

Isle of Wight Council
**MODEL WORKPLACE
WELL-BEING POLICY FOR
SCHOOLS**
December 2011

1 Document Information

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Author:	Claire Shand, Head of Human Resources Human Resources, Resources Directorate ✉ claire.shand@iow.gov.uk ☎ (01983) 821000 ext 6283
Sponsor:	Davina Fiore, Deputy Director Resources Resources Directorate ✉ davina.fiore@iow.gov.uk ☎ (01983) 821000 ext 6209
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3 Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to providing a working environment and management practices that promote the good health and well-being of all its employees thus reducing related costs and the occurrence of absence.

4 Well-being Strategy

4.1 The Governing Body’s ‘duty of care’ towards employees, legislation and case law, require them to manage and safeguard the physical and psychological well-being of the school’s employees.

4.2 To help meet these objectives, the School has adopted:

- the **attendance management policy and procedure** which provides a framework with clear milestones enabling managers effectively to manage attendance;
- the **health and safety policy** which provides a framework for, and measurement of, safe places of work; and
- the **workplace well-being policy** which focuses on the School’s obligations to managing stress and mental ill health.

It is vital that managers be fully aware of these policies and their role in managing healthy workplaces.

4.3 Managers within the school will need to have a clear understanding of the causes of absence in order to formulate strategies that address non-attendance (sickness absence). The main causes of absence can be viewed as four distinct areas:

Causes of Absence:

<p>Health and lifestyle factors</p> <p>Genuine illness / poor health</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Smoking</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Excessive use of alcohol</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lack of exercise</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Body weight</p>	<p>Workplace factor</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Working patterns</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Health and safety concerns</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Travel times</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Excessive hours</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Safe place of work</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Relationships at work</p>
<p>Attitudinal and stress factors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Job satisfaction</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Career satisfaction</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Intention to leave</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Organisational commitment</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Stress</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Absence ‘culture’</p>	<p>Domestic and relationship factors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Divorce, separation</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Number of children under 16</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lack of flexible working arrangements</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Caring responsibilities</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Financial worries</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Bereavement</p>

4.4 Clear and consistently applied procedures play an important part in managing attendance. However, these mechanisms do not necessarily address some of the underlying causes of sickness absence. It is in some of these areas where prevention may be more effective than cure.

4.5 Specific areas for preventative action by managers should include:

- health promotion.
- recruitment and screening procedures.
- flexible working arrangements.
- improving the physical working environment.
- job design.
- managing career expectations through the personal development review process.
- building trust and loyalty.
- monitoring of working hours.
- monitoring of individual workloads.
- prevention of accidents and occupational ill health.
- consultation with staff on work-related issues that may affect their health.

Advice and guidance in all these areas is available through existing policies or from HR in conjunction with the Occupational Health Service.

4.6 The school through the Council has arrangements in place for staff to access a confidential counselling service. Any member of staff who may be experiencing problems at work or at home may make use of this service.

NB: Please note this is only applicable if the school opts in to this service. Alternatively the school may have an alternative provision available.

5 The Need for a Workplace Well-being Policy

Promoting and protecting the well-being of the workforce is important to the Governing Body. Many factors in the workplace influence the well-being of individual employees, departments or the school as a whole. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect people's well-being at work will have a wide range of benefits, both for the individual and the School.

The Governing Body will continue to promote and work towards performance improvement and efficiency, getting the very best from our people, retaining and attracting the people who are best skilled and well motivated.

Well-being in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved well-being at work. Addressing workplace well-being can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce the risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems, and assist them in remaining at work.

To fulfil this commitment the Governing Body and Headteacher will:

- seek to identify potential circumstances that may affect the well-being of staff and conduct risk assessments.
- increase awareness and understanding of how to promote well-being at work and the avoidance of absence.
- ensure advice and guidance is available to managers in dealing with well-being concerns of staff.

In turn, staff will be encouraged to take a responsible approach to health and well-being issues, including assisting those conducting risk assessments of stress in the workplace.

6 Definitions

One of the main concerns in promoting the well-being of staff is to encourage positive mental health. In doing so, it is recognised that positive action must be taken to reduce the occurrence of workplace stress. The Health and Safety Executive define stress as being “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”. However it is important that the difference between “pressure” and “stress” be acknowledged: pressure does not necessarily give rise to stress and pressure can sometimes motivate. While acknowledging that pressure and stress may also be caused by a range of issues external to the workplace, the Governing Body’s prime responsibility in this is to address work-related stress.

