

Plymouth  
School of  
Creative Arts

make  
discover  
perform

## Staff Wellbeing Policy

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**1. Introduction**

Plymouth School of Creative Arts has developed a whole school mental health strategy which recognises the need for “a community of adults who are able to model mental resilience, self care, emotional control, and have the ability to name emotions. For this to be possible we need to look after each other and ourselves in a work context”.

As part of our ongoing commitment to support our workforce psychological wellbeing we are committed to signing up to be a Mindful Employer® and its charter (Appendix 1). This is a public commitment confirming that we are positive about our employee’s mental wellbeing.

We are keen to understand and improve what we can do to promote better mental wellbeing for adults and children. Wellbeing is all about our holistic health; both physical and emotional. When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We are motivated and engaged, more resilient and able to deal effectively with daily troubles, as well as ‘bounce back’ from life’s challenges.

Good workforce wellbeing is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school, for retaining and motivating staff and for promoting pupil wellbeing and attainment. The best thing we can for our students is model emotional resilience and a positive level of mental wellbeing.

As school staff juggle a multitude of different tasks and demands, it is important that everyone is given the right emotional and practical support so that they can, in turn, support their students. Workforce wellbeing can also improve performance and job satisfaction; leading to reduced staff turnover. It can also help to reduce absence (both short and long term), increase productivity and promote workforce engagement.

This policy outlines some of the ways in which we commit to maintaining workforce wellbeing at our school. Each individual member of the workforce and their circumstances are different, but this policy provides an overview of the basis on which everyone can expect to be treated. This policy refers to all members of the workforce, teaching and non-teaching, temporary and permanent in the school including those in the strategic leadership team and

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the headteacher.

This policy is about recognising what we can do to promote mental health at a practical and cultural level but also how we will support you if you are struggling with your mental health or you are becoming mentally unwell.

The pathway this policy intends to outline is one which starts with what everyone can expect at a universal level, right through to support available if you are unwell.

## **2. Principles**

This policy aims to:

- Develop an environment in which workforce wellbeing is supported and everyone can carry out their duties effectively.
- Recognise the key role of the Headteacher/Senior Leaders/Line Managers in supporting access to guidance, training and support.
- Encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Comply with all statutory requirements.
- Develop and maintain a positive health and safety culture through regular communication and consultation with the workforce and their trade union representatives on health and safety matters.
- Develop an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional wellbeing is taken seriously and everyone is supported to seek any help and support they need.
- Ensure that all the workforce are aware of the policy through regular promotion on workforce notice boards and electronic systems.
- Identify the hazards that could lead to poor staff health and wellbeing and reduce these where possible.

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- We expect all staff to show respect and empathy for each other and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

## **Promoting staff wellbeing**

Some of the keys to promoting and sustaining staff wellbeing will be through:

- the workforce celebrating the ordinary magic going on daily throughout the school - not just with our students but also towards each other...
- the SLT implementing the engagement cycles especially the pledges committing ourselves to:
  - Improve the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce
  - Ensure that line managers are fully supported & equipped to deliver all aspects of their role
- individuals practising and embedding a growth mindset in all its activities
- be aware of how leading a physical and healthy lifestyle can improve your mental health
- advocate physical activity and promote the benefits to pupils, parents and wider community
- promote national guidelines for activity levels in adults and how to meet them

## **Recognising and understanding risks to your mental health**

The Health and Safety Executive define work related stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

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A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances: (Oxford Dictionary)

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

**The governing body** is responsible for:

- fulfilling its duty of care as an employer
- setting and monitoring policy
- monitoring the workload of the headteacher
- receiving any concerns from members of staff

**The headteacher** is responsible for:

- ensuring that the resources are in place to enable the workload of staff to be kept at a healthy balance
- considering how the workforce are treated and valued
- considering its own practices, including number of meetings
- ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff wellbeing
- overseeing that change management is operated in a reasonable way
- fostering a supportive work environment for all staff and ensure that all line managers recognise the importance of managing and promoting staff wellbeing
- actively implementing and modelling the principles and behaviours which contribute to staff wellbeing. Ensuring that bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated
- ensuring that they and the SLT/ELT remain accessible to members of staff
- providing a set budget for staff welfare
- planning the year's timetable considerately bearing in mind staff commitments

The headteacher implements and reviews this policy with the support of:

- the leadership team
- line managers

**Line managers** are responsible for:

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- ensuring that demands are not placed on individual members of staff that interfere unfairly with their work/life balance monitoring the workload of members of staff and being alert to signs of stress. This may include seeking external and/or clinical supervision; this would be addressed on a case by case basis
- listening to the views of members of staff and responding to concerns and suggestions
- ensuring that the efforts made by members of staff are acknowledged
- acting as gatekeeper and prioritising reforms and innovations
- ensuring that staff are equipped with the right training to do the job confidently
- ensuring that staff feel valued and that time is set aside for them providing meeting guidelines that are agreed upon and followed
- including in professional development meetings opportunity for staff to discuss their aspirations and career intentions
- making special arrangements, where possible, to enable staff to combine the demands of family life and work life
- ensuring that there are effective methods of communication
- maintaining contact with staff during long absences
- conducting risk assessments for work-related stress.

**Members of staff** are responsible for:

- treating one another with respect
- implementing guidelines and other advice included in this policy
- ensuring that they speak to another member of staff if they are encountering difficulties. This includes identifying and discussing with your Line Manager areas for development which may include CPD
- keeping in mind the workload of other members of staff when setting meeting dates or other activities and events
- valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes.
- creating and celebrating ordinary magic

#### 4. Managing workload

All members of staff will have a clear job description outlining roles and responsibilities. Key to ensuring staff wellbeing is being able to manage

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conflicting priorities. The relationship between employee and line manager is central to supporting this.

