WELLBEING STATEMENT

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Contents

1.0 EPT STATEMENT

1.1 Wellbeing is very important to the Education Partnership Trust (EPT). Part of our commitment to the health and wellbeing of all our employees is to foster and promote a culture that:

- increases awareness of ways to improve health;
- decreases high levels of stress through monitoring the working environment;
- protects employees, where possible, from workplace injury;
- offers job satisfaction and, where possible, flexible working options; and
- supports employees by implementing health and wellbeing medical, physical and mental health support and making guidance available from a range of practitioners.

APPENDIX A – RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The EPT, as an employer, has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employee as far as reasonably practicable. It is also required to have measures in place to mitigate, as far as reasonably practicable, factors that could harm the physical and mental wellbeing of employees, including work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work related and within the EPT's control.

All Employees have specific duties in relation to health, safety and wellbeing. These duties include:

- Treating individuals / colleagues with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Ensuring that there is good communication with all colleagues in the team and with whom they work.
- Adhering to the sound management principles set out in the EPT policies and procedures.
- Attending training, as appropriate, to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of work-related stress.
- Co-operating with Human Resources ('HR') to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken or supporting colleagues undertaking risk assessments for roles or working practices that may give rise to work related stress.
- Participating in events and initiatives undertaken by the EPT to promote wellbeing and more effective working.
- Raising concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- Taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by adopting healthy lifestyles.
- Taking responsibility for their own development of skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and reduce the risk of stress.
- Taking responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, and therefore helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

This statement accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as **"the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them".**

There is an important distinction between "reasonable pressure" which stimulate and motivate and "stress" where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

This statement recognises that there are many sources of work-related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees, citizens or users of the service.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a number of **Management Standards** which cover the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:

- **Demands** – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- **Control** – i.e. how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- **Support** – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.
- **Relationships** – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

- **Role** – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- **Change** – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

The EPT's performance on wellbeing and stress management will be assessed in the context of the HSE Management standards which the EPT already adheres to and from which the following policies are linked.

The document should be read in conjunction with:

- Dignity at Work.
- Equality Policy.
- Flexible working policy.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The EPT Leadership, Directors, Headteachers and school Senior Leadership teams acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health, that there is a persuasive business case as well as a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote wellbeing as far as is reasonably practicable.

The EPT Leadership, Directors, Headteachers and school Senior Leadership teams are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity and can work at their optimum level.

The EPT Leadership, Directors, Headteachers and school Senior Leadership teams recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on employees' wellbeing and that it can take many forms and needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

The Employee Wellbeing Statement expands upon the EPT Health and Safety Policy, setting out how the EPT will promote the wellbeing of employees by:

- Creating a working environment where potential work-related stressors are, as far as practicable, avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective HR policies and employee development.
- Increasing managers and employee's awareness of the causes and effects of stress.
- Developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill health.
- Developing the competence of mangers through Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours, so that they manage employees effectively and fairly.
- Engaging with employees to create constructive and effective working partnerships, both within the teams an across the EPT.
- Establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work-life balance.
- Encouraging employees to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing through effective health promotion programme initiatives.
- Encouraging employees to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE EMPLOYEE WELLBEING STATEMENT

The EPT Leadership, Directors, Headteachers and school Senior Leadership teams will:

- Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the EPT.
- Champion good management practices as set out by ACAS and the EPT, and the establishment of a good work ethos within the EPT which discourages assumptions about the long-term commitment to working hours of a kind likely to cause stress and which enables employees to maintain a reasonable work-life balance.
- Promote effective communication and ensure that there are procedures in place for consulting with, and supporting, employees on changes in the organisation, to management structures and working arrangements at both a Trust and school level.
- Encourage initiatives and events that promote health and wellbeing.

Managers and Supervisory staff will:

- Empower teachers to decide upon the best approaches for their pupils.
- The school will ensure there is a clear system of sanctions which is applied consistently so that staff do not struggle with pupils.
- Be very visible within the school.
- Have an open-door Senior Leadership – no concern is ever too small.
- Review workload in line with DfE recommendations.
- Treat individuals reporting to them with consideration, dignity and promote a culture of mutual respect in the teams they manage.
- Not permit unacceptable behaviour and will take decisive action when such issues are brought to their attention.
- Ensure that there is good communication within their team and that there are opportunities for individuals to raise concerns about their work, and to seek advice from HR at an early stage where concerns are raised.
- Adhere to sound management principles as set out in the EPT's policies and procedures.
- Attend training as appropriate in order to increase their awareness of the causes and effects of workrelated stress.
- Promote an open and honest approach to mental wellbeing.
- Co-operate with HR to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for roles or working practices that may give rise to work related stress.
- Encourage their employees to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the EPT to promote wellbeing and more effective working.
- Act in the interests of all their colleagues where performance by a member of staff may cause stress to their colleagues.

