



THE BLACKBURN  
DIOCESAN BOARD  
OF EDUCATION

# Supporting Wellbeing & Mental Health

in Church of England  
High Schools and Academies

**God's peace, which is far beyond human  
understanding, will keep your hearts and minds  
Safe in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7**

Approved on	
Next review	
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## CONTENTS

Introduction	2
12 Steps to support the Wellbeing & Mental Health of School Staff & Pupils	3
Diocesan Policy Templates	5
Pupil wellbeing and mental health – Template Policy	6
Staff wellbeing and mental health – Template policy	13
Diocesan Support for Wellbeing and Mental Health through the Service Level Agreement:	20
Senior Leaders Overnight Retreat	
What is a retreat?	
When are they available?	
Senior Leaders Overnight Retreat Comments and Reflections	21
Annual Quiet Day	
What is a Quiet Day? Where are they held?	
Who can attend and how can they aid mental health and wellbeing?	
Can a school commission a bespoke quiet day for staff?	22
Advent Quiet Day Comments and Reflections	23
Wellbeing and Mental Health – Sign posting Diocesan Board of Education, Local Authority and outside agencies support services	24
Appendix 1 - Exemplar Quiet Day	28

## INTRODUCTION

A key feature of Church of England Schools and Academies is the Christian ethos and distinctiveness which shapes the educational and social experience of everyone in the school community. Embedded in this experience is the potential to nurture the health and wellbeing of the staff and pupils as part of an holistic education system focused on human flourishing. This focus encourages a real encounter with the Christian faith and a living out the *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* 2016. [The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education's Vision 2026](#) states that:

*We want our church schools to be known as places which raise expectations, nurture and develop ambitions where individuals and communities aspire to achieve those things which are fulfilling, life-affirming, constructive and fruitful.*

The positive approach towards wellbeing and mental health, together with good partnerships with working agencies such as Mencap and health services, ensures that all are supported within the church school setting. The implementation of mental health and wellbeing policies linked with curriculum opportunities and health education enable spiritual development for all to live *'life in all its fullness'* John 10:10.

This booklet has a specific focus for High Schools and Academies and aims to complement the recent publication from the National Society *Mental Health and Wellbeing: Towards a Whole School Approach*, 2018. The policies within this booklet are based on The Church of England Education Office's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Template. They have been enhanced for the North West of England context and directly address the needs of both staff and pupils. The enclosed extra documents are to further aid and support the school's own reflective practice when reviewing how they meet the needs of the whole school community.

The passage in which this booklet is rooted comes from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians; **"God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus" [Philippians 4:6-7]**

The passage speaks of how God's peace is always there for His people even when they may feel they are beyond help. As a diocese we are committed to supporting and enabling all, wherever possible, to engage with the message Paul gives in this letter as we provide in our schools for those of all faiths and no faith, quality experiences and guidance.

As a model we recommend the 12 steps to support the wellbeing and mental health of staff and pupils which you will find within this document.

## 12 STEPS TO SUPPORT THE WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH OF STAFF & PUPILS

The unique setting and environment of each school or academy impacts on how the wellbeing and mental health of staff and pupil is supported.

These 12 steps have been developed to enable school leaders to reflect on their current provision and develop it further. The inspiration for the 12 steps is rooted in the good practice and research led by the Anna Freud National Centre for children and families. As Christian Communities, Church Schools seek to live out the gospel, which directs them to *'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another' John 13:34*

In order to audit how well the school meets the needs of staff and pupils, all these 12 steps are shaped as questions for reflection and to aid the whole school development plan and self-evaluation process.

1: Who is the lead responsible for coordinating the school's approach to staff and pupils' wellbeing and mental health? How do they ensure that mental health remains on the school agenda?

2: Does the mental health policy address the needs of staff and pupils? Is the policy regularly reviewed? How is the policy embedded and communicated so that all staff and pupils are aware of it?

3: How effectively does the ethos of the school promote openness about mental wellbeing and encourage staff and pupils to feel comfortable sharing concerns?

4: Do the opportunities for supervision help staff feel confident they are taking the right decisions when supporting pupils and peers experiencing complex issues? (e.g. including safeguarding and mental health)

5: How is supervision offered outside of line management for those who do not feel comfortable approaching their manager with concerns about their mental wellbeing? How do staff access sources of support such as external agencies, school chaplain and local clergy?

6: Do the measures in place reduce workload and limit hours spent working outside the school day to a minimum? Do Senior leaders lead by example when it comes to limiting emailing at evenings and weekends?

