



Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) & Wellbeing Policy

Appendix 1: Support for Staff

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1. Things the school does to support staff wellbeing at Thameside

Teaching and learning, planning and curriculum

- We trust teachers to decide the best approaches for their pupils.
- The School Development plan is contributed to by all parties to help ensure a clear vision for staff and the school.
- Use of collaborative working with partner teachers.
- Schemes of work are provided for some subjects to support in the teaching of these areas of the curriculum.
- PPA alternates between the morning and afternoon, giving teachers the equivalent to a whole day out of class a fortnight.
- No pressure to 'put on a show' in lessons: A culture of typicality is reinforced by no lesson gradings.
- A positive and engaging environment means that pupils are eager to learn.
- Support from specialists when teaching
- Teachers are all provided with a 'Catch up Day' which they can take at any time during the academic year.
- A rota system means that adults all 'share the load' with break duties and other responsibilities

Behaviour

- Everyone has the highest expectations of behaviour, with ALL staff reinforcing those expectations.
- Therapeutic techniques are used to support behaviour management techniques.
- SLT are visible and offer support when managing more challenging behaviour.
- SLT and other school staff run 'positive play' at lunchtimes so any children struggling to regulate their behaviour on the playground can attend these sessions.
- Children will always have a familiar adult in their classroom, whether this be a TA, 1:1 or teacher to ensure consistency when managing behaviour.

Assessment and reporting to parents

- Marking and feedback guidelines support the use of conferencing where conferencing is used to give the children verbal feedback during the lesson.
- Whole class feedback means that foundation subject books do not need to be marked individually at the end of the lesson.
- Minimal data entries.
- Data is never entered more than once.
- One report is written each year for parents which reports on achievement with a focus on Maths, English and a General Comment.
- Parents evenings take place twice a year and targets are set and shared during the meeting.
- Teachers do not receive emails directly from parents, unless they opt to share their work email address with parents/carers.

Professional Development

- CPD offered in line with targets that are set during appraisals.
- One staff meeting per week.
- Time for staff to put new things into action.
- Non-hierarchical approach to professional development.
- Support from in house experts/leaders in all areas of the curriculum and education.
- Targeted plans for teachers who need support.
- Comprehensive support for ECTs, with dedicated mentors and regular meetings.
- Use of 'Blinks' to provide teachers with feedback but not sit in through the entirety of a lesson.
- Use of 10 minute observations by teachers and TAs to give them the opportunity to observe others in the school and learn from their practices.
- Performance Management is tailored to individual needs. We begin from the assumption that everybody will be awarded a pay increment unless they haven't done all they can to improve pupil outcomes.
- Teacher self-evaluation of books, takes away the pressure of a scrutiny.
- TA training to keep them up to date with any changes, is carried out by SLT during the school day.
- Weekly support staff meetings mean that all staff are briefed on what is going on in the school and can ask their line manager anything they need clarification on.
- Subject leaders are given a day of non-contact time a big term in order to allow them time to manage/monitor their subjects.

We work hard, play hard

- There are no prizes for looking busy or staying late – work in a way that suits you and make sure you make time for yourself and your family.
- No expectation of answering emails outside of school opening hours.
- We are constantly streamlining all systems and processes so they take less time.
- We survey staff to get their honest opinions about how to improve.
- A culture of peer-to-peer praise (Texts/Emails of thanks and recognition, Values postcards)
- Open door to a member of SLT – no concern is ever too small.
- Regular staff social events at lunch times and after school.
- Seasonal events for everyone to show their less serious sides e.g., World Book Day, staff pantomime.