All Employees will:

- Treat colleagues and all other persons with whom they interact during their work with consideration, respect and dignity.
- Be visible in, and around, the school, ready to support colleagues when required.
- Co-operate with the EPT's efforts to implement wellbeing policy initiatives, attending briefings and raise their own awareness of the cause of stress on health.

- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- Take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by adopting healthy lifestyles.
- Take responsibility for their own development of skills as one of the means to enable them to work effectively in their team and so reduce the risk if stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, and therefore helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.
- Show tolerance of, and respect for, the rights of others.
- Undertake training to upskills and support their CPD.

Human Resources will:

- Provide advice to managers and employees on best practice in relation to HR management.
- Develop policies and procedures as required.
- Ensure that there are arrangements to communicate the content of the EPT's HR policies, procedures and toolkits or guidance to managers and employees.
- Ensure that there are arrangements to support individuals who are experiencing stress, including referring to the Employee Assistance Programme, Wellbeing Services or Occupational Health Support where appropriate.
- Ensure there are arrangements to support managers who are experiencing problems with employee performance.
- Seek the views of employees on wellbeing and stress management arrangements by using employee surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.
- Make available the stress indicator toolkit based on the Health and Safety Executives Stress Management Standards.
- Support with risk assessment advice.
- Organise workshops and training to promote events as requested / required by the Schools.

RISK ASSESSMENT

EPT wide level

The stress Indicator Toolkit should be used as part of the school's risk assessment to establish whether the EPT policies and procedures are sufficient to enable compliance with the HSE's Management Standards in relation to the management of work-related stress.

Where gaps or issues in arrangement or practices are identified, escalation should be to the Headteacher who will seek advice from HR.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR WELLBEING AND STRESS PREVENTION THROUGH GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

These include the following:

- Clear recruitment and selection procedures.

- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that the right person is recruited for the job and has the autonomy to undertake the duties.
- Agreed knowledge, skills and behaviours for managers to be cascaded to all levels of management and supervision.
- Training and development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks / duties required of them.
- Procedures for managing performance.
- Procedures for assessing capability, absence management and return to work procedures to ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness.
- Suitable adaptations for disability.
- Harassment and anti-bullying procedures.
- Procedures for communicating with employees on the work of the EPT and issues affecting their work.
- Flexible working arrangements, where possible, and contact days with employees on maternity /paternity leave.
- Opportunities for promoting employee mental wellbeing.
- Fostering a culture of participation.
- Equality and fairness.

CONSULTATION

Employee surveys will be used to gather feedback on wellbeing and the views of individuals will be at a local level through stress risk assessments.

Recognised trade unions under the provisions of Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 will also be consulted in the development of local stress initiatives and invited to be involved on the delivery where appropriate.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE WELLBEING STATEMENT

The Employee Wellbeing Statement will be reviewed every three years by HR.

USEFUL LINKS AND SUPPORT

For HSE Stress Management standards:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/

For EPT HR:

HR@ept-uk.com or call 01254 790026

For Simply Health:

https://www.simplyhealth.co.uk

APPENDIX B - STRESS MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE AND MANAGER GUIDANCE

1.   **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

What should I do if I feel that I am suffering from stress?

Try to identify the causes and what you can do to make things better. Ideally, tell your manager at an early stage. If you consider your stress is work-related, this will give the manager an opportunity to help and prevent the situation getting worse. Even if the stress is not work-related, your manager may be able to help.

- Many employees are reluctant to talk about stress at work. It is important to remember that stress is not a weakness and can happen to anyone.   This is an issue both you and your line manager should take seriously.
- If you consider that the cause of your stress is your line manager, it is important that you raise your concerns with another appropriate manager who can assist you. Alternatively, you should raise your concerns with your employee representative.   Occupational Health, Human Resources, Health & Safety or Trade Union Representative.
- The EPT actively encourages staff to discuss their concerns with an appropriate manager at the earliest opportunity to ensure these are addressed promptly and effectively.

