



EBOR ACADEMY TRUST

Policy Number

36

Wellbeing Strategy

Approved By: Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date: November 2022
Review Period: 3 years
Review Date: November 2025
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Date Created/updated: September 2022

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1. Why mental health and wellbeing is important

1.1 At Ebor Academy Trust we believe that the good mental health and wellbeing of our staff is vital to organisational success and sustainability. We also know that in order for our staff to support the ongoing mental health of our children, it is essential that we support our workforce in the same way.

1.2 A healthy, happy workforce means we can:

- reduce sickness absence, presenteeism and staff turnover
- enhance our reputation as an employer which cares
- improve staff morale and performance
- better support the Trust's children to learn and succeed.

1.3 As a Trust we are committed to upholding the principles of and enacting the [Education Staff Wellbeing Charter](#). This includes the following organisational commitments:

1. Prioritising staff mental health
2. Giving staff the support they need to take responsibility for their own and other people's wellbeing
3. Giving managers access to the tools and resources they need to support the wellbeing of those they line manage
4. Establishing a clear communications policy
5. Giving staff a voice in decision-making
6. Driving down unnecessary workload
7. Championing flexible working and diversity
8. Creating a good behaviour culture
9. Supporting staff to progress in their careers
10. Including a sub-strategy for protecting leader wellbeing and mental health
11. Holding ourselves accountable, including by measuring staff wellbeing

Ebor Academy Trust's Wellbeing Strategy takes account of these commitments.

2. Definitions and Strategy Principles

- 2.1 The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter defines wellbeing as “A state of complete physical and mental health that is characterised by high-quality social relationships”. The World Health Organisation’s definition of mental health and wellbeing is “a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.
- 2.2 Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want Ebor Academy Trust staff to:
- Enjoy working in a safe, open and supportive workplace environment and culture that supports mental health, overall wellbeing and which prevents discrimination
 - Be aware of mental health and wellbeing issues and behaviours and able and willing to take responsibility for their own self-care and that of others
 - Help the organisation to reduce the stigma around depression and anxiety in the workplace
 - Feel supported during times of personal or work stress
 - Maintain a healthy work life balance
 - Have opportunities to engage in initiatives that support mental health and wellbeing
 - Feel confident and empowered to talk about their problems to colleagues and or managers as appropriate
 - Have positive and healthy relationships at work.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust will:

- embed a culture where employee wellbeing is everybody’s responsibility, regardless of role, hierarchy or experience and where talking about wellbeing is the norm rather than the exception.
- engage in dialogue with staff both individually and collectively through various staff groups, including the Joint Consultative Committee, and surveys, to monitor staff wellbeing and discuss how the quality of working life can be improved. The Trust will work to develop a culture of openness whereby the whole of the staff team feels empowered to talk about mental health and put forward ideas as to how the Trust can support this even further.

- raise awareness of mental health and positive wellbeing strategies throughout the organisation, utilising the staff newsletter, email and social media
- take positive action to make the workplace a mutually supportive environment where good work relationships thrive. This will include:
 - promoting a culture of teamwork, collaboration and information-sharing
 - promoting positive behaviours to avoid conflict and ensure fairness
 - ensure robust policies on bullying and harassment are in place and well publicised
 - encouraging exercise and regular social events to boost staff health, team work and mental wellbeing
 - offering mentoring and coaching sessions to all staff to help them gain confidence and develop new skills
 - celebrating the successes of teams and individuals in a variety of ways
- make resources available for the creation of a network of trained mental health first aiders accessible to all schools
- develop and publicise a list of sources of support for staff to utilise, should they need specialist support for their wellbeing
- Ebor Academy Trust will look to all line managers within the Trust to manage staff in a manner which is not detrimental to mental health and which positively promotes mental health and wellbeing and will make resources available to support line managers to enable them to do this.

