



# 'Managing stress and promoting wellbeing at work'

## Vision, values, wellbeing, leadership, mental health

White Trees Independent school is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for its staff and recognises the importance of fostering psychological as well as physical well-being.

This commitment arises from White Trees duty of care to all its staff, and more generally the recognition that a safe and healthy working environment contributes to the motivation, job satisfaction, performance, and creativity of all staff.

Specifically, White Trees is committed to the promotion of health, to the prevention of work-related stress and to the provision of support to any member of staff who may suffer stress.

White Trees aims to minimise the risk of stress through a risk management process involving the identification, assessment and implementation of control measures to workplace stressors.

- White Trees has an EAP in place in which staff have 24/7 access assistance.
- A wellbeing team: Mental Health first aid for adults / pupils, social and staff wellbeing and staff voice coordinator

**W**onderful  
**E**xcellent  
**L**ovely  
**C**lever  
**O**utstanding  
**M**agnificent  
**E**nthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

To be reviewed at Governors September 2021

Created by the Wellness Team July 2020

<b>Policy owner</b>	White Trees School	<b>Last review</b>	August 2023
<b>Date Created</b>	January 2020	<b>Next review</b>	August 2024

# Preventing Stress

Take stress prevention measures such as:

- Fostering a co-operative and supportive environment
- Ensuring good communications within teams
- Ensuring adequate preparation for new roles and responsibilities through risk assessment and training
- Enabling staff to report excessive workloads, interpersonal pressures and symptoms of stress without fear of discrimination
- Recognising early signs of stress in employees and acting to provide appropriate intervention
- Supporting staff in recovering from stress-related illnesses and managing the return to work after any period of sick leave so that stress does not recur.

# Detecting and addressing stress

- To take reasonable action to combat and prevent workplace stressors identified through risk assessment or those raised by members of staff
- To increase general awareness of stress and methods to prevent and combat harmful, excessive workplace stressors in various ways, including training and health promotion initiatives
- To consult with union safety representatives on proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress
- To assist staff in managing stress in others and themselves
- To manage problems that do occur and provide a confidential referral service
- To manage the return to work of those who have been absent from work with stress related problems

# Monitoring effectiveness

- To review risk assessments in accordance with best practice so as to monitor risk management to prevent stress.
- To monitor, investigate and evaluate stress indicators, such as excessive sickness absence or high labour turnover

# Legislative influences

There are no specific laws on controlling stress at work, but broad health and safety law applies:

- Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees;

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## White Trees School Managing Stress at Work Policy

- Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers have a duty to assess the health and safety risks to which their employees are exposed at work. Such an assessment should include an analysis of the risks to employees' health caused by stress at work.
- Under the Equality Act 2010 employers have a duty not to discriminate against employees on account of their disability as defined under the Act. This involves making reasonable adjustments to the workplace or to the way the work is done, if the existing working arrangements or physical features place the disabled person concerned at a substantial disadvantage. Ill health arising from, or exacerbated by, stress at work may constitute a disability under the Act.

Ill health resulting from stress caused at work has to be treated in the same way as ill health due to physical causes in the workplace.

This means that employers have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that health is not put at risk through excessive and sustained levels of stress arising from the way work is organised, or from the day-to-day demands placed on their workforce.

All staff have an individual responsibility to minimise the risk of any kind of harm to themselves and their colleagues and to co-operate with White Trees in its efforts to manage work-related stress.

Case law has established that, unless the employer knows otherwise, it can be assumed that employees are mentally capable of withstanding reasonable pressure from work.

Employers are not under a legal duty to prevent ill-health caused by stress due to problems outside work, e.g. financial or domestic worries. However, non-work pressures can make it difficult for staff to cope with work and, consequently, their performance at work might suffer. Therefore, being understanding to staff in this position is in the employer's best interest.

## We ensure that:

- All staff have access to a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme, wherein they can discuss any stressors they have either in or out of work
- All staff have access to and are aware of the wellbeing team. This consisting of a Mental health first aider, a staff wellbeing and social coordinator, staff voice coordinator and a Mental health first aider for the pupils
- Staff feel supported and have access to the leadership team to discuss their stressors and worries
- Staff have opportunities to join in with a variety of activities aimed at their wellbeing
- Staff will have a yearly appraisal to discuss targets.
- Staff will be provided with a supervision with a member of the leadership team 3 times a year.
- Staff will have access to contact numbers for various agencies to provide further support.

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