7: Where are the comfortable, designated physical spaces within and around the school grounds where pupils and members of staff can take time out if needed? E.g. School Chapel, and areas for prayer and reflection.

8: What are the regular opportunities for staff to participate in activities with colleagues that are not linked to their work? For example: *prayer spaces in school* (a reflection resource) and prayer groups, exercise classes, creative groups.

9: Do regular staff and pupil wellbeing surveys aid understanding of key issues, inform changes and impact on any measures you take to support staff and pupils' wellbeing in your school?

10: In the Headteacher's report to the Governing Body: how is the mental wellbeing of staff and pupils reported and evaluated?

11: How well do staff and pupils regularly access opportunities for the sacramental ministry of the church, during the school week? For example: the eucharist.

12: How regularly do members of staff access diocesan programmes for mental health and wellbeing? For example: Quiet Days and Retreats

## DIOCESAN POLICY TEMPLATES

In this section you will find two separate policies one for the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and one to address the mental health and wellbeing of members of staff. These two policy templates have been created to meet the needs of Church High Schools and Academies in the north west context, responding to both national policy and diocesan guidelines. These templates offer the opportunity for you to personalise the policies to meet the needs of your school and its trust deed. It is recommended that they are displayed within the policy section of your school website, so that they are easily available to all.

# Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy [enter name] Church of England School

**This policy is based on The Church of England Education Office's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Template, which has been enhanced for the North West of England context.**

**"God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding,  
will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus"  
[Philippians 4:6-7]**

## Policy Statement

The passage from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians assures the followers of Christ that God's peace is always there for His people, even when they feel that they are beyond human help. St Paul is encouraging them to reach out to God at such times. Here at (insert name of school) we aim to enable all to engage with this message by providing quality experiences for all our pupils which will nurture and support their mental health and sense of wellbeing. Therefore, ensuring that...

*Mental health is 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 Organization]*

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

[add the school's Christian Vision Statement here]

We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every pupil within a Christian setting, supported by our school's Vision and values. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected, both directly and indirectly, by mental health and wellbeing issues.

## Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils within a distinctively Christian environment, guided by our Vision and chosen values
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

### Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the good mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Insert appropriate roles and names, for example ...]

- Designated Safeguarding Officer – [Insert name]
- Designated Senior Leader – [Insert name]
- Special Educational Needs and Disability [SEND] [Insert name]
- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead – [Insert name]
- Lead First Aider – [Insert name]
- Pastoral Lead – [Insert name]
- PSHCE Leader – [Insert name]
- Safeguarding Governor – [Insert name]

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed, with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Office staff or the head teacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by [insert name], Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix [insert appendix number/title].



## Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

## Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Supported by our school's Christian Vision, we will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than harms.

## Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it will be explained by the school's Lead Professional during CPD sessions.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupils seeking help by ensuring that they understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next
- The location of safe spaces/reflection areas within our Christian environment [you may wish to signpost what is available in school]

## Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with **[insert name]**, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead **[or other appropriate title]**.

### **Possible warning signs include:**

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be for the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file [or the system/method preferred by the school, e.g recording on CPOMS]. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, **[insert name]** who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

## Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on, then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. This is the case particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead [or appropriate position in your school] [insert name]. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil. In addition, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of their child and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Officer [insert name] must be informed immediately.

## Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away, where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions. Consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have *many* questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to and how to go about this if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

## Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

### **Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:**

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection/safeguarding training. This will enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process. The school will access training and support from the Diocese when appropriate and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where developing situations with one or more pupils occur.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with **[insert name]**, our CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every **[Insert appropriate time scale]**. It is next due for review in **[month/year]**.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to **[insert name]** our mental health lead via phone **[insert phone number]** or email **[insert email address]**.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

## **Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** **[enter name] Church of England School**

**“God’s peace, which is far beyond human understanding,  
will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus”  
[Philippians 4:6-7]**

### **Policy Statement**

The passage from St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians assures the followers of Christ that God’s peace is always there for His people, even when they feel that they are beyond human help. St Paul is encouraging them to reach out to God at such times. Here at **(insert name of school)** we aim to enable all to engage with this message by providing quality experiences for all our staff which will nurture and support their mental health and sense of wellbeing. Therefore, ensuring that....

*“Mental health is 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]*

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:

**[add the school’s Christian Vision Statement here]**

### **Introduction**

We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every member of our staff, within a Christian setting, supported by our school’s Vision and values, recognising and responding to need as it arises. As a church school, our relationships and care for each other are rooted in the Christian concepts of love and compassion and this policy has these imperatives at its heart.

