



Oasis Academy Limeside Staff Wellbeing Policy

Wellbeing is all about our holistic health, including the physical and emotional. When we have good levels of wellbeing, we are able to live life well. If we are well supported by those around us who are compassionate, supportive and understanding, we are more likely to be resilient and able to deal effectively with day-to-day events, coping with life's challenges. At Oasis Academy Limeside we aim to use the teachings of Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK) in our everyday practice and as such have used their teachings throughout this policy.

At Oasis Academy Limeside we recognise that leaders who have empathy are more likely to create an ethos and culture that supports wellbeing. Leadership with empathy is proven to increase staff engagement, retention and overall wellbeing.

Oasis Academy Limeside values all staff both personally and for their professional skills and qualities. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to ensure that all adults know that leaders are invested in them and will demonstrate this through the personal and professional support given. We value the views of all staff and will seek to ensure that their views are sought at every opportunity.

We are committed to making sure that this Staff Wellbeing Policy is implemented so that each individual is able to cope successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress. All staff will be enabled to talk honestly about work-related stress without fear of judgement, reprisals or shame.

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and wellbeing by making sure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently.

Our approach to staff well-being is based on the teachings of Trauma Informed Schools UK (TISUK). It is underpinned by educational practices which PROTECT, RELATE, REGULATE, REFLECT.

PROTECT

Our priority is to ensure that adults are physically and psychologically safe. That they are supported by policies and practice that mitigates the possibility of them experiencing physical harm at work or as a direct result of their work and that they have opportunities to engage in

warm, empathic relationships with adults they trust. As a school we support and

promote those relationships and we create a warm and calm environment that is consistent, accepting and optimises social engagement. We do not place adults in situations that they cannot manage.

Specifically:

- All adults are taught about the impact of toxic stress and the ways in which the school seeks to reduce this.
- Regular whole school training to ensure that all adults have a comprehensive understanding of PACE (Hughes 2016), whole school awareness of Social Engagement Theory (Purges 2017) and Panksepp's Emotional Systems (2012). Adults are therefore able to engage in PACEFUL relationships with each other and increase social engagement.
- Ensuring that there are emotionally available adults in school who undertake the role of wellbeing champions and that staff know who they are and where to find them.
- There is a no shouting, no shaming policy in school. Raised or hostile voices are not tolerated.
- All adults receive regular feedback about their work, and this is given positively, supporting professional development. Feedback is non-shaming and not harsh or critical.
- Adults are encouraged to take breaks and there are pleasant spaces for staff to relax and restore.
- Leaders will actively promote new and innovative ways of reducing workload.
- Senior Leaders check in with staff regularly and demonstrate genuine interest in their work and personal lives.
- Use of adult only spaces and time to reflect is encouraged, in particular when staff have experienced challenging situations.

RELATE

At Oasis Academy Limeside, our understanding of RELATE is underpinned by the knowledge that the ability to form meaningful relationships is fundamental to mental health and happiness. We understand that relationships are crucial in promoting the optimal development of the frontal lobes of the brain associated with the executive functions key to emotional regulation, emotional intelligence, planning, problem solving and ultimately, learning. The opportunity to engage in meaningful relationships with other colleagues is central to the health and well-being of all staff.

Specifically:

- All adults interact with each other from a position of social engagement not social defence.
- All adults know about the key relational skills and in particular the ability to listen with empathy and they use these when supporting each other.
- Leaders will seek opportunities for staff to engage in meaningful enjoyable, social activities designed to promote relationships.
- Leaders promote an open-door policy ensuring that all staff are valued and have regular contact with them
- Leaders will ensure that staff are celebrated for their successes and contributions.
- Adults are encouraged to express their emotions and are not shamed or undermined when acknowledging their anxieties or stressors.

- Adults have daily opportunities to engage with each other in environments that are supportive and pleasant.
- Leaders will ensure that there is clear communication between staff and the academy leadership team with regards to all areas of school life.

REGULATE

We know that leaving adults in a state of toxic stress can result in physical ill health as well as making it impossible to engage productively in the activities taking place around them. We have a duty to support adults in school to ensure that they are not left in toxic stress. We know that one of the most powerful ways to do this is to create an environment in which adults can be listened to, attuned to and validated and to experience high levels of empathy.

Specifically:

- Ensuring that job descriptions and person specifications are clear in order to ensure that the 'right' person is recruited for the job.
- Promoting training and development procedures to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake the tasks/duties required of them.
- Ensuring that interactions are emotionally regulating, PACEFUL and designed to reduce stress levels.
- Ensuring that adults do not engage in socially defensive behaviour with each other.
- Providing and valuing staff-only spaces, designed to promote regulation and reflection.
- Ensuring that adults are aware of each other's needs and support each other through rich, trusting, relational experiences.
- Ensuring that strategies and policies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress. This includes preventing unnecessary stress and ensuring that any work-based stress employees experience is at a productive, healthy level.
- Encouraging staff to be fully involved in the decisions of the school through staff forums in which staff can talk freely about any issues which impact on their ability to carry out their jobs.

REFLECT

At Oasis Academy Limeside, we believe that adults need to be able to reflect on their feelings in order to fully understand them.

Reflection enables us to make sense of our life and have a coherent narrative that makes sense of what we are feeling and what has happened to us. There are times following troubling incidents that adults need to be helped to reflect in order to make sense of what has happened, of their response and if necessary, to repair ruptures in relationships that may have resulted. Adults also need opportunities to share with leaders, in a safe space, the stressors from work.

At Oasis Academy Limeside we facilitate this in ways which support adults to feel valued and not blamed.

Specifically:

- All staff and in particular leaders, are trained in the art of active listening with a particular focus on empathy and acceptance of the feelings of others.
- Leaders provide regular opportunities for staff to engage in reflective listening with

each other, enabling adults to talk confidently about work stressors and significant events.

- Staff have access to free counselling services provided by the school or are signposted to free counselling services.
- Key staff have supervision.
- Oasis Academy Limeside will measure its performance in relation to stress management and employee well-being, such as: sickness absence data, staff turnover, exit interviews, number of referrals to Occupational Health, numbers of grievance and harassment cases.
- Leaders will seek the views of employees on the effectiveness of the school's Wellbeing Policy and stress management arrangements using staff surveys and other appropriate questionnaires.