Wellbeing Policy

Date of Board Approval	May 2021
Version	1
Next Review Date	As required
Responsible Officer	HR Manager

1. **Policy Statement**

   The Trust recognises that promoting and protecting the wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' health, social wellbeing and productivity.

   There are many factors that influence the health and wellbeing of staff. Understanding and overcoming these issues can result in a range of benefits for both individuals and the wider organisation.

   Mental wellbeing is relevant for all employees, which means every member of staff can play a part in improving wellbeing in the workplace. By addressing mental health issues, organisations can improve the general wellbeing of employees, reduce absenteesing and presenteeism, lower staff turnover, increase productivity, and help promote the employment of those who have experienced mental health problems.

   Research shows that workplaces which have an adverse effect on the mental wellbeing of workers suffer, among other things, from poorer quality output, lower productivity, higher levels of absence and lower morale. Schools and colleges that make the mental wellbeing of staff a central feature of their culture, organisation and management, are far more likely to deliver the educational outcomes that children deserve.

   Similarly, promoting physical activity and encouraging healthy eating, can help employees manage stress and weight loss, while also improving concentration and alertness. Employees who exercise regularly and eat a balanced diet also report less illness and are more likely to recover more quickly from any illness they do get.

   This policy covers the following areas:-

   1.1 Mental Wellbeing

   Promoting mental wellbeing by –

   - Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues.
   - Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace.
   - Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health.

   1.2 Physical Wellbeing

   Encouraging physical health by –

   - Promoting physical activity across the Trust.
   - Supporting a healthy, balanced diet in the workplace.
   - Encouraging staff to drink 6 – 8 glasses of water a day.

   1.3 Management and Leadership

   - Equipping Managers and leaders with the skills to identify and assist those with mental ill health.
   - Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the Trust.

<u>1.4 Support for Employees</u>

Offering support to employees by:

- Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of employees.
- Offering help, support and guidance to those with a mental health issue.
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health.

<u>1.5 Employment for those with mental health issues</u>

Supporting those coming back to work by:

- Making necessary adjustments to the role/environment.
- Establishing agreed recruitment practices.
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health.

2. Aim of the Policy

2.1 To create a workplace culture that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of all staff.

2.2 To increase employee knowledge and awareness of health and wellbeing issues and healthy lifestyle behaviours.

3. Objectives

3.1 Mental Wellbeing

3.1.1 To create a supportive workplace culture, tackle factors that may have a negative impact on mental health, and ensure managers have the right skills to support staff.

Actions
- Give employees information on mental health issues to help raise awareness.
- Deliver non-judgemental support to any staff member experiencing a mental health issue.
- Ensure each school has a mental health first aider who can support staff with mental ill health.
- Ensure all staff have access to the wellbeing policy.
- Deliver a thorough induction to new starters providing an outline of the organisation, the policies and the role they are expected to play.
- Provide ways for staff to support their own mental wellbeing, for example through physical activities and social events.
- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well.

- Ensure good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.

3.1.2 To provide support and guidance for any member of staff experiencing mental health issues.

Actions
- Check how working conditions and the organisation's policies are having an effect on mental health.
- Ensure staff members with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement.
- Encourage staff to talk to a mental health first aider, HR, occupational health, a counsellor or GP.
- If an employee has been on long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a gradual return to work with support at each stage.
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental ill health in the strictest confident and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned.

3.1.3 To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health.

Actions
- Show a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues, including having positive statements in recruitment literature.
- Do not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress, or will necessarily have more absence than other applicants.
- Ensure that all line managers have information about managing mental health in the workplace.

3.1.4 To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue.

Actions
- Identify workplace stress factors/scenarios and carry out risk assessments.
- Provide confidential support services for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the organisation's agreed workplace mental wellbeing policy.

3.2 Physical Activity

3.2.1   To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for managing stress and maintaining wellbeing.

Actions
- Provide leaflets and information on the importance of physical activity.
- Promote initiatives that encourage physical activity.

3.2.2   To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue.

Actions

- Provide information on local gyms and sports facilities.
- Encourage physical activities.

3.3 Healthy Eating

3.3.1   To raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating for both physical and mental wellbeing.

Actions
- Provide information and resources on how healthy eating can contribute to mental health, for example, increasing levels of concentration and the ability to cope with everyday stresses.
- Promote literature on the benefits of healthy eating.

3.3.2   To encourage and support staff in making healthier eating choices.

Actions

- Provide food storage areas for lunchtime meals.
- Create an annual healthy eating week, with activities and events.
- Provide easy access to a cold water source.
- Work with in-house catering teams to offer healthy menu options.
- Encourage staff to each lunch away from their desks.

4. Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to making the workplace mental wellbeing policy effective.

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace, identify hazards and risks and take steps to eliminate or reduce these as far as is reasonably practicable.

- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Assist and support employees who are known to have mental health problems or are experiencing stress outside work – for example due to bereavement or separation.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking, and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.

Human Resources have a responsibility to:

- Organise training and awareness courses on workplace wellbeing in conjunction with suitable providers.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy
- Promote workplace wellbeing initiatives.
- Monitor and report on levels of sickness absence which relate to mental health problems, including stress-related illness (in conjunction with occupational health providers and departmental managers).

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Support and contribute to providing a safe, healthy and supportive environment for all workers.
- Raise issues of concern and seek help from their line manager, human resources or support services.
- Accept opportunities for support when recommended.
- Engage with workplace initiatives.

5. Communication

All employees will be made aware of the workplace wellbeing policy and the resources available to them.

The Wellbeing Policy will be accessible and downloadable via the Romero Catholic Academy Trust website.

6. Review and Monitoring

The Human Resources department will be responsible for reviewing and consulting with all stakeholders on the workplace wellbeing policy, as well as monitoring its effectiveness.

Indicators to measure effectiveness could include:

• Working hours and patterns

• Accidents at work

- Staff complaints

- Staff sickness levels

- Staff turnover

- Use of occupational health or counselling services

- Employee surveys

- Early retirement through ill health

- Exit interviews

The policy will be reviewed six months from implementation and then annually after that to ensure that it remains relevant.

Available Support Services

- School-based Mental Health First Aiders who can signpost accordingly.

- Able Futures –a Nationwide Specialist Partnership set up to help people who are in work and are living with mental health difficulties -
Tel - 0800 321 3137
Website - www.able-futures.co.uk / Email - hello@able-futures.co.uk

- Education Support – the Mental Health and Wellbeing Charity for Education Staff - https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/ Tel - 08000 562 561

- Minds Matter - https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/Mindsmatter

- Every Mind Matters - https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/mental-health/

- Mind – www.mind.org.uk / Tel - 0300 123 3393