What support is available to you?

To help you and your line manager determine whether work related stress is an issue for an individual or team, the EPT has adopted a stress indicator tool in the form of a basic questionnaire from the HSE. The questionnaire consists of 35 one-line questions, based on an individual's experience of work within a team or department.

- A stress risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your workplace, could cause stress. Your manager will need to:

   o identify any potential stress "risk factors" within your workplace/activities; consider whether suitable controls are in place to manage stress; and.
   o decide whether further action is required
- Where further action is necessary, your manager will need to complete an Action Plan. You are encouraged to work with and alongside your manager throughout the process.
- You will be asked to complete the stress indicator tool. It will be explained to you why you have been asked to complete the questionnaire. Make sure you give open and honest answers. This will help you and your manger to develop and implement any plans which may help you manage stress. When the questionnaire has been completed you should give the questionnaire to your manager who will analyse it and discuss the findings with you at a subsequent meeting within a mutually agreed time frame. You may be asked to complete the questionnaire after a period of absence to help identify what preventative measures can be taken to avoid any recurrence of stress-related illness.
- You can complete the stress indicator tool yourself at any time. The results should be discussed with your line manager so that he/she can act upon findings, e.g. complete a stress risk assessment (if required). The completed stress indicator tool should be given to your line manager within a reasonable time frame, e.g. 5 working days. You should work together to decide and record what actions are required.

What additional support is available for you?

The EPT has purchased a Simply Health scheme which is available to all employees and completely confidential. This employee assistance programme offers support to employees to identify and resolve personal concerns and issues that may affect their performance in their job. This may include health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal issues. Simply Health acts as a gateway to a wide range of services and support functions. The use of the Simply Health service by an employee is voluntary and the vast majority of employees who use the service do so through self referrals.

The EPT's Occupational Health Service can provide advice to managers and staff who have concerns about the effect of work-related stress. Staff who are medically qualified and/or professionally qualified in Occupational Health can provide valuable advice and assistance.

The EPT has procured external workplace mediation, which supports a professional and amicable working relationship.

The EPT has purchased E-Learning for every employee aimed specifically at Health, Safety & Wellbeing and includes:

- o Mental Health in the workplace – Overview. o Mental Health in the workplace - Good Practice. o Stress in the workplace. o The Resilient Mindset.
- o Under Pressure.

The EPT HR team will also assist to provide advice and guidance to employees on matters relating to stress management. In particular, support will be offered relating to completion of suitable and sufficient risk assessments.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council offers a wellbeing service for people who live and / or work within the Borough. The Wellbeing Service may be appropriate in order to support employees with a range of issues or concerns. The referral can be made by the Manager on the employee's behalf or the employee can refer themselves. The service is fully confidential and can be accessed by contacting the Wellbeing Service directly on 01254 682037, wellbeing@blackburn.gov.uk or www.refreshbwd.com./change GPs can also refer employees to the service.

Many employees are members of established Trade Unions or Professional Associations. These organisations have recognised the prevalence of stress amongst employees and have set up a range of support mechanisms, such as help and advice lines and written guidance material.

Voluntary bodies can provide information and advice or even a sympathetic ear. Local Health Authorities, through Health Promotion or information services, Citizens Advice Bureaus, Social Services Departments etc. will be able to provide a list of local groups and associations. These groups can offer assistance on a wide range of issues from bereavement to marriage guidance and counselling.

2. **MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY**

Knowing when to take action. Stress can be difficult to recognise. As well as leading to anxiety and depression it can have a significant impact on your physical health. Managers should be:

- Alert to changes in behaviour e.g. worsening relationships with colleagues, withdrawal, indecisiveness, frequent absence, accidents, inability to delegate, a general deterioration in performance or increased use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.

Responsive, e.g. if an employee raises concerns about being unable to cope, or about feeling stressed, they must be taken seriously and acted upon.

- Aware of the types of illness attributable to stress at work, see Appendix 1 – Recognising the warning signs of stress.
- Aware of the impact that any work-related changes may have on their employees.

- Aware of possible causes of stress under the following areas:

  - Control – how much say employees have over their work.
  - Support – the encouragement and resources provided by management.
  - Demands – workload, work patterns and work environment.
  - Relationships – such as having to deal with conflict or unacceptable behaviour.
  - Change – how organisational change is managed.
  - Role – dealing with conflicting roles/priorities.