2. Useful Websites

- Acas www.acas.org.uk
Information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace
- Alcoholics Anonymous www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to recover from alcoholism.
- Carers UK www.carersuk.org
The voice of carers
- CBI www.cbi.org.uk
Guidance to businesses on managing stress at work
- Department of Health www.gov.uk/government/organisation/department-of-health
Information on dealing with stress and mental health problems, including the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com
The commission is working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.
- Gingerbread www.gingerbread.org.uk
Gingerbread and One Parent Families have now merged to provide better support and a bigger voice to 1.8 million lone parents and their children throughout England and Wales.
- HSE <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>
Information on the stress management standards
- Local Government Employers www.local.gov.uk
Guidance for all councils on stress prevention and management
- Mindful Employer www.mindfulemployer.net
Information and guidance on managing stress and mental health in the workplace
- NASUWT www.nasuwt.org.uk
Information on a whole range of issues related to stress and wellbeing
- NHS 111 <http://www.nhs.uk/111>
National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters
- Princess Royal Trust for Carers <http://www.carers.org>
Here to improve carers' lives by fighting for equality and recognition for carers.
- Relate <http://www.relate.org.uk>
UK's largest provider of relationship counselling and sex therapy.
- Samaritans <http://www.samaritans.org>
Offers confidential, non-judgemental support to individuals.

- Teacher Support Network
<http://teachersupport.info>
- Work Life Balance Centre <http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org>
Exists to help people restore control over their workload and working lives we enable them to cut down overworking and so make new decisions about how they spend their time.
- World Health Organisation http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/en/oehstress.pdf
Publication on work organisation and [stress](#)

3. Useful resources

Wellness Action Plans

Wellness action plans (WAPs) are an easy, practical way of helping you to support your own mental health at work. If you are a manager, they're also a useful tool in helping you to support the mental health of your team members. [Mind](#) has guidance and templates to get you started, for both employees and line managers. Everyone can complete a WAP; you don't need to have a mental health problem in order to feel the benefits and it can be used to help us identify what keeps us well at work, as well as to facilitate a conversation around support or adjustments between and manager and employee.

Guide for people working in a workplace: <https://www.mind.org.uk/media/12145/mind-wellness-action-plan-workplace.pdf>

This is for those working in a physical workplace. We've designed it to help you reflect on what supports your mental health and wellbeing at work.

Guide for line managers: <https://www.mind.org.uk/media/13262/mind-wellness-action-plan-linemanagers.pdf>

We also have a guide for line managers to help you implement Wellness Action Plans across your team and start conversations about mental health. The guide also provides useful information on workplace adjustments and signposting.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - Where to find it...

Free and confidential advice on a range of topics, including personal finances, stress and work-life balance can also be accessed via the [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)*](#) by visiting the website <https://healthassuredap.co.uk/> or by calling them on **0800 028 0199**.

On **Instagram** - there is also The Mental Health Hour - a monthly Q&A with a counsellor which takes place at 12pm on the last Thursday of each month

On **Spotify** - there are a number of playlists (from Cosy Self-Care to Stress Relief to Mood Boost and more) and podcasts where different mental health topics are discussed

You can download the Instagram app and the Spotify app from the Google Play Store or the Apple Store.

Health Assured App – You can access Health Assured's online services and wellbeing tools by downloading the **My Healthy Advantage** app from the Google Play Store or the Apple Store.

When you download the app you will be asked to provide Reading Borough Council's unique code: **MHA179566**

You will then be asked to create an account (use a personal email address and password) and, once you have done that, you will be able to access all the online services provided by Health Assured.

Stress Awareness

The things that cause us stress are different for different people and people experience and deal with stress in different ways. A small amount of stress can be useful. It can motivate you to take action and get tasks completed. It can also make you feel alive and excited. But too much stress can cause negative effects such as a change in your mood, your body and relationship issues. Rethink have produced a [Stress – How to Cope](#) factsheet (see www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/stress-how-to-cope), which outlines self-care ideas, links to online resources and when to seek further advice from your GP.

There are many tools and resources available on [Mindtools](#) (see www.mindtools.com/pages/article/managing-stress.htm), although there is a limit on the number of articles you can view for free. These include keeping a [Stress Diary](#) and [relaxation techniques](#) for stress management, and there is also an article on [Supporting a Friend or Co-worker Suffering from Stress](#).

Compass Recovery College

Whether you're looking to develop your knowledge and skills in self-management, you are supporting someone with mental health-related challenges, or you work in mental health services, we're delighted to welcome you on a learning journey. We offer a wide range of workshops that are an educational route to recovery from mental health challenges and increasing positive wellbeing. You don't need a referral from a clinician or service to enrol. As a participant, you can choose which workshops interest you or suit your needs.

