

Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Version	1.2
Approving Body	Trust Board
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Review date	30th September 2029
Owner	Director of People & Culture
Applies to	All Trust Schools, all Trust staff

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	October 2020	To establish a Trust wide policy
1.1	October 2023	Periodic review
1.2	September 2026	Amendment to sections 3, 4, 5, 6. New section 8 & appendix 1

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1. Policy statement

1.1 Initio Learning Trust has developed an employee wellbeing policy to manage its duty of care to promote 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, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

1.2 The aim of this policy is to describe the Trust's commitment to the promoting positive mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how we fulfil our legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The Trust recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved performance.

1.3 This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

2.1 The procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

3. Responsibilities

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

3.2 The Trust will give regard to ACAS, Government & Health & Safety Executive guidance on this topic.

3.3 In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

3.4 The Trust will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support.

3.5 Line managers

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, 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 Trust's policies on equality and diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment, discrimination and sexual harassment issues. Managers should also familiarise themselves with the ACAS publication on Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace.

3.6 In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing and should:

- Have an understanding of mental health and potential causes of this

- Make a commitment to improve mental health at work
- Champion awareness of mental health and fight any stigma attached to this
- Identify ways to improve workplace well being
- Tackle the causes of mental ill health
- Ensure staff have resources and support including UKHealthcare services.

Examples of how this can be achieved are as follows:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations and working environments are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.
- ensuring staff have resources and support if they are suffering from mental ill health • work with trade unions / employee representative groups on ways to promote positive mental health
- educate the workforce about mental health

3.7 Human resources / People Team support

The Trust will engage with their People Team for HR support to develop Trust-wide policies and procedures, to protect the wellbeing of employees, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

The Trust operates practices and policies that ensure staff are able to achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and other commitments, and adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998.

All schools have an assigned People Business Partner, whom staff can contact confidentially if they don't feel able to talk to their line manager.

3.8 Occupational health

The Trust has engaged occupational health professionals who will provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, 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 Trust, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

3.9 Occupational health professionals will play a critical part in developing rehabilitation plans and advising on reasonable adjustments for employees returning to work after absences related to mental ill health, and work with GPs and line managers on designing jobs and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is safe, sustainable and successful. Advice will also be taken from our occupational health professionals regarding design and implementation of any suitable health promotion and lifestyle behaviour management programmes.

3.10 Employees

Employees must 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 the Trust if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the People department or the occupational health service 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 Trust 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) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) 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, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Records will be kept in accordance with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

4. Health promotion initiatives

4.1 The Trust will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing. The Trust's Senior Leadership Team will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes alongside partnering with National College to source tailored training, learning and development for staff. Line managers and employees will be encouraged to participate and champion this in their local setting.

4.2 Examples of the types of initiatives that can be run:

- mental health: stress, anxiety and depression (SAD) management and awareness;
- disability & neurodiversity awareness;
- bullying and harassment;
- preventing sexual harassment at work;
- trauma informed care awareness;
- domestic violence awareness;
- PTSD awareness;
- menopause awareness and action plans;
- reasonable adjustments & equality impact assessments awareness;
- handling violence and traumatic incidents at work;
- lifestyle behaviours, with voluntary screening (for example in relation to alcohol, drugs and smoking); and
- physical activity and fitness

This list is not exhaustive.

4.3 Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and staff network groups designed to foster wellbeing and diverse and inclusive safe spaces.

5. Training and communications

5.1 Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs 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. Staff have access to the National College platform which offers a wide variety of specific training, learning & development courses and webinars, which staff can navigate and access independently.

5.2 Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress assessments and 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 Trust-wide methods. The Trust will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns. The Trust recognises the importance of two-way feedback and can only review and consider information available to them to act upon.

5.3 The Trust will consider tailored communication media channels during periods of Trust organisational change.

6. Occupational health support

6.1 Employees can speak to their line managers if they would like to be considered for support from occupational health. A comprehensive occupational health service is available, from individual health screening to the design of return-to-work plans for those rehabilitating after a period of long-term sickness absence. Line managers should liaise with their People Business Partner to explore this option.

6.2 Workplace wellbeing services provided by the occupational health team include:

- workstation assessments;
- pre-employment screening;
- fitness-for-work assessments;
- eye tests for users of visual display screen equipment;
- health and safety training.