3.   **TOOLS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THE MANAGEMENT OF STRESS**

To assist managers in the management of work-related stress, the EPT uses an HSE developed self-evaluation – Stress Indicator Tool and Stress Risk Assessment Form (including example control measures), based on the HSE Management Standards. The tools can be used in two ways:

- To identify, analyse and reduce the potential sources(s) of work-related stress at an individual employee level.
- To enable managers to complete a stress audit on an entire Department, location or team to help them identify whether a group of individuals is suffering from the signs of stress. The results should be used to identify possible problems within the workplace, why they are occurring and then find a way to solve them. This process may involve the completion of a stress risk assessment.

These tools demonstrate good practice and encourage employers, employees and representatives to work together to tackle the key causes of stress.

The stress indicator tool is a simple questionnaire which will allow individuals to perform a self-assessment and identify possible areas of stress. Individuals/teams that appear to be at risk from work related stress should be encouraged to complete the stress indicator tool and give it to their manager for consideration. Managers can examine completed questionnaires in order to identify possible sources of stress within the work environment.

The self-indicator tool should be completed:

- Following a significant change to individual/team roles.
- Where employees have raised health/work related issues (including sickness absence notification).
- As part of an employee's annual appraisal review.
- Following a period of stress related sick leave.
- Following an increase in sick leave (individual or team).
- Following a reduction in performance (individual or team).
- After a Personal Development Appraisal (PD) or 'one to one' where issues relating to stress are raised by the employee.

- Following team meetings where issues relating to stress are raised by employees.

The stress indicator tool contains 35 questions. The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Managers should discuss the purpose with the individual/team concerned. The venue for this meeting should be suitable and private.

A scoring system will enable managers to identify potential areas of concern. Managers must:
   Analyse the results of the completed stress indicator tool.

- Identify responses that are ticked in boxes with a value of 3 or lower.
- Identify the possible causes.
- Take appropriate action. See below. Table 1 – Action to be taken. It is important that managers discuss the results of the indicators with relevant employee/groups of employees.
- When an employee completes a stress indicator questionnaire and gives it to their manager for review, it is expected that the manager will analyse the questionnaire and discuss the findings with the employee at a subsequent meeting within a mutually agreed timeframe
- Before carrying out the stress risk assessment, managers should gather relevant information to help identify any specific work-related issues:

   - Stress Indicator Tool
   - Stress Risk Assessment form (note: considering any existing stress assessments and /or control measures).
   - Other generic, specific or dynamic risk assessments.
   - Other – e.g. exit interview reports, feedback from appraisals, one to ones, sickness absence records, timekeeping, performance related issues.

Scores	Action to be taken
Red	A Stress Risk Assessment must be completed as soon as possible. Are the ticks in boxes 1 or 2 clustered around a specific stressor/risk factor? It may be appropriate to focus on the same risk factor when completing Stress Risk Assessment Form to identify possible controls.
Amber	Indicates potential for improvement. If the completed self-indicator tool has ticks in box 3 managers should consider how the identified areas are being controlled and if a Stress Risk Assessment is needed. Discuss any issues/concerns identified and consider what assistance can be provided. If required, seek advice from Occupational Health, Human Resources or Trade Unions.
Green	No significant issues that require immediate action. Manager must discuss the results of the self-indicator tool with the individual and continue to review as appropriate.

The EPT Stress Risk Assessment Form has been developed by adopting the principles of the HSE management standards. Some specific hazards identified within the form are directly related to the possible causes.

The risk assessment of stress at work should be completed in five clear steps:

Identify the hazards

- Identify possible stressors (consider the HSE key causes of stress – Demand, Control, Support, Relationships, Role Change). Use the data that has been gathered – sickness absence reports, exit interview reports, feedback from employee surveys, feedback from Personal Development Appraisals (PDAs) and one to one discussion.
- See contents of the EPT's Stress Risk Assessment Form for the adopted HSE Management Standards and known hazards.

Identify who might be harmed and how

The risk assessment will often be specifically focussed on an individual/team/department.

Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

- Can the hazard be completely removed? If not, how can it be controlled?
- Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. This may determine whether further action is required to reduce the risk.
- The Stress Risk Assessment Form – including example control measures, can be used to identify possible controls.