The School, as employer, has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as is reasonably practicable. It is also required to have in place measures to mitigate, as far as practicable, factors that could harm employees’ physical and mental wellbeing, which includes work-related stress. This duty extends only to those factors which are work-related and within the School’s control.

This policy accepts the Health and Safety Executive definition of work-related stress as “the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. There is an important distinction between “reasonable pressures” which stimulate and motivate and “stress” where an individual feels they are unable to cope with excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.

This policy recognises that there are many sources of work-related stress and that stress can result from the actions or behaviours of managers, employees or students.

## **Aims of the Policy**

As a school community, supported by our Christian Vision and values, we aim to:

- develop a healthy, motivated workforce that is able to deliver a high standard of education to students;
- help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members; recognising the impact work can have on employees’ stress levels, mental and physical health;
- encourage an atmosphere in which members of staff feel comfortable in asking for help when it is needed;
- recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness;
- communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly;
- respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members;
- provide staff with training to deal positively with stressful incidents and give them a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies;
- make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work-related health and wellbeing issues.

The Health and Safety Executive [HSE] has produced a number of Management Standards which cover the primary sources of stress at work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. These are:

- demands – i.e. workload, work patterns and the work environment;
- control – i.e. how much say the person has in the way they do their work;
- support – i.e. the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues;
- relationships – i.e. promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable Behaviour;

- role – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles;
- change – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated within the organisation.

The School will self-assess its performance on wellbeing and stress management in the context of the HSE Management Standards.

## **Statement of Intent**

The School's Governors and Senior Managers acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health and that there is a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote employee wellbeing as far as is reasonably practicable. There is the commitment to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with dignity and can work at their optimum level.

The Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy expands upon the School's Health and Safety Policy [or your school's particular name for this policy], setting out how the School will promote the wellbeing of employees by:

- creating a working environment where potential work-related stress is, as far as is practicable, avoided, minimised or mitigated through good management practices, effective Human Resources policies and staff development;
- increasing managers' and employees' awareness of the causes and effects of stress;
- developing a culture that is open and supportive of people experiencing stress or other forms of mental ill-health;
- developing the competence of managers through the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours framework, so that they manage staff effectively and fairly;
- engaging with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships, both within teams and across the school;
- establishing working arrangements whereby employees feel they are able to maintain an appropriate work life balance;
- encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing through effective health promotion programmes and initiatives;
- encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own work and effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.



## Roles

### The governing body will:

- take overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that staff, including the Headteacher, enjoy a reasonable work-life balance;
- adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns, etc., where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school;
- ensure that clear procedures are in place that will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as the Capability or Disciplinary Policy;
- provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision making processes;
- review the demands on staff and seek practical solutions wherever possible;
- provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building, etc.

### The Headteacher will:

- ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard;
- support the governing body in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress;
- ensure that staff are aware of the sources of support available to them and encourage them to participate in events and initiatives undertaken by the School to promote wellbeing and more effective working;
- adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off for public or trade union duties, or for personal reasons [For further information refer to our School's Absence Management Policy [\[or your school's appropriate policy\]](#)];
- ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life;
- create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns and enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness;
- encourage staff to be fully involved in the decisions of the school through staff forums in which staff can talk freely about any issues which impact on their ability to carry out their jobs;
- monitor and review any measures that are planned and assess their effectiveness;
- conduct risk assessment for work-related stress in consultation with senior staff;
- appoint a staff wellbeing co-ordinator [\[if appropriate to the needs of your school\]](#) who is responsible for ensuring that the good health and wellbeing of all staff members is supported, promoted and valued by the school. The co-ordinator will also ensure that school policies and procedures reflect this aim;
- make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer-term reasonable adjustments to work;

- instigate an annual staff survey to gather feedback on this Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy [if appropriate to the school]

#### **Staff members will:**

- make themselves aware of the school's policies on Capability, Whistleblowing, Bullying and Harassment, Staff Attendance etc [or your school's appropriate policies];
- assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues;
- take responsibility, where possible, for their own health and wellbeing by adopting healthy lifestyles;
- ask their Line Manager for help or support if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their well-being. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and therefore it is important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads;
- identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school;
- apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance and be honest about sickness absence leaves;
- share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.