6.3 If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands, and raise issues such as identified training needs. If an employee cites stress, please read the Trust's Stress Management Policy in conjunction with this policy.

6.4 A referral to the occupational health team will be made, with approval from the schools People Business Partner, if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager. 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 any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the Trust.

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

- the Trust's employee assistance programme;
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination);
- subsidised gym/sports facilities;
- stress management online training;
- special leave arrangements;
- menopause action plan;
- wellness action plan;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities and neurodivergence; and
- the Trust's grievance policy.

7. Relationship with other policies

7.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including policies on; work life balance, special leave, flexible working, menopause, stress management, preventing sexual harassment at work, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, violence at work, equal opportunities and staff training and development.

8. Review

This policy is reviewed and amended every 3 years by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this code of conduct to ensure it is working effectively.

APPENDIX 1

Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis (EIA)

Step 1: Scoping and Identifying the Aims

School/Service	People Department
Title of Change:	Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing policy
What are you completing this EIA for?	Policy
Is this a new or existing activity or change?	Existing
What are the main aims / objectives of the changes?	Ensure policy is still relevant and the most current legislation is being adhered to.
What is the context for this EIA? e.g., policy, practice, service, curriculum proposal or project?	
Why is the activity/change needed? E.g., The policy or practice affect different “protected groups” differently?, enhancing of services, education	
Name/s of people/Date undertaking analysis:	Shani Davies, Director People & Culture
Who will be affected by this activity/change? eg pupils/students, service users, employees, wider community	All Staff in scope of this policy
Does it relate to an area with known inequalities? E.g., access to service for disabled people, pupils/students, vulnerable pupils/students, SEND, racist bullying etc.	
EIA Schedule: When will the EIA be reviewed?	

Step 2: Assessing the Impact

Detail any positive or negative impacts of this document /policy on pupils/students and staff in the box below. If there is no impact, please select “not applicable”

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)	NA	Action to address negative impact: (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Sex consider issues for: men and women, non-binary.	Y			
Gender reassignment E.g. privacy of data and harassment	Y			
Disability e.g., attitudes, physical, social barriers, visible and non-immediately visible disabilities, neurodivergence, learning disability	Y			
Age e.g., consider all ages but there may be some issues that relate for example to older people/younger people	Y			
Sexual Orientation consider heterosexual as well as lesbian, gay and bisexual (and other sexual orientations)	Y			
Pregnancy and maternity	Y			

e.g., childcare, working arrangements, part time working				
Marriage and civil partnership	Y			
Religion or belief consider religions, beliefs, or no belief	Y			
Ethnicity / Race e.g., language barriers, different ethnic groups/nationalities	Y			
Socio-economic factors e.g., resident status – socio economic/low-income groups, migrants, carers, impacts on children and families (please state)	Y			
Mental health e.g. short term, long term, acute, fluctuating mental health conditions, impacts	Y			

If you answer yes to any of the following, you MUST complete the evidence column explaining what information you have considered which has led you to reach this decision.

Assessment Questions	Yes / No	Please document evidence / any mitigations
In consideration of your document development, did you consult with others, for example, external organisations, employees, pupils/students, carers or community groups?	Yes	Staff and Trade Unions
Have you taken into consideration any regulations, professional standards?	Yes	Equality Act 2010, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Worker protection Act 2023, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, KCSIE, ACAS, CIPD

Step 3: Review, Risk and Action Plans

Low – No major change	Medium - Adjust the policy	High – Stop and remove
The activity is robust and there is no potential for discrimination, and you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance and foster relations between groups.	This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy/project altogether. If the activity shows unlawful discrimination, it must be removed or changed.

How would you rate the overall level of impact / risk to the school / service / Trust if no action was taken?	Low x ☐	Medium ☐	High ☐
What action needs to be taken to reduce or eliminate the negative impact?	N/A		
Who will be responsible for monitoring and regular review of the document / policy / change?	Director People & Culture		

Step 4: Authorisation and sign off

I am satisfied that all available evidence has been accurately assessed for any potential impact on pupils/students and employees with protected characteristics in the scope of this project / change / policy / procedure / practice / activity. Mitigation, where appropriate has been identified and dealt with accordingly.

Equality Assessor:	Shani Davies	Date:	19/2/26
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