7 Policy Objectives

The policy aims are to:

- provide advice and information about minimising risks to health.
- outline specific responsibilities.
- educate staff about the causes, effects and management of stress.

To achieve these objectives managers will:

- carry out risk assessments to identify health and well-being issues related to work.
- implement appropriate control measures to minimise risks to health and well-being.
- monitor and audit arrangements in an effort to improve the quality of the working environment.
- raise awareness of the causes, signs and symptoms of stress and stress-related illness, and of the ways in which the school supports individuals.
- ensure they are equipped to respond to staff well-being concerns.
- educate employees in techniques for recognising and coping with potentially stressful situations.
- provide information about appropriate welfare services to all employees, including the availability of any employee assistance programme.

The following have been identified as appropriate measures of employee performance and well-being for the purposes of managing health and well-being

- absences will be recorded and monitored for data analysis.
- exit questionnaires will be used and followed up with appropriate exit interviews when staff leave employment.
- use of the Council's Occupational Health and counselling services will be monitored without breaching confidentiality.

8 Well-being Responsibilities

Headteachers / Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring:

- the engagement of management at all levels in the importance of managing staff well-being.
- allocation of appropriate resources to enable line managers to deliver the agreed strategy proactively, the use of a counselling service and health referrals for expert opinion.
- active implementation of the principles and behaviours contributing to positive staff well-being.
- alertness to employees' personal circumstances and offering additional support where appropriate to members of staff experiencing risks to their well-being which derive from outside work, e.g. bereavement or separation.
- ensuring effective communication between management and staff.
- in particular, ensuring effective communication where there are organisational and / or procedural changes which give rise to increased levels of stress in the workplace.
- ensuring that bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated (NB please refer to Dignity at Work Policy).

Headteachers / Senior Managers / Line Managers will:

- request HR to provide advice and guidance with stress risk assessments, if required, when it is identified that an employee is suffering from stress or where there is a perceived risk of stress and ensure that any reasonable measures identified are implemented.
- ensure that employees are consulted at all times over all aspects of their employment that may cause stress or impact on their health and well-being when changes affecting them are planned.
- ensure that employees receive appropriate training and resources to carry out their duties.
- ensure that staff are provided with appropriate development opportunities to manage absence in accordance with the Absence Management Strategy.
- consider workloads to ensure jobs are realistic and manageable.
- monitor working hours, overtime and holidays to encourage individuals to take breaks as required by legislation.
- familiarise themselves with the Dignity at Work Policy concerning bullying and harassment and ensure that employees are aware that this is not tolerated in the workplace.
- recognise that employees may have experiences in their personal lives that may make them vulnerable to pressures at work and which may have a temporary influence on their work performance e.g. health issues or personal circumstances.
- treat all discussions with employees around personal issues as confidential unless it is necessary to involve others to deal with the issue and the employee gives written agreement for disclosure.
- where appropriate discuss issues around stress with the Health and Safety Liaison Officer, Human Resources (HR) Advisor, or Trade Union representative.

Human Resources will, if required:

- provide advice and guidance to the Governing Body and / or Headteacher on the Workplace Well-being Policy.
- provide guidance to the Governing Body and / or Headteacher on the implementation of the policy to include the appropriate management of individual cases.
- through the Health, Safety and Welfare Team advise, guide and support departments in carrying out stress risk assessments where required.
- through the Health, Safety and Welfare Team provide support to employees experiencing

- stress and advise them and their line manager of the support available.
- raise awareness amongst all staff of the importance of work / life balance.

Employees will:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety at work and co-operate with management in any measures taken to reduce stress.
- be committed to avoiding causing health and well-being problems for other employees, including acting in accordance with the principles of the Dignity at Work Policy.
- be proactive in identifying occasions when they may be suffering from health and well-being problems, either work-related, or due to external factors, and alert their line manager to these where appropriate.

Trade Unions will:

- work with the school to raise awareness and promote the importance of health and well-being in the workplace.
- where aware of concerns, identify these to the school or HR and work with the school to resolve the issues.

