The HOLT Staff Wellbeing Policy

Statement of Intent

The HOLT Isle of Wight is committed to protecting the Health, Safety and Welfare of our employees. Preventing stress is a major factor in maintaining the wellbeing of our staff, which is a key priority. The HOLT is designed to be a happy working environment, and we strive to ensure that all employees are comfortable to say if they are finding things difficult. The HOLT understands the importance of managing stress and keeping it to acceptable levels ie when it becomes more than just being busy and spills into affecting wellbeing.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of The HOLT and its employees in supporting wellbeing, and promoting good mental health practices, and to advise employees on how to deal with mental health issues and prevent stress.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Health and Safety at work Act 1974

Employment Rights Act 1996

Employment Relations Act 1999

Equality Act 2010

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

Health and Safety policy

Staff attendance and absence policy

Induction of new staff policy

Data protection policy

Grievance policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for

Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy

Ensuring the HOLT’s ethos reflects its commitment to reducing workload and creating a working environment that is focussed, purposeful and considers individuals wellbeing

Ensuring staff roles and responsibilities

Ensuring that all policies are assessed for workload impact

Encouraging stress awareness throughout the HOLT and promoting stress as a serious issue rather than a weakness

Consulting with the Director on managing employee stress and promoting wellbeing, including them in any decisions that need to be made

Ensuring the Director puts measures in place to support employee wellbeing

Actively trying to eliminate stressors in The HOLT

Ensuring monitoring visits are strategic, focussed and reflective of its monitoring plan, and being clear with staff ahead of the visit about what the focus will be and the information that will be required from them

Recognising mental health issues and appointing a mental health and wellbeing governor who will oversee managing and supporting staff mental health

The Mental Health and Wellbeing governor is responsible for:

Influencing the setting of a vision that creates a positive wellbeing culture and is underpinned by equality values, a system of accountability, and robust policies and procedures

Ensuring that the strategic plan for the HOLT includes objectives linked to improving, supporting and responding to the mental health staff

Ensuring that the HOLT has appropriate policies in place that include objectives focussed on meeting staff needs

Ensuring there is a whole business approach to mental health and wellbeing embedded within practice, the curriculum, the values and ethos, and the social and physical environment.

Ensuring that the Director, as wellbeing lead, oversees the provision and support of mental health and wellbeing in The HOLT, and ensures effective links exist with local mental health support.

Meeting with the Director on a regular basis to monitor and review the impact of provision and interventions

Working with the Director to ensure that appropriate training is put in place to support employees

The Director is responsible for:

Creating and promoting a positive and supportive atmosphere throughout the HOLT.

Developing a sensitive performance management process that is linked to clear job specs

Implementing CPD to equip staff with the tools needed to effectively manage stress.

Including staff in the decision making process wherever possible

Ensuring that all policies that affect staff wellbeing are properly adhered to and reviewed.

Authorising any staff absences related to stress and/or mental health issues as well as granting extended leave

Monitoring employees workloads and holiday entitlement, ensuring that they are not overworked, and providing regular updates regarding absence to the Trustees whilst maintaining staff confidentiality in line with the Data protection policy.

Attending all necessary training, keeping skills current and setting a good example for staff

Regularly communicating with staff, encouraging them to be open when discussing stress and emphasising to staff that they will not be judged as failing or wanting because they suffer from stress or mental ill health.

Ensuring all employees have read and understood this policy.

Organising thorough inductions for new employees, explaining the HOLT’s policies and code of conduct.

Making reasonable adjustments for members of staff struggling with long term mental health issues.

Employees are responsible for:

Being able to recognise the early signs of stress or mental health issues in themselves and their colleagues

Supporting co-workers if they become stressed, which may include practical assistance or emotional reassurance

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance

Promoting a positive, supportive atmosphere throughout the school

Being open to discussing stress

Reporting honestly to the Director about their wellbeing and any incidents of stress eg being overworked

Where possible, asking for help when they feel under pressure or stressed

Attending events and training opportunities which promote wellbeing and health

Not acting in a manner which endangers themselves or others

Undertaking additional training and personal development opportunities

Reporting any concerns they may have about their co-workers stress or mental health issues to the Director

Identifying warning signs

The HOLT recognises that individuals will react differently to stressful situation and become stressed by different situations and stimuli throughout their working lives. Because of this it is important for all employees to understand the different factors that may cause themselves or their colleagues’ stress.

Overworking or undertaking work that does not match their skills and abilities

Fear of change and trying to cope with change

Insufficient workload or not being able to use skills

Lack of job security

Poor relationships with colleagues and a lack of involvement

Harassment or bullying

Crisis management

Not having a long term plan in place

The HOLT recognises that life itself can be stressful and sometimes overwhelming, and so strives to support employees when they are experiencing significant stresses at home by taking action in the workplace to ensure that work stress is reduced.

Behavioural indicators

Difficulty sleeping

Changes in eating habits

Increased smoking or drinking

Isolation from friends and family

Physical indicators

Tiredness

Indigestion and nausea

Headaches

Palpitations

Aching muscles

Dizziness

Mental indicators

Indecisiveness

Difficulty concentrating

Memory loss

Feelings of inadequacy

Low self esteem

Emotional indicators

Anger or irritability

Anxiety

Hypersensitivity

Feeling drained and lethargic

Actions to support Employee

The HOLT will actively promote a culture of kindness and support to each other amongst employees, clients, stakeholders, volunteers and Trustees.

Employees will be encouraged to speak with the Director if they should start to feel stressed or overwhelmed, who will take steps to ensure more support is given with work, and signpost the employee to relevant services if applicable.

Self Management

Employees can make changes to avoid and prevent stress and/or poor mental health, as it is a problem that should be tackled and not ignored.

Employees should always speak to the Director in the first instance, and not be worried that they will be judged negatively, as asking for help is a sign of strength not weakness.

Ways of maintaining wellbeing include:

Keeping active

Managing a healthy work/life balance

Prioritising their workload

Avoiding unhealthy habits eg drinking and smoking

Speaking to the Director about any concerns as soon as they arise.

Reporting

When an employee has concerns about a colleague, they should report these in the first instance to the Director, who will arrange for appropriate support to be given to the employee concerned.

Where the stress is being caused by a dispute or bullying, a formal investigation will be carried out, and the complainant directed towards the procedures outlined in the grievance policy.