Line managers will:

- routinely take stock of individuals' wellbeing and mental health to help assess the impact of current approaches and plan further improvements to enhance morale. This will take place in 1:1 meetings, performance management meetings and supervision meetings
- conduct regular one to one meetings to provide managers with opportunities to speak with staff about how they are, both at work and at home, and explore with them anything that might be impacting on their mental wellbeing. Even though the demands of teaching schedules and working times may make this difficult, clear and regular lines of communication between line managers and their team members are essential and must be prioritised
- keep colleagues in their teams up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload

- ensure that colleagues know who to approach with problems or concerns about their role and how to raise issues with senior management
- make sure job descriptions are kept up to date and that work is allocated appropriately between team members.

HR will:

- develop Trust-wide policies, procedures and initiatives to support the wellbeing of colleagues, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the aim of helping colleagues to maintain positive wellbeing
- source and provide Trust-wide training on employee wellbeing issues
- be available to provide confidential support by phone, email or face-to-face on wellbeing matters, which may include signposting colleagues to key services
- capture and monitor quantitative and qualitative data to analyse the Trust's success in promoting wellbeing amongst its employees.

Trained Mental Health First Aiders will promote healthy minds by:

- leading and working with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- providing advice, support and signposting to staff
- organising training and updates
- advising on the facilitation of positive working relationships and social connections.

All staff will:

- take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, seeking support where necessary
- support activities that enable good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, including taking up relevant training where offered
- strive to achieve a healthy work life balance, for example by regularly taking uninterrupted lunch breaks, refraining from sending work-related emails out of hours, taking annual leave entitlement and resting after busy periods, with very senior staff leading by example. Weekend and evening emails should be kept to a minimum and only

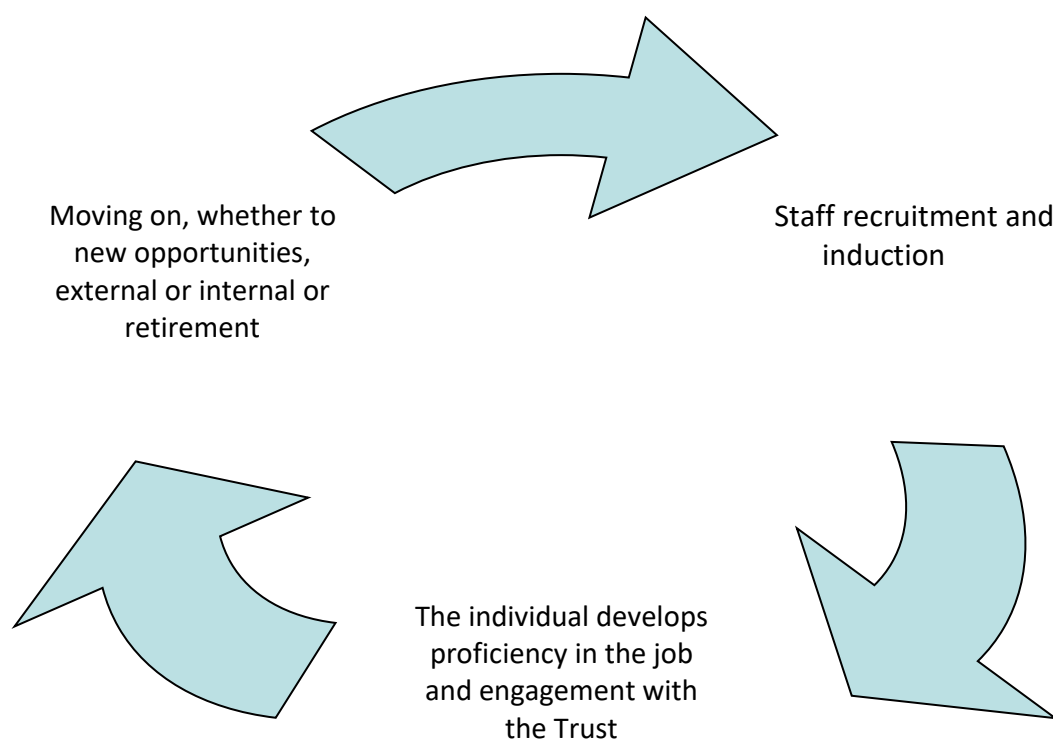
sent where it is absolutely necessary for the smooth running of the schools or where there is an urgent reason for doing so

- promote a positive working environment that aims to help them and their colleagues to feel included, supported and empowered to talk about mental health openly and without judgement
- access support when needed and raise any concerns with their line manager
- approach, assess and assist members of staff in crisis or in need of support
- listen to and communicate with others non-judgmentally
- give support and information, encouraging appropriate professional help and other support as appropriate.

