Mental Health and Well-Being Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

Bottesford Bunnies Pre School is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises the importance of promoting positive mental health and well-being, through a multi-disciplinary approach whilst ensuring that members of employees' work, in a professional but supportive and caring environment.

This policy and guidance (see appendix 1) outlines Bottesford Bunnies intention regarding Mental Health and Well-being, including stress and harassment in particular this policy takes into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, the Equality Act and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Management Standards and as such is brought to the attention of all employees.

2. Mental Health and well-being Policy Statement

Bottesford Bunnies Pre School recognises that mental health problems and stress can affect anyone regardless of their position and is a Pre School issue that all staff have a responsibility to address. This policy applies equally to all employees and is designed to complement Bottesford Bunnies Pre School existing policies.
Bottesford Bunnies Director /Manager Clare Williams is responsible for providing the necessary resources to enable the management team to implement this policy.
In undertaking duties with regards to mental health and well-being Bottesford Bunnies Pre School will aim to:

- Reduce the stigma around mental health.
- Positively promote and safeguard the mental health and well-being of its employees and prevent stress by promoting a supportive workplace culture based on trust, support and mutual respect, where employees are able to talk openly about their job and their mental health and report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.
- Create an environment that supports and encourages good mental health amongst our employees.
- Ensure that the leadership team are equipped to appropriately respond to disclosures which support Bottesford Bunnies Pre School commitment to mental health and well-being.

- Provide appropriate support for all employees suffering from mental health and associated problems.
- Identify workplace stressors, whenever possible.
- Educate the workforce about the advantages of good mental well-being and its influence over the quality of working and personal life.
- Reduce the levels of absence as a result of increased healthy mental well-being amongst employees.
- Demonstrate that the workplace is valued, and the work life balance is respected by the support of good mental health.
- Involve job design and equipment to remove mental health risks in the workplace wherever possible.
- Eliminate from the workplace, stressors which can have a detrimental effect on employee's well-being.

Examples of these are:
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discrimination (sexual, religious, political, ethnicity)
- Victimisation

- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the effective review of this policy statement as necessary on an annual basis.
- Provide support for the leadership team to ensure they are dealing appropriately with issues and maintain their own mental health and well-being.
- Provide adequate resources to enable the management to implement the Pre Schools agreed mental health and well-being management policy.

3.Legislative Requirements

In terms of the health and safety at work act, employers have a general duty to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health of their employees at work. This includes taking steps to make sure they do not suffer stress related illness as a result of their work.

Management of health and safety at work regulations: the main provisions of these regulations regarding stress are a duty to assess risk, apply principles of prevention, ensure employees capability to undertake work tasks and provide suitable training.

The stress management standards: the management standards defined characteristics, or culture, of an organisation where the risks from work related stress of being effectively managed in control. The standards, six key areas of work designed that, if not properly manage, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.

The six management standards cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

1. **Demands** – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.
2. **Control** – how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
3. **Support** – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.
4. **Relationships** – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
5. **Role** – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
6. **Change** – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The equality act replaces previous legislation (such as the race relations act and the disability discrimination act) and aims to move discrimination. Under the act, a person is disabled if they 'have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

This policy relates only to the part that covers disability and in particular mental health and harassment.

4. Review and Monitoring

The monitoring and review arrangements include.

- Review of absence statistics and trends on at least a quarterly basis by the Director/Manager Clare Williams.
- Discussions at tea and biscuit chats, supervisions, appraisals, opportunities during team meetings too.

5. Implementation

To successfully implement this policy, we will:

- Ensure throughout our recruitment processes that we ensure that the role fits the person. This will be done through fair recruitment procedures.
- Ensure through our recruitment processes that no one is disadvantaged in obtaining employment or progressing in the company on the grounds of their mental health.
- Provide employees with an induction program that includes the benefits of good mental health awareness.
- Provide access to mental health awareness training for employees if requested.
- Link to local and national campaigns to promote positive mental health.
- Encourage early reporting of any issues in the workplace which may affect employee's mental health.

- Encourage early reporting of any existing mental health issues which employees may be suffering from in order for us to be able to work to provide confidential support and any workplace adjustments in a timely fashion.
- Ensure that employees have opportunities to raise issues through, appraisals/supervisions , performance management & tea & biscuit meetings.