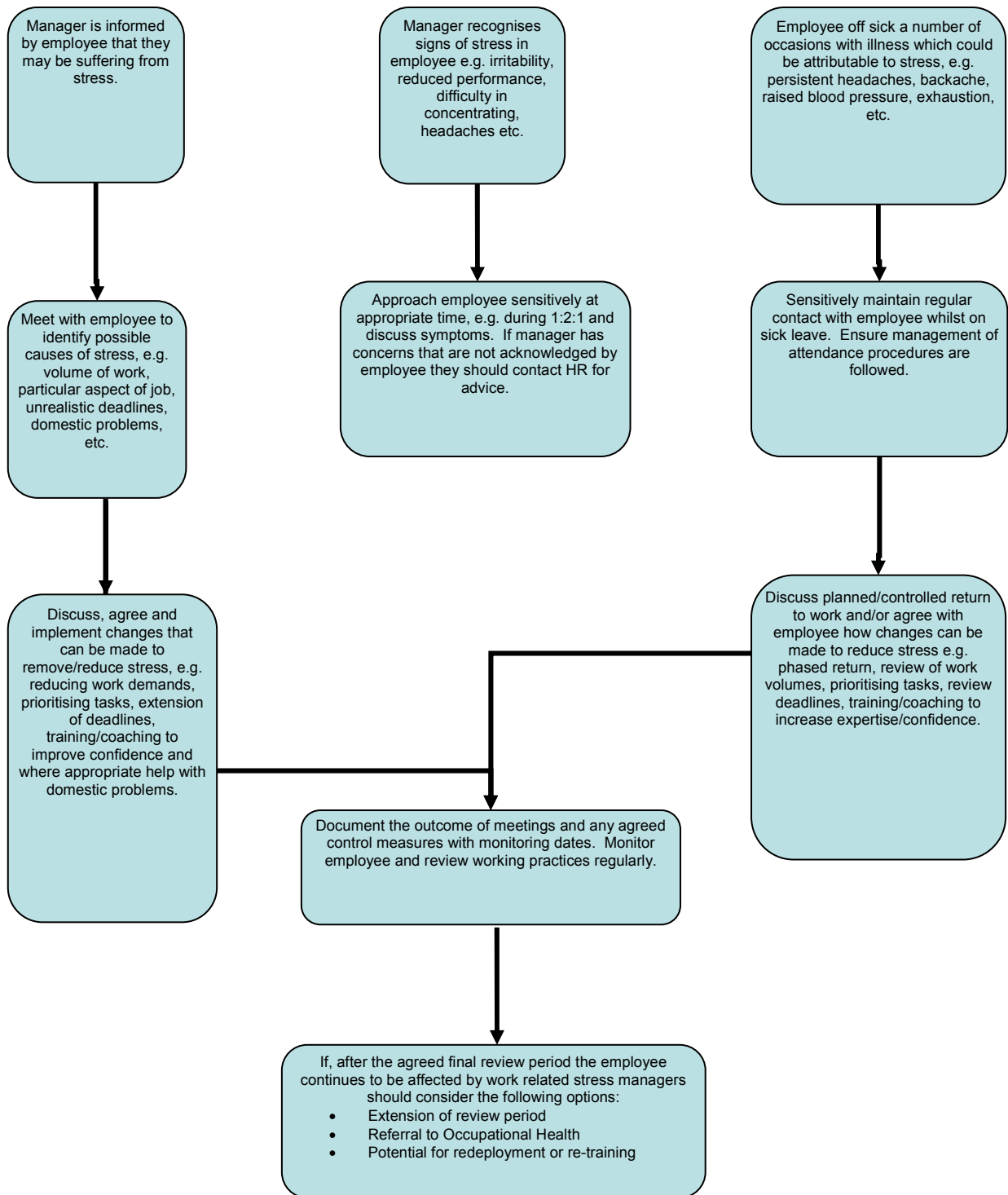
9 Related Documents

- Dignity at Work Policy – School Based Staff <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/dignity-at-work-school-based-staff>
- Personal Development Review / Performance Management Review
- Attendance Management Policy and Procedure – School Based Staff <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/attendance-management-school-based-staff>
- Health and Safety Policy <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/health-and-safety-manual-1-1-introduction>
- Sustainable Community Strategy - *Eco-Island* www.eco-island.org.uk
- Corporate Plan www.iwight.com/council/documents
<http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-1-of-3>
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures Sections 1, 2, and 3 <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-2-of-3>
<http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-3-of-3>
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards www.4lscb.org.uk

10 Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

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| • HR | Human Resources |
| • HSE | Health and Safety Executive |

11 Appendix B – Flowchart for Managers



12 Appendix C – Flowchart for Employees