#### **Actions to support new staff**

##### **Practical actions to support new staff**

- All staff will be given a school orientation by the Headteacher [or appropriate Senior Leader].
- All new staff will receive the staff induction pack/staff handbook, including photographs of key personnel. This will include all important policies, or their location, and will include this policy on health and wellbeing.
- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required.
- Any other support actions offered by the school – e.g. introductory session with the school's Chaplain and/or Head of Worship, guidance on leading Form Group Worship, scheduled regular support meetings with their Line Manager, etc, etc.

## Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing

- The Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy Head, and other managers) must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The Senior Leadership Team should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.
- Where additional, professional advice is required, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised.
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or support from the Local Authority e.g. counselling.
- During this time, the school will ensure that the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

## Procedures to promote staff wellbeing

Include here the procedures/opportunities offered to the staff by the School. These could include any of the following, as well as strategies unique to your own setting:

- Twice weekly communication via morning staff briefings.
- Continuing professional development for all staff.
- A designated quiet area for reflection, prayer, 'space'.
- Opportunities for voluntary staff prayer meetings/Eucharists.
- Opportunities for quiet days and retreats.
- A peer to peer support system for all members of staff – e.g. the Guardian Angel approach
- Quarterly/termly social events.
- Performance management.
- Annual job description meetings.
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan.
- All staff invited to INSET days.
- Recognition of staff birthdays/special occasions/successes.
- An annual celebration service for staff, giving thanks for their work, achievements and dedication, including those who are leaving the school.
- Rooms/areas for each faculty to relax, work and support colleagues.
- After-school wellbeing sessions with such activities as yoga, dancing, keep fit.

- Consultative staff meetings held once a term to give staff the opportunity to voice concerns and to have their views sought.
- Staff weekly breakfast – tea and toast / bacon butties / coffee and croissants.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published to all staff and promoted in school. Its contents will be covered during general induction training sessions for new employees.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by [insert appropriate person, e.g. the Headteacher, or a governors' committee] with regular reports made to the [insert relevant governors' committee or Full Governors' Meeting].

This policy will be reviewed every [insert timeline] by [insert appropriate personnel/committee]. It is next due for review in [insert month/year].

## Diocesan Support for Wellbeing and Mental Health through the Service Level Agreement:

### Senior Leaders Overnight Retreat

#### What is a Retreat?

Trevor Miller of the Northumbria Community writes a brief explanation:

*In its simplest form 'Retreat', means 'to withdraw, to drawback.' Throughout the ages, the Christian tradition has understood Retreat to be an important part of spiritual formation. That is, time consciously set aside for God, a change of focus, a deliberate act of stepping outside of normal routine by withdrawing (not running away) from the noise and pressures; the immediate and insistent claims of our social, domestic and workaday responsibilities in order to be in a quiet place where all our senses are open and ready to listen to God.*

Henri Nouwen wrote “we ‘can be preoccupied with being occupied.’”, A retreat gives the opportunity for a person to know them self better be more aware of a sacramental world; and to be content with God alone. However, the principal purpose is to seek God for himself as the ‘one thing necessary’ and therefore learn to ‘love him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength’.

The retreat programme is similar in shape to a series of quiet days (**see section on Quiet Days**) and the use of scripture, silence, prayer and reflection are key elements. Diocesan Advisors highlight this style of retreat as part of the wellbeing for senior staff, governors and pupils. The ways silence can be used is outlined in **Appendix 1 Suggestions for using the time of silence**.

#### When are they available?

The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education is committed to providing a Senior Leaders Retreat in Lent every year, to which all are invited. **This overnight retreat is not part of the Service Level Agreement**. It is a compulsory part of the DBE Services Christian Leadership Course which is run across the five north west dioceses. The retreat is held at Whalley Abbey most years or another local retreat centre and the themes are set around the season of Lent with reflections on Christian Leadership.

Further information is found on the diocesan website [www.bdeducation.org.uk](http://www.bdeducation.org.uk)

## Diocesan Senior Leaders Retreat Comments and Reflections

I found it very emotional but also very rewarding. I reconnected with my faith and found a lot about myself.

Going following an Ofsted and SIAMS inspection turned out to be the perfect timing refocusing me and nurturing my faith

“The retreat was a real blessing. The time to pause, coupled with the inspirational reflections, allowed me to discover a renewed clarity of thought about my purpose as a leader. The time spent in silence and prayer proved especially fruitful – I left re-energised, inspired and joyous. Thank you.”

I would tell everyone to embrace the experience and the silence!