Appendix 1

Mental Health and Well- Being Procedure and Guidance

Introduction

The aim of this Procedural Guidance is to outline the benefits of positive mental health and well-being, promote a supportive work environment and set out the measures Bottesford Bunnies Pre School puts in place for Mental Health and Wellbeing, including prevention, stress management and support for employees.

Definitions

Definitions of Mental Health

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

The positive dimension of mental health is stressed in WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

Mental Health: an umbrella term which refers to a continuous spectrum from positive mental health and wellbeing to mental health problems which can be mild to moderate or more serious, severe and enduring.

Mental Well-being: a term that includes life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing – for example, having a sense of control, purpose in life, a sense of belonging and positive relationships with others.

Mental Health problems: a term that refers to symptoms that meet the criteria for clinical diagnosis of mental health problems - for example, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. However, not everyone has a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. If you are in good mental health, you can make the most of your potential, cope with life and play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends.

Mental Health and Work

There is compelling evidence to show a positive link between employment and mental health. People enjoy better mental health when they are in work and for people with mental health problems, work can be therapeutic. A return to work improves mental health as much as the loss of employment worsens it. Some aspect of the work environment can pose a risk to mental health, but the overall balance of evidence is not in doubt: work is good for mental health.

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of people with mental health conditions have a job and are almost as likely to be working as anybody else. On average, employers should expect that at any one time, nearly 1 in 4 (Mental health foundation) of their

workforce is affected by a mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. Only a small proportion of this ill health is directly caused by work or working conditions.

Evidence suggests that the key ingredients of a workplace programme are:

- Recognition that work is good for mental health and people do not need to be symptom free to work successfully.
- Prevention of mental health problems including the provision of mentally healthy working conditions and access for all employees to generalised health promotion and well-being programmes.
- Early identification of emerging problems, with any unexplained change in an employee's productivity at work being seen as a possible warning sign
- Awareness training for employees to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health issues.
- Better access to professional help (such as counselling, coaching) which wherever possible enables people to carry on working at the same time as receiving support
- Effective rehabilitation for those who need to take time off work, including regular contact with employees during periods of absence.

Common to all of these situations is that they essentially involve a clear, positive line management role, however the first step is simply a better understanding of mental health issues throughout Bottesford Bunnies Pre School.

Definitions of Stress and Work Related Stress
Stress related illness is perhaps the most common way mental health problems may present themselves
The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as
"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them"

This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health, in particular mental health. Life is a challenge and pressure is a natural part of it. Individuals vary in their ability to cope with pressure.
Personal factors are the most common stressors and can impact the situation permanently or temporarily. When stress is intense repeated or continuous, physical or mental ill health can result.
No one is 'immune' to stress, and it is not a sign of personal weakness. It is recognised that some level of pressure can be motivating and challenges that can be responded to effectively may lead to job satisfaction. However, this Policy is concerned with the negative effects of stress and can include mental health problems and also physical effect such as heart disease, back pain, gastro-intestinal disturbances, various minor illnesses, psychological effects, anxiety and depression and sleep disturbances.
Stress at work – pressure at work can affect individual, but it is most usual for there to be personal factors also impacting on someone's ability to cope at work. Bottesford Bunnies has a clear responsibility to ensure work factors are addressed appropriately and the risk to individuals is minimised.

Procedure

Prevention

Bottesford Bunnies shall work towards creating and maintaining a positive culture by:

- Developing and introducing work life balances policies
- Working towards and maintaining the Workplace Well-being Charter
- Raising awareness of mental health issues, roles and responsibilities through training
- Demonstrating commitment to this policy by the Leadership Team initiating uptake of training and supporting and promoting a healthy work life balance for employees
- Raising awareness through promotional campaigns
- Discussing and having opportunity to discuss well-being at staff meetings.
- Participating in regular get togethers, which promotes positive wellbeing within the team (team building)
- Enabling employees to raise mental health issues and receive appropriate support by:

Raising awareness and uptake of support services through Occupational Health, Health and Safety and the LA Human Resources

The Leadership Team will undertake mental health and well- being management training.