Workshops are delivered both online and in person. We have three main categories of workshops:

Mental Health workshops: Designed to help us understand mental health challenges. These workshops focus on increasing knowledge, building confidence, and teaching self-management skills to help us in our day to day lives. This term we have run workshops on understanding psychosis, managing stress, and understanding bipolar. We have upcoming workshops on managing anxiety and understanding emotions.

Wellbeing Workshops: Designed to improve wellbeing and help keep us well. They provide a space to explore our creative side, engage in exercise and connect with others. Examples of workshops include yoga, creative writing and reading for wellbeing.

Drop-in Sessions: Our drop-ins are a good place to start if you are new to Compass. These can be attended as little or often as you like. They offer a safe space to connect with others in a relaxed environment. Drop-in sessions currently running include coffee and chat sessions on Tuesday mornings and a walking session on Friday mornings.

For further information, please contact Compass at: Compass.Opportunities@reading.gov.uk or call us on 0118 9373945. More information can also be found via the website at www.compassrecoverycollege.uk.

Resources for School Business Managers

Education Support, in partnership with Education Mutual, have launched new wellbeing resources aimed at helping School Business Managers stay mentally healthy. These easy-to-read guides are based on research conducted in the education sector and are relevant for anyone working as a School Business Manager. You can download or print each of the guides from the [Education Mutual website](#) or via the following links;

Getting the right work-life balance and protecting yourself: A guide for School Business Managers -
www.educationmutual.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Resource-2-Work-life-balance.pdf

Supporting each other with mental health and well-being: A guide for School Business Managers -
www.educationmutual.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Resource-1-Mental-health-and-wellbeing.pdf

Financial support <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/get-help/help-for-you/financial-support/>

Education Support offer a financial grants service for teachers, teaching assistants, supply and support staff, lecturers and retired staff. They do not need to be paid back! See if you are eligible.

Financial Support and Advice for Teaching Assistants

Money worries can have a big impact on your mental wellbeing. It can disturb your sleep, and leave you feeling anxious and unable to concentrate. And with inflation rising and the cost of living increasing, it's something more and more of us are thinking about. Whilst primarily aimed at Teaching Assistant, this guide from [Education Support](#) will be of interest to anyone who is looking for help managing a budget. With an accurate budget, you'll be able to cut out unnecessary expenses and save money, or stop running up big debts. If you already have debt problems, a

budget will show you how much spare cash you have. The page also links to a benefits checker, so you can find out what you're entitled to and how to claim them. For further information see;

https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/fhvh2b0i/eds046_teaching-assistant-resources-v4-finance.pdf

Grief Support

Cruse Bereavement Support offers specialist advice and access to grief counsellors. You can contact them online at <https://www.cruse.org.uk/> or via the helpline on 0808 808 1677. Their services also include one to one sessions and support groups, and there is a selection of online guides on their website aimed at helping to understand our responses to grief, the feelings we may experience and some techniques to help manage grief.

Untangle Grief is a free app, available on the App Store or Google Play, which aims to help navigate life after a loss. Users of the app can access a community of support groups, advice from bereavement experts and personalised help via a private chat helpline.

NHS Berkshire Talking Therapies

NHS Talking Therapies Berkshire is a friendly service for people aged over 17 with common mental health problems such as low mood, anxiety and stress. Individuals can refer themselves via the website (<https://talkingtherapies.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk>), by phone on 0300 365 2000 or email talkingtherapies@berkshire.nhs.uk – or you can ask your GP or care professional to refer you. The service will then get in touch with you within 1 or 2 days to arrange a time to talk to you about your situation and organise a wellbeing assessment with one of our therapists. Following the Wellbeing Assessment, the different treatment options will be discussed with you and a personalised plan made.

For any further information, including a step by step guide on what to expect and resources to support your mental wellbeing, please visit <https://talkingtherapies.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/>

Please see our Mental Health & Wellbeing section on the website for more information on these offers of support:

<https://www.thamesideprimary.co.uk/page/?title=Mental+Health+%26amp%3B+Wellbeing&pid=218>