

Employee Wellbeing Charter



Dudley Academies Trust is fully committed to placing emotional health and wellbeing at the heart of our decision-making. We will support employees to make positive choices for their own wellbeing and encourage an open and understanding culture across and between all roles in the Trust.

Specifically, we commit to develop a long-term strategy for improving employee wellbeing and we will:



Prioritise employee mental health



Support colleagues to take responsibility for own and others' wellbeing



Provide managers with tools and resources to support wellbeing



Establish a clear communications policy



Give employees a voice in decision-making



Drive down unnecessary workload



Champion flexibility in working where appropriate



Create a good behaviour culture



Support employees to progress their careers



Support senior leaders' wellbeing and mental health sub strategy



Hold ourselves accountable by measuring wellbeing



Department for Education



**Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families**

Supported by resources from:

In detail, this means that the Trust will:



Prioritise employee emotional health

We will tackle emotional health stigma within the Trust, promoting an open and understanding culture.

- Give the same consideration and support to emotional health as physical health, including in the management of employee absence.
- Fulfil our legal duty to control the risks associated with work-related stress in the education setting so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Channel support to individuals whose role has a significant emotional component. This might take the form of peer support, supervision, and/or counselling along with employee assistance provision.
- Ensure that employee understand the real benefits that sensitive pastoral support can have, while also recognising where their limits are as non-specialists.
- Ensure there are opportunities to increase joint working in support of pupils/learners, as well as routes to refer for specialist support.
- Ensure there are mental health trained colleagues in every Academy.



Give employees the support they need to take responsibility for their own and other people's wellbeing

We will empower employees to take ownership of their own wellbeing and look out for the wellbeing of others. This will include ensuring that all employees are familiar with the different dimensions of wellbeing, including mental health, financial wellbeing and physical wellbeing. We will ensure that employees know how to access appropriate guidance, support and tools, and that their use is encouraged throughout the organisation. Our employee assistance programme will offer confidential support for counselling, physical and mental health, financial and legal issues and will be available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week all year round.

We will operate a buddy system for all new employees who join the Trust in their first year.



Give managers' access to the tools and resources they need to support the wellbeing of those they line manage.

We will work to provide managers with tools, resources and training to support their employees. However, we will not expect managers to provide professional wellbeing support for which they have no professional training and will ensure that there are clear routes in place to escalate for further support.

Managers are able to confidentially sign post colleagues to our employee assistance programme with joint agreement of employees where this is felt appropriate.



Establish a clear communications policy

We will provide clear guidance to all stakeholders (internal and external) on remote and out-of-school hours working, including when it is and is not reasonable to expect employees to respond to queries.

This does not necessarily include preventing employees from accessing email outside of core working hours if it suits them personally and will encourage the use of out of office and send later tools through ICT communication systems. Appropriate access to SLT colleagues will be maintained to ensure employees have appropriate access to discuss challenges and issues during the school day.



Give employees a voice in decision-making

We will constantly strive to improve the ways in which the voice of employees is included in the decision-making process across the Trust. (This may also include engagement with key stakeholders, such as recognised trade unions and others.) In particular, we will proactively seek to draw upon the experience of those with emotional health issues and/or of discrimination.

Colleagues will be invited to join a trust-wide working group to focus specifically on workload and wellbeing. The Trust will create opportunities to provide feedback, including employees voice sessions hosted by senior trust colleagues.

Wellbeing monitoring systems will be used to gather trust wide anonymous feedback to regularly inform developments around employee voice and wellbeing.



Drive down unnecessary workload

We will work proactively to drive down unnecessary workload, making use of available tools such as the DfE Workload Reduction Toolkit for schools, improvements in ICT and data systems and consider employees workload with the implementation of each new or revised policy.

The Trust will take a sensible approach to implementing 1265 with sensible time allocations to support wellbeing and workload, along with discussion and support from union representatives. Teaching allocations will be reviewed at least annually in line with the Trust's approach to curriculum led financial planning to ensure fairness and consistency and value for money.

Data collections will consider whether the workload and timing is appropriate and will only require data where there is clear benefit to education outcomes.

Deadlines, calendars and meetings will be well publicised in advance, and an annual calendar produced before the end of the summer term, with opportunities to provide feedback through consultation.



Champion flexible working and diversity

We will work to create a supportive culture around flexible working subject to the educational and operational needs of the Trust. We will agree an approach that not only recognises employees' legal right to request flexible working but also acknowledge that for some employees working flexibly can be a key means of protecting and enhancing their personal wellbeing.

The Trusts' Family Leave Policy and Flexible Working Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure they provide the most flexible approaches and will include a generous approach to family appointments, and colleagues own children's school events.

We will work to promote diversity – eliminating potential discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity diversity and equity among employees.



Create a good behaviour culture through our Values Driven Expectations

We will work with employees and pupils/learners to maintain and implement the Trust-wide behaviour policy. All employees and pupils/learners will have a shared understanding of how good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded, and the sanctions imposed if pupils/learners misbehave. We will support teachers to create calm, safe and disciplined environments, which allow teachers to teach and pupils/learners to learn. Our approach will go hand-in-hand with understanding and supporting pupil/learner emotional health issues.



Support employees to progress in their careers

We will ensure that employees are able to pursue professional development without adversely affecting their own or other people's workload. In our academies, we will align any professional development activity to the Standard for Teachers' Professional Development and relevant standards for Associate employees.

There will be a trust-wide career pathway and CPD programme for all employees to recognise the career development opportunities available through the Trust. A programme of adult education courses will be offered through the Trusts' sponsor Dudley College of Technology as well as annual investment in employees training through revenue and apprenticeship levy funds.



Include a sub-strategy for protecting leader wellbeing and mental health

We will ensure that all those with strategic decision-making responsibility (including as appropriate Local Advisory Committee members and Trustees) collaborate to develop a sub-strategy specifically for protecting leader emotional health. This will include access to confidential counselling and/or coaching where needed. Trust policies will give due consideration to the workload requirements of implementation in areas such as PMR and lesson observations.



Hold ourselves accountable, including by measuring employee wellbeing

We will measure the wellbeing of employees using recognised tools and metrics and be transparent about results. We will monitor trends over time, and act in response to changes. Further, we will work with employees and relevant stakeholders (this might include parents/carers, recognised trade unions and others) to agree an approach to organisational accountability on our commitments, giving due consideration to workload.

Other measures that will support employee wellbeing include:



Complimentary tea, coffee, sugar, and milk in the staff room



Annual flu jabs for all employees aged under 50 available upon request each winter



Calendared wellbeing weeks with no meetings and specific wellbeing activities



Cycle to work scheme available for all employees



Free counselling, legal and financial services for all employees and their household members



Employees social events calendar



Employee sport and activity provision using Trust facilities



Employee awards scheme



Employees Laptop (for most roles)



Employee Discounts