## Diocesan Support for Wellbeing and Mental Health through the Service Level Agreement:

### Annual Quiet Day

#### What is a Quiet Day?

Quiet Days are days which are intended to provide Senior Leaders and Staff from Church Schools with the space to “be” before God and also about making space for oneself. God works in the spaces and the silences within. A quiet day is not a ‘working day’ it is a day when school staff can step out of their normal routine, so it is important to have space and times of silence as part of a quiet day.

#### Where are they held? Who can attend and how can it aid mental health and wellbeing?

The Diocese of Blackburn holds a number of Quiet Days as part of the Retreat and Quiet Days programme at various retreat centres across the north.

The Board of Education holds an annual Advent or Epiphany Quiet Day. **All schools may send a member of staff on this quiet day as part of the Service Level Agreement.** The Quiet Day is usually held at local retreat centre or sometimes in a similar retreat house setting e.g. St Joseph’s House of prayer , Tunstall. It is an opportunity for staff to relax, reflect and pray and so to renew their spiritual resources, reflecting on themes from the Christian season.

The programme for the day is kept very simple to provide maximum space for the individual—the hope is that each person will use what is offered in a way that is helpful to them, as an aid to their mental health and wellbeing. Senior leaders may nominate themselves, with the support of their Chair of Governors, to take time out on such days. They may also recommend the day to a member of staff who they feel would benefit. However, it is important that this day is advertised to staff so they equally can approach senior leaders for permission to attend.

#### Can a school commission a bespoke quiet day for staff?

Bespoke Days for Schools are available from the High Schools and Academies team throughout the year. Further information is available from [helen.sage@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:helen.sage@blackburn.anglican.org) or [hilary.wilby@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:hilary.wilby@blackburn.anglican.org)

## Diocesan Advent Quiet Day Comments and Reflections

*I found the quiet day to be a wonderful experience. ... such an inspirational speaker and I really valued being able to focus on my own religious and spiritual development*

*The theme 'Love came down at Christmas' was well-chosen and allowed me to reflect on my work and personal life and to see where changes could be made.*

*A thought provoking, reflective day in a beautiful, peaceful setting.*

*The Communion Service was a lovely part of the day that I think all of us enjoyed sharing very much*

Annual Diocesan  
Advent Quiet Day  
some recent  
Comments and  
Reflections

*I haven't attended one of these days before, but I would definitely do so again, and would recommend it to colleagues.*

*Perfect for this time of year and I really appreciated being able to relax and have the time to really absorb what he was saying. I found the day to be not only thought provoking, but actually*



## Wellbeing and Mental Health – Sign posting Diocesan, Local Authority and Outside Agencies support services

### Diocesan Contact Information

#### Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education

Stephen Whittaker

Director of Education

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Helen Sage

Adviser to High Schools and Academies

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#### Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education

##### **Stuart Harrison**

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##### **David Thorpe**

Assistant Diocesan Director of Education [Acting] and Senior Diocesan Schools Adviser

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##### **Jane Griffiths**

Diocesan Schools and Academies Adviser

0151 705 2190

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### Local Authority Contact information and services

#### **Mental Health Support Teams**

**Blackburn with Darwen**

Contact: [blackburnwithdarwenccg.nhs.uk](http://blackburnwithdarwenccg.nhs.uk)

Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) secured funding to implement NHS England's new Trailblazer programme. This provides mental health support in school to

help both pupils and staff create an environment of mental wellbeing. Blackburn with Darwen has secured additional funding to create two MHSTs (Mental Health Support Teams) for secondary schools and colleges. The Support Teams provide one to one and group therapy for mild to moderate mental health issues, give timely advice to school and college staff, as well as liaise with specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support.

### **Critical Incident Response Team**

**Service Lead:** Anne Ford Principal Educational Psychologist

**Contact:** Anne Ford (Principal Educational Psychologist) on 01254 666887 or the Administration Team on 01254 666860 to request support from CIST.

Blackburn with Darwen Educational Psychology Team is able to offer a Critical Incident Response Team (CIST) which provides psychological support to schools or other educational communities in the event of a traumatic incident.

Settings may wish to request bespoke training from the educational psychology team or book onto our courses on topics such as bereavement and loss.