Record your findings and implement them

- You must keep a record of any work you have completed on the risk assessment form.
- Share your significant findings/action plans with senior management.
- Communicate the outcome to your employees.
- Decide how you are going to review the results.
- Complete and communicate the Action Plan (i.e. part C of the Risk Assessment Form). The action plan is a key part of the risk assessment and must include details of the action to be taken, names of the responsible person and reasonable time frames for each action to be achieved.

Review the risk assessment and update if necessary

- Monitor any changes you make to ensure that they are having the effect you intended.   The risk assessment should be a document that continually evolves.
- Review what you have done when you make major changes in your workplace.
- Ensure you have arranged a date to review the assessment.

Managers should, unless they have or could have reasonably discovered evidence to the contrary, assume that their employees are mentally capable of withstanding reasonable pressures at work. Contrary evidence might include past stress-related illness.

Taking action

Any grievances or concerns raised by an employee should be responded to promptly and relevant advice sought and acted upon where necessary e.g. from Human Resources, Health & Safety and Occupational Health.

4. **INVESTIGATING THE CAUSE/TAKING ACTION**

Managers should begin by asking whether anything specific is causing stress or anxiety. If the stress appears to be work-related, managers should agree a way to address the causes and symptoms sing the stress risk assessment, ensure a plan of action is put in place promptly. Regular meetings with

the member of staff are advisable to review the plan, and to obtain feedback on the progress to help resolve any issues.

Managers should refer staff to Occupational Health Unit should they feel that specialist assistance is required.

5.   **RETURN TO WORK AFTER STRESS RELATED ILLNESS**

It is imperative that when an employee returns to work following a stress related illness, managers discuss their return to work arrangements with them. Managers should also record and monitor any agreed actions on the stress risk assessment form and indicate support mechanisms which have been agreed upon. The assessment should be regularly reviewed by XXXXX as this will help to ensure that employees are receiving the required level of support. Managers must always consider liaising with the EPT's Occupational Health Provider to obtain specialist advice and to ensure the employee is appropriately supported during their return to work.

6.   **RECORD KEEPING**

Managers should keep factual records of all cases of stress-related illness, such as dates of discussions and meetings, issues raised, completed indicator tools, risk assessments, any suggestions made by the employee, Human Resources, Occupational Health etc. that could not be agreed, a reason they could not be agreed, actions agreed, dates the situation was reviewed and outcomes thereof. A copy of all documents relating to the assessment of stress must be retained in the employee's personnel file.

If an assessment is carried out on a team/department, appropriate records should be kept by the Department/manager concerned. These records should be made available where a change in post/role occurs. For example, if any aspects of the action plan are outstanding or to demonstrate work previously completed.

7.   **TRAINING**

Training for managers to assist them in recognising and dealing with employees affected by work related stress has been identified as a key issue across the UK. Therefore, the EPT has acquired training for Managing Stress and supporting a resilient mindset.

8.   **SOURCES OF HELP AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

Human resources will advise, support and guide the organisation, line managers and employees on matters relating to stress management. HR will facilitate any stress related training and will ensure appropriate supporting policies are in place and reviewed. Please contact the EPT HR Service.

Occupational health will assess those referred and provide or facilitate appropriate treatments. They will also provide advice, support and guidance to the EPT and its managers on matters relating to stress management. Please contact the HR Service if you require any further information.

Trade unions - many employees are members of established Trade Union or Professional Associations. These organisations have recognised the prevalence of stress amongst employees and have set up a range of support mechanisms, such as help and advice lines and written guidance material.

Voluntary bodies can provide information and advice or even a sympathetic ear. Local Health Authorities, Health Promotion or information services, Citizens Advice Bureaus, Mental Wellbeing charities (such as MIND or the Big White Wall), Social Service Departments etc will be able to provide

a list of local groups and associations. These groups offer assistance on a wide range of issues from bereavement to marriage guidance, debt issues and counselling.

Health services for an individual the first 'professional' point of contact is likely to be a General

Practitioner (GP). Access to specialist support such as clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors and others is via a GP.

Additionally, schools may want to consider the following initiatives:

- School wellbeing champions.
- Termly wellbeing initiatives.
- Healthy snacks i.e. "Fresh Fruit Fridays".
- Termly challenges – with the winners of the challenges choosing a charity for the school to support.
- Smoking cessation groups during lunch breaks.
- Drink more water campaigns, purchase school branded water bottles.
- Keep in touch days for maternity / paternity / adoption or allocated buddy from the departments for long term sickness (if appropriate).
- Workload reviews.