In addition, colleagues are also strongly encouraged to participate in Ebor Academy Trust's staff wellbeing surveys, so that perceptions can be captured on culture and climate and any improvements made to support retention, productivity and engagement.

4 Wellbeing and the Employee Lifecycle

4.1 How Ebor Academy Trust will nurture wellbeing at each stage of the employee lifecycle is outlined below:



4.2 Recruitment and induction

Supporting strong mental health starts with getting the right person for the job; a mismatch between a new recruit and their workplace or the job's expectations can lead to stress.

Therefore, the Trust will:

- ensure job descriptions are written clearly and accurately and are reviewed regularly and exist for all roles
- ensure job adverts are informative and accurate and promote the Trust's commitment to staff wellbeing
- ensure that interviewers are adequately and appropriately trained
- ensure all new starters are medically cleared for the role they are offered and have the opportunity to disclose mental health conditions confidentially, knowing that reasonable support and adjustments will be made available in the workplace via occupational health, HR and their line manager
- provide a planned induction to enable the individual to make a speedy and effective start in the role, maximising their contribution to the Trust.

4.3 Developing proficiency and organisational engagement

The Trust recognises that people go through a variety of health and life challenges at different times and this can impact on their work.

The Trust aims to keep its people as healthily as is reasonably possible so that they can continue to enjoy meaningful work, as this in itself is good for mental wellbeing.

To effect this, the Trust will:

- provide return to work discussions after a period of sickness absence, where any concerns and underlying health issues are discussed openly so appropriate support can be offered
- provide access to an employee assistance programme which includes free, confidential counselling services as well as financial benefits and general life advisory services
- provide access to independent occupational health services
- provide access within the Trust to qualified mental health first aiders
- recognise relevant trade unions to support staff who are members

- provide a wide range of training and development opportunities, including long term development programmes such as NPQs, other professional qualifications, apprenticeships and coaching and mentoring as well as thorough induction training and role related continuing professional development. These will be planned with line managers to assess impact on workload prior to commencement
- conduct a performance review meeting at least annually, with regular one to one meetings in between
- provide flexibility in work attendance through a Leave Policy which grants time off for specific circumstances
- run regular staff wellbeing surveys to listen and learn from staff feedback
- promote social and team building events within schools for those who want to participate
- run staff recognition schemes across schools and the central team
- ensure the Ebor culture actively promotes inclusivity.

4.4 Moving to new opportunities

In order to support staff fulfilment at work, the Trust will:

- provide a range of training and development opportunities to equip staff to continue to do their roles well and/ or to apply for promotions
- encourage career development through opportunities arising within the Trust
- provide relevant pre-retirement information for those looking to retire.

5 Monitoring Wellbeing

5.1 A mixture of quantitative and qualitative measures will be used to assess staff wellbeing, including the following:

- staff surveys, which include a base set of standardised questions so that trends can be tracked, reported on and communicated
- staff sickness levels, especially stress related sickness absence
- uptake of the employee assistance programme
- uptake of occupational health services
- feedback from leaver surveys

- staff turnover and reasons for leaving
- number of candidates applying for roles at Ebor schools
- internal promotions within Trust schools
- participation levels in recognition schemes, social events and training activities

6 Communicating Wellbeing

- 6.1 Staff wellbeing will occupy a dedicated page on the Ebor Academy Trust website with links to other staff benefit information as appropriate. In addition posters, emails and “Bugle Wellbeing Specials” will provide regular update information, including information on the staff recognition scheme, its entry dates and winners. Links to staff surveys will be sent out via all user email.

Reports on staff wellbeing will be made termly to trustees through the People, Pay and Performance Committee.