There is no cost to schools for this service

### **East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Services (ELCAS)**

**Service Lead: Contact: Jo Weller**

**Contact:** 01282 804 806 for General Enquiries:

ELCAS is a specialist mental health service for **children and young people**. Referral to the service may be made by schools with a supporting CAF Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

ELCAS teams help when a young person is experiencing severe, complex and persistent mental health problems and mental health disorders. The focus of the service is on delivering measurable clinical outcomes relating to concerns such as:

- Self-harm and suicide attempts
- Moderate and severe depressive disorders
- Adolescent Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Mental health Issues related to Autistic Spectrum disorders
- Complex neuropsychiatric disorders
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Phobias and Anxiety Disorders
- Trauma and complex PTSD
- Mental health issues associated with physical health problems

If ELCAS deems that the service is unable to be of help, it gives advice to the person referring about other services available such as:

Child Line 0800 1111 (Free 24 hours) or Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

The ELCAS website also signposts links to national organisations other sources of information, support and advice on mental health issues

## Outside Agencies Contact Information and Services

The following list though not exhaustive is a representative sample

### Young Minds

A leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. There are excellent sections on information and advice, with a comprehensive list of publications, websites and helplines.

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

### The Royal College of Psychiatrists

The website has a specific section for young people with factsheets about mental health problems and a list of useful advice and links.

[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfo/youngpeople.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfo/youngpeople.aspx)

### NICE

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence publishes guidelines on high quality, evidence based care for patients using the National Health Service. Many of the difficulties young people we see in ELCAS are experiencing are covered in NICE guidance.

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### ChildLine

Confidential telephone counselling for any child or young person with a problem.

Freephone: 0800 1111 (24 hours)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### Other resources and information on mental health issues

<http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk>

### Local Links

#### ADHD Northwest –

ADHD is committed to providing a free unique support service to empower and improve the wellbeing of individuals and families affected by an Attention Deficit Disorder and associated conditions.

<http://www.adhdnorthwest.org.uk/>

#### Action for ASD

Action for ASD is a charitable body for people affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders.

<http://www.actionasd.org.uk>

#### Child Sexual Exploitation

<https://www.lancashire.police.uk/cse>

Other useful sites

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/youngminds-crisis-messenger/>

**Charlie Waller Memorial Trust (CWMT)**

<https://www.cwmt.org.uk>

The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust was established to increase awareness of the symptoms and dangers of depression amongst young people and remove the stigma that is attached to mental illness. It also encourages those that are well to pick up the symptoms in others and persuade them to get help.

The CWMT provides evidence-based presentations and training to schools and in other youth settings. It also supports employers and line managers to tackle the stigma relating to mental ill health and create a healthy working environment so that employees can perform at their best level.

CWMT publishes free resources for professionals, parents, young people and others interested in mental and emotional wellbeing.

APPENDIX 1

Whalley Abbey Quiet Day: notes for participants

*'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.'* John 10:10

The Abbey Chapel is open to the group throughout the day.

The leaders will be available to the group during the day.

Please feel free to wander around the gardens during the day.

**Suggestions for using the time of silence after and between the talks**

1. Do nothing at all...sit or kneel or lie down...and wait for God to lead, to speak, to put ideas and thoughts and prayers into the mind. Relax and rest. If literally doing nothing at all is impossible, do something creative with the hands.
2. Use something to 'spark off prayer'...the Bible, the hymn book, phrases or short prayers...use something quite short and dwell on it. Read books about prayer or a book of prayers, being prepared to stop reading in order to pray.
3. Walk about in the garden, take photographs to aid reflection, thinking, taking no notice of anyone else, being aware of God.
4. Use the chapel and use the time for your own usual prayers, with the added help that there is more time than usual.
5. Use the time to pray for others...perhaps a few, or only one (not a long list). Bring them to God to share his presence with you in the quietness.
6. Face up to yourself and your particular needs, knowing that God will deal with these if you give him time and room. Do not dwell only on the need but on the receiving of help.
7. A very practical and active use of the time could be to think out, deliberately, your own present method and practice of prayer (private and public worship habits). Plan afresh if necessary...write down ideas to try out. If the present pattern is unsatisfactory, now is your chance to do something about it. **Remember, if you make an ideal plan you will not necessarily be able to keep to it perfectly, but it is worth a try.**
8. If all else fails, do not feel guilty if you do something that does not seem an ideal use of time. If none of these suggestions appeals to you, and you don't find a better way of spending the time, talk to someone about it and decide why it has been unprofitable.

and Finally: LEAVE ALL MOBILE DEVICES TURNED OFF and in your car. This is time out with God and no matter what our good intentions are, it is easy to slip back into work mode if ipads and iphones are within easy reach and on silent. You've put plans in place at school and left them the Abbey number for emergencies, so relax and be with God!



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