All members of staff at our school are linked to a line manager. The line manager is there for staff to discuss issues related to their role but also the ways in which school life is balanced with home life and any difficulties that the individual member of staff is facing.

We want all members of staff to enjoy working in our school and to feel that they have a good work/life balance. If staff feel at any time that this is not the case, they should raise the issue with their line manager. If any member of staff feels that the relationship between themselves and their line manager does not work well, this should be raised with the line manager of their line manager.

We commit to helping staff maintain a good balance between family and school life. This can mean that there are occasionally swaps in roles and duties to enable staff to:

- attend events associated with their child's school e.g. assemblies that they are participating in, concerts, parents evenings
- attend to household emergencies
- attend events associated with any caring duties they might have
- attend medical appointments that cannot be arranged at other times.

This list is not exhaustive. Please refer to the school's Managing Attendance policy (which includes provisions on flexible working) for further guidance. Any difficulties should be discussed with the line manager.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

Professional development is a key element of school improvement. All staff are entitled to training and development to make sure that they can fulfil their responsibilities confidently and competently.

We also acknowledge the importance of wider professional development that might include courses not directly linked to our school development plan.

We recognise that staff engaging in additional training opportunities can have enrichment benefits for our school. Each application for time and/ or

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funding will be looked at individually. We recognise that it is important that staff are given chance to progress their careers, and as such allow time for viewing of schools and interviews.

## 5. Meeting protocol

All studio are expected to attend:

- one weekly team meeting
- one weekly staff meeting

Non-studio staff are expected to attend one weekly staff meeting.

It is expected and acknowledged that senior members of staff, including the headteacher, will have a greater time commitment to meetings. However, consideration should still be given to avoiding any unreasonable demands on their time.

The staff at **our** school have agreed that:

- all meetings must have an agenda that is circulated at least two days before the meeting takes place
- all meetings are minuted and the minutes circulated – these do not have to be detailed but should be comprehensive
- routine meetings should last no longer than one hour. However, it is recognised that the weekly team and staff meetings referred to are scheduled for 90 minutes
- the chairs of meetings are rigorous in ensuring that unnecessary items are not discussed and that meetings are not held if there is insufficient need
- items that are just for information are circulated via email and are not included during meeting time.

Those members of staff who work part-time should discuss with their Line Manager the reasonable expectation of attendance.

Meetings should be planned as carefully as a lesson.

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## 6. Communication

We value the opinions of our staff and a staff survey is completed annually to check how individuals feel about new initiatives and to seek ideas and suggestions.

We are developing a meeting and dissemination structure to ensure that everyone is kept informed of what is happening.

The weekly meetings and staff folder bulletin provide ongoing updates of events and activities within the school. Information about the week is sent to all members of staff via copies of newsletters and governors' updates sent out to parents.

All of the workforce are made aware of their roles and responsibilities as part of their induction, supervision, performance review. Their responsibilities include awareness of key policies and procedures, including this Policy.

## 7. Linked policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Anti-bullying and harassment policy
- Appraisal policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Equality and diversity
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Managing Attendance
- Grievance
- Mental Health Strategy

## 8. Useful links

Acas [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

Information on stress, and employer and employee rights, in the workplace

Alcoholics Anonymous [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other to recover from alcoholism.

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British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)  
Find a counsellor or psychotherapist in your area.

Carers UK [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)  
The voice of carers

Cruse Bereavement Care [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)  
Bereavement support for adults

Education Support Partnership [www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk](http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk)  
Charity providing support to all education professionals. Helpline available.

Equality and Human Rights Commission [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://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](http://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/index.htm>  
Information on the stress management standards.

Mindful Employer [www.mindfulemployer.net](http://www.mindfulemployer.net)  
Positively enabling those in the workplace who live with identified mental ill health.

National Education Union [www.neu.org.uk](http://www.neu.org.uk)  
Union for education professionals in the UK.

NHS 111 <http://www.nhs.uk/111>  
National Health Service advice and guidance on health matters

Relate <http://www.relate.org.uk>  
UK's largest provider of relationship counselling and sex therapy.

Samaritans <http://www.samaritans.org.uk>  
Offers confidential, non-judgemental support to individuals.

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## Appendix 1

PSCA is committed to signing up to be a Mindful Employer® and its charter (Appendix 1).

**The Mindful Employer® Charter** - [www.mindfulemployer.net/charter/](http://www.mindfulemployer.net/charter/)

### Seeking help and support

As an employer we recognise that, in the UK, people experiencing mental ill health continue to report stigma and discrimination. We are committed to creating a supportive and open culture, where colleagues are able to talk about mental health, and are confident that they will be properly supported and offered reasonable adjustments when required.

As an employer we will:

- Provide non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental ill health.
- Not make assumptions that a person with a mental health condition will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off than any other employee or job applicant.
- Show a positive and enabling attitude to all employees and job applicants with a mental health condition. This will include positive statements in local recruitment literature.
- Ensure all line managers have access to information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.
- Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health conditions and The Equality Act 2010, and given appropriate interview skills. Make it clear in any recruitment or occupational health check that people who have experienced mental ill health will not be discriminated against and that disclosure of a mental health problem will enable both employee and employer to assess and provide the right level of support or adjustment.

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose of changes made</b>	<b>By</b>
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7/5/19	Policy approved.	Board of Governors

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