



HR Service

# Diocese of Nottingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts

Mental Health and  
Wellbeing Policy



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**Commitment to equality:**

**We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.**

**This Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy has been subject to consultation with the Recognised Trade Unions. It was approved and adopted by the CMAT as detailed below:**

<b>Policy Approved by:</b>	<b>Date of Approval</b>
Board of Directors – Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy Trust	
Board of Directors – St Therese of Lisieux Catholic Multi Academy Trust	12/07/2021
Board of Directors – St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust	
Board of Directors – St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi Academy Trust	

**It will be reviewed after 24 months in consultation with the Recognised Trade Unions.**

**Signed by Director of the CMAT:**

*L.G. Weaver*

**Signed by CEO:**

*James McKechnie*

## I. DEFINITIONS

In this Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions, where they appear, shall have the following meanings:

- i. 'CMAT' means the Catholic Multi Academy Trust, that is the company responsible for the management of the Central Team and the Academies and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff within the Central Team and the Academies.
- ii. 'Board' means the board of Directors of the CMAT who are responsible for carrying out the employment functions of the CMAT.
- iii. 'Central Team' means all staff employed in the Central Office functions of the CMAT.
- iv. 'Chair' means the Chair of the Board of the CMAT as appointed from time to time.
- v. 'Companion' means a willing work colleague not involved in the subject matter under which the policy is being invoked, a trade union official, an accredited representative of a trade union or other professional association of which the employee is a member.
- vi. 'Diocesan Education Service' means the education service provided by the diocese in which the CMAT is situated, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Diocesan School Commission.
- vii. 'Directors' means directors appointed to the Board of the CMAT from time to time.
- viii. 'Governor' means a member of the Local Governing Body of the School.
- ix. 'Headteacher' means the most senior teacher in the School who is responsible for its management and administration. Such teacher may also be referred to as the Head of School or Executive Headteacher.
- x. 'Local Governing Body' means the Governors appointed from time to time to carry out specified functions in relation to the School as delegated by the CMAT.
- xi. 'School' means the Academy named at the beginning of this Policy and Procedure where applicable and includes all sites upon which the Academy undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xii. 'Vice-Chair' means the Vice-Chair of the Board of the CMAT as appointed from time to time.
- xiii. 'Working Day' means any day on which an employee would ordinarily work if they were a full-time employee. In other words, 'Working Day' will apply differently to teaching and non-teaching staff. However, part-time and full-time staff will not be treated differently for the purposes of implementing this Policy and Procedure.

## **2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF POLICY**

- 2.1 This Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy applies to you if you are an employee or worker at the CMAT (hereinafter referred to as an “employee” or “you”).
- 2.2 The purpose of this Policy is to set out the ways in which the CMAT will seek to promote the positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers our commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health and organisational commitment to handling individual issues in a supportive way which is in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the CMAT.
- 2.3 The aim of this Policy is to describe the CMAT’s commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out:
- (a) how the CMAT fulfils its legal obligations;
  - (b) the responsibilities of different functions and specialists, and
  - (c) the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing.

The CMAT recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle job/role requirements and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved performance.

The School/CMAT will operate practices and policies that ensure staff are able to thrive at work and achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and other commitments and adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998. The CMAT is committed to addressing excessive workloads and to following the recommendations made in the ‘Making Data Work’ Report of the Government’s Teacher Workload Advisory Group.

- 2.4 This Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance, health and wellbeing including the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure, the Leave of Absence Policy, the Grievance Policy and Procedure and the CMAT Code of Conduct.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The CMAT has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The CMAT will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and will review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

- 3.2 The CMAT will give regard to ACAS, Government and Health & Safety Executive and other relevant guidance and good practice on this topic.
- 3.3 In addition to reducing safety risks, this means the CMAT will operate in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and by having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.
- 3.4 The School/CMAT will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. It will also seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into Line Manager training and other initiatives, such as Mental Health First Aiders and Ambassadors. The CMAT Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs) will communicate and consult on wellbeing initiatives with the Recognised Trade Unions.

### 3.5 Line Managers

3.5.1 The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. In the workplace, Line Managers have the opportunity to control/influence the following factors when it comes to mental health and which can contribute to stress:

- (a) workload;
- (b) work variety;
- (c) work relationships;
- (d) involvement/employee engagement;
- (e) culture of disclosure when issues arise;
- (f) communication;
- (g) bullying.

3.5.2 The effects of long-term stress can include physical, intellectual, emotional and behavioural signs such as:

- (a) headaches;
- (b) crying;
- (c) nausea;
- (d) tiredness;
- (e) palpitations;
- (f) worrying;
- (g) making mistakes;
- (h) anger;
- (i) irritability;

- (j) job dissatisfaction.

