**Doc 24: Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy: Redacted Sample**

**Name of Your School**

**Context**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the ‘Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Action Plan’ for enter year. It