

Our Vision is to produce outstanding teachers who will ensure their students, whatever their starting point, thrive in all aspects of education. Our trainee teachers will value developing the whole person equally to the achievement of academic success.

Policies and Procedures

Stress and Mental Health Policy

Adopted: April 2018

Review Date: April 2020

Reviewers: RDv/GCr

Relevant Legislation:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Equality Act 2010
HSE Stress Management Standards

Related Policies:

Ill Health Policy and Procedures

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Introduction

The North Wiltshire SCITT believes that its employees are its most valuable resource and that their well-being is vital to effective performance at work and the continued provision of high quality services. To this end the SCITT is committed to providing, maintaining and promoting a healthy and supportive working environment.

- Under the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 the Academy has a duty to ensure the health and safety of its employees as far as is reasonably practical.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place a duty on the Academy to assess and control the degree of stress in the workplace.
- The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Academy not to discriminate against employees who suffer from a disability under the act which includes long term ill health caused by stress at work.

While the SCITT has no control over external or personal factors it is committed to managing stress and risks within its control, and to providing support to employees who are suffering from stress.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure the physical and mental health of all employees;
- To promote a healthy, safe and friendly working environment and control and reduce risks to mental health;

- To help provide and maintain a supportive and non judgmental working environment;
- To provide effective support to all employees in managing stress and other mental health problems, and to encourage better recognition of mental health issues; and
- To recognize that the prevention of stress is easier than dealing with it once it has arisen.

Stress and its Recognition

Stress is a natural reaction to excessive pressure that is experienced by everybody. When stress is experienced consistently over a period of time its effects can become detrimental and lead to further and more serious psychological and physical illnesses. Stress itself can be caused by an infinite number of variables which will vary enormously in different individuals and personal factors like family problems can easily affect an individual's work, while work based factors like bullying, lack of training or poor working conditions can just as easily spill over into the home.

Recognising stress can be difficult as its effects will vary from person to person but the following signs can sometimes indicate that someone is experiencing difficulty:

- Changes in behaviour;
- Indecisiveness;
- Absenteeism; or

Although the SCITT has no control over external factors which may be more difficult to identify the Health and Safety Executive has identified 6 main causes of stress at work which the SCITT can affect:

1. Demands made on employees;
2. The level of control employees have over their work;
3. The support employees receive from managers and colleagues;
4. The clarity of an employee's role within the organization;
5. The nature of relationships at work; and
6. The way that changes are managed.

The SCITT is aware that stress is easier to manage before it becomes a problem and with that in mind will endeavour to operate in a fashion that takes all of the above factors into account **and to ensure clear timeframes are given to allow trainees time to plan work** . **The SCITT will also always be open to discuss** how an alteration of one or more of these factors might produce a better working environment.

Principles

- The SCITT will conduct an annual assessment of the risks to employees' health, both mental and physical, based on data collected from staff at work including absence data, staff turnover, grievance cases, accidents and exit interviews.
- The SCITT will always listen to any concerns that employees may have. The individual responsible for such concerns is the SCITT director. All such concerns will be treated with respect and dignity, and employees will be provided with the necessary information to make informed decisions.
- The SCITT recognizes that stress and other mental health issues may require periods of sick leave or absence in order to recover from stress.
- Where necessary the SCITT will facilitate the managed return to work of employees who have been absent due to stress.

- All cases will be dealt with in accordance with the SCITT's policy on equality and diversity.
- All discussions, requests for help and advice will be kept strictly confidential and the information gathered will be held **in accordance with the GDPR and the NWSCITT Privacy statement.**