3.5.3 Line Managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the CMAT's Code of Conduct in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

3.5.4 Line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risk to employee health and wellbeing by:

- (a) having an understanding of mental health issues and potential causes;
- (b) making a commitment to improving mental health at work;
- (c) championing awareness of mental health and fighting any stigma attached to mental health issues;
- (d) identifying ways to improve workplace wellbeing;
- (e) tackling the causes of mental ill health;
- (f) ensuring staff have resources and support;
- (g) ensuring that staff do not have excessive workload.

Examples of how this can be achieved are as follows:

- (i) ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions and person specifications. This means ensuring that external and internal candidates are only appointed to posts (including temporary internal posts to cover a colleague's absence e.g. on maternity leave) for which they have the requisite skills, experience, qualifications and knowledge as outlined in the relevant Person Specification and Job Description. Where no candidates meet these criteria no appointment should be made. Line Managers should recognise that appointing the wrong person to a job role could be stressful for that individual and adversely affect that individual's mental wellbeing;
- (ii) keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- (iii) ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- (iv) making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- (v) ensuring that work-stations and working environments are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose;
- (vi) ensuring staff have resources and support if they are suffering from mental ill health.

### **3.6 Human Resources Support**

3.6.1 The Diocese of Nottingham CMATs HR Service will develop policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees. The CMAT HR Team will assist line managers in supporting individuals and will liaise, as appropriate, with occupational health with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

### **3.7 Occupational Health**

3.7.1 The CMAT has engaged occupational health professionals who will provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees to remain in the workplace, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from the CMAT HR Team and working with individuals to help them to retain employment. Occupational Health or the CMAT HR Team may wish to obtain further clinical information in accordance with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988. An employee's consent will be obtained before any such a report is requested.

3.7.2 Occupational health professionals will play a critical part in helping the School/CMAT develop return to work plans for employees returning to work after absences related to mental ill health and support employees by providing advice and guidance to line managers to ensure that return to work is managed successfully.

### **3.8 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Provider**

3.8.1 The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) offers employees access to free 24/7 confidential telephone counselling support on any personal, work or family issue. on the freephone telephone number – 0808 168 2143.

3.8.2 Every CMAT employee can phone the service for ad-hoc in the moment support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If it is clinically appropriate, an employee will be referred by the service for contracted counselling. Each employee is entitled to receive an agreed number of contracted telephone counselling or face-to-face counselling sessions.

3.8.3 Drawing on anonymised data provided by the EAP provider relating to calls to its 24-hour helpline and usage of the face-to-face counselling service with employees, we will monitor trends (anonymously) to inform improvements to our practice.

### **3.9 Employees**

3.9.1 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employees have an individual responsibility to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions at work. This includes colleagues and also pupils/students where applicable. Employees must co-operate with Line Managers, staff within the Central Team and other colleagues to help everyone meet their legal requirements.

3.9.2 Employee can take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing their Line Manager if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their own health or wellbeing or that of anyone else. When discussing their own job, the discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands and raise issues such as identified training needs. Advice can also be sought from the CMAT HR Team.

3.9.3 Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the HR Team or Occupational Health is treated in confidence. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting employees, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary. As part of the application of this policy, the CMAT may collect, process and store personal data and special categories of data in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. We will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation (being (i) unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK, the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998). Records will be kept in accordance with our retention policy and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

## **4. TRAINING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

4.1 Line Managers and employees will discuss individual training needs as part of the annual performance management cycle to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to

adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

- 4.2 Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and School/CMAT- wide methods. The CMAT will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance and for them to raise concerns.

## **5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

- 5.1 Line Managers can recommend referrals to Occupational Health for a member of staff via the CMAT HR team who will obtain the member of staff's consent before the referral is made. Employees can also speak to their Line Manager or the HR Team if they would like to be considered for support from Occupational Health. Discussions between employees and the Occupational Health professionals are confidential, although the Occupational Health team will provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and/or any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the School/CMAT.

- 5.2 Workplace wellbeing services provided by Occupational Health include:

- (a) pre-employment screening;
- (b) fitness-for-work assessments;
- (c) providing advice and support for employees with specific medical conditions for whom reasonable adjustments may be needed.

- 5.3 Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- (a) the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP);
- (b) leave of absence arrangements;
- (c) procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- (d) the CMAT's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

## **6. MONITORING**

The policy will be monitored to ensure consistency of application and adherence to Equalities legislation and to assess the effectiveness in combatting both the causes and effects of

workplace mental ill-health and promoting employee wellbeing. Anonymised sickness absence statistics will be compiled by the CMAT HR Team as one of the means of measuring the effectiveness of this Policy.