Utilising the appropriate policies in relation to absence.

- Recognising and valuing the contribution of each individual within the workplace by using the Employees supervision and appraisal procedures to acknowledge skills.
- Providing a safe and healthy working environment by undertaking and assessment-based approach to work related hazards.
- Periodically identify and assess sources and measures of workplace stress where available by:
  - Undertaking a employee's survey and acting on the results
  - Analysing accidents statistics

Stress Management

Bottesford Bunnies Pre School:

- Provide information on good practice in preventing/managing stress
- Provide support and advice once an individual need has been identified via Occupational Health, which is a specialist area of medicine concerned with the interaction between people's health and their work, who provide confidential advice.
- Occupational Health Advisor or Occupational Health Physician appointments advice on possible reasonable adjustments.
- Ongoing support, tailored to individual need

Further information on the Stress Management Standards can be found via the following link:
http;//www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/

Mental Health and Well-being support

It is recommended that all employees who have a period of absence as a result of mental health problems or stress are given the opportunity to discuss their issues with Management to establish whether any adjustments can be made to alleviate their symptoms. If appropriate, Bottesford Bunnies will refer the employee to outside agencies as early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution.

<u>Responsibilities</u>

Both Bottesford Bunnies and its employees share a mutual responsibility to work together in the management of Mental Health and Well-being. Bottesford Bunnies will do all it can to provide, so far as is reasonable and practicable, a safe and healthy working environment. Employees must also take responsibility for their own health and safety, and also for others who may be affected by their acts or lack of due diligence.

Specific Responsibilities – Leadership Team

- Early action can prevent an employee becoming more unwell. Where you have concerns about an employee, ask if they would be comfortable discussing their situation with the Leadership Team. As part of the discussion, to be aware of the support mechanisms available to both you and the employee and take into consideration good practice in preventing/managing stress.

- Where appropriate, an individual assessment should be conducted in consultation with the employee to ensure that reasonable adjustments within the role, workplace and working hours are considered.

- Where an employee has had a period of absence of mental health problems or stress, ensure they are referred to outside agencies, as early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution.

- Ensure good communication between management and employee, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes and involve employees at an individual level and team level in seeking solutions to resolve work related issues.

- Promote a culture which has a positive attitude to mental health and well-being, where employees can approach the Leadership Team when they are feeling stressed without fear of blame or reprisals.

- Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their area if responsibility and control.

- Support employees with mental health problems or who may be affected by stress who are either at work or returning to work and where appropriate

- Be vigilant and offer additional support to employees who are experiencing stress outside work, for example, bereavement or separation

- Ensure all employees receive appropriate induction and training for their job, including reference to support services.

- Ensure employees are provided with meaningful development opportunities

- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety

- Monitor workloads, working hours and overtime to ensure that employees are not overloaded

- Monitor holidays to ensure that employees take their full entitlement.

Specific responsibilities – employees

- Raise any concerns that they have about work pressures, work life balance and any external pressures that are affecting their health at work, with the Leadership Team.

- All employees have a responsibility to contribute to a supportive work environment by:

  Being respectful and considerate of others
  Listening to the problems or concerns of others and providing practical support as appropriate
  Being positively appreciative of people and their efforts.
  Being ready to offer help to colleagues, where appropriate, for example, their behaviour, mood or performance may indicate or suggest something is wrong.
  Respecting confidentiality
  Participating in goals setting and positive management of workload
  Avoiding overloading colleagues with extra work or responsibility

Any employee who has a period of absence due to mental health and stress related issues, should remain in close contact with Clare Williams Director/Manager to enable them to work together on a structured rehabilitation plan for their return to work.

References to other policies:

Adopted at staff meeting October 7th, 2021.

Signature:
Reviewed and updated at staff meeting October 19th, 2022, by Director, Manager, Deputies and Practitioners.
Next review date October 2023
Reviewed and updated at team meeting October 19th 2023 by Director, Manager. Deputies and educators
Next review date October 2024
Reviewed and updated at team meeting January 22nd, 2025, by Director, Room Lead, Deputy and Educators
Next review January 2026
Reviewed and updated January 28th by Director/Manager, Deputy Manager and educators.
Next review date January 2027