risk Assessment at Appendix B should be completed. Once completed the form should be returned to the Employee Wellbeing Team at County Hall.

A stress risk assessment is a step by step approach to identify what is contributing towards an individual's stress in the work environment. The stress risk assessment used by the Employee Wellbeing Team has been developed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and is in questionnaire format.

Once the completed stress risk assessment has been received by the Employee Wellbeing Team, they will assess the form and send a risk assessment analysis to the employee and the line manager/Headteacher named on the form. This includes a summary of key outcomes compared against nationally recognised research and data.

Upon receipt of the risk assessment analysis, the Line Manager/Headteacher should arrange to meet with the employee to complete the Stress Risk Assessment Action Plan found at Appendix C. Employees are entitled to be accompanied by a colleague or a Trade Union representative at this meeting. The line manager/Headteacher is advised to take advice from HR, who may also attend the meeting. A copy of the completed action plan should be given to the employee and a date for a review should be set. Both parties should retain a copy of the form.

The stress action plan should contain:

- A summary of the key issues identified by the stress risk assessment
- An outline of agreed actions (control measures) that may help to manage the causes of stress in the workplace for the employee
- Timescales for the implementation of the actions and review of the effectiveness of the plan.

In seeking to find solutions to any problems of perceived stress, the employee should be encouraged to participate in any discussion with the Headteacher/Line Manager, and will be invited to contribute solutions that are mutually acceptable. Each employee has their own threshold for handling stress and this threshold may vary in different situations and at different times.

#### **4. Responsibility of Headteacher**

The Headteacher/Chair of Governors is responsible for ensuring that any issue of work related stress is dealt with speedily and effectively. They may arrange for an appropriate line manager to undertake actions within procedure but cannot delegate the overall responsibility of ensuring that each issue is dealt with appropriately i.e. the Headteacher/Chair of Governors is responsible for determining what reasonable action can be taken to reduce any unacceptably high levels of stress.

The Headteacher/Chair of Governors must ensure that any additional notes or documentation are kept for audit/evidence purposes, and copied to the employee.

#### **5. Support**

**Headline** – Headline is a confidential support service for Dorset Headteachers staffed by experienced clinical psychologists. They specialise in supporting Headteachers through stressful periods and aim to help them in the management of stress and the development of personal resilience. The aim is to maintain strong leadership in schools and reduce absences through stress related illness. They can be contacted on 07502 226 328

**Education Support Partnership (*formerly known as Teacher Support Network*)** – The Education Support Partnership is available to all serving and trainee teachers, which offers information, support or concentrated short term counselling to help employees cope with the demands of teaching. Further information can be found at [www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk](http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk) or 08000 562 561

**Staff Counselling** – The counselling service is provided free for all employees of the council including school and academy based staff where the school/academy buys into the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Package. The service provides for up to six sessions in normal working hours. They can be contacted on 01305 224266 or [staffcounselling@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:staffcounselling@dorsetcc.gov.uk)

# Appendix A – Template for recording work related stress

Name:

School:

Department:

Line Manager:

I have stress related symptoms and I am currently at work/on sick leave (please delete as appropriate)

- The nature of my symptoms are:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- I believe the reason for my symptoms is:

Informal discussion held on:

Held with: (name and Job Title)

Outcome of discussion/Action points following informal discussion:

Review date (to be agreed by employee and Line Manager):

Signed employee:

Date:

Signed Line Manager:

Date:

# Stress Risk Assessment – Action Plan

**to be jointly completed by employee and Line Manager**

Often an **informal discussion** provides an effective and agreed solution to the identified sources of work related stress

Outcome of discussion and agreed action plan including review dates:

Signed (employee):  
Name (print):

Date:

Signed (Line Manager):  
Name (print):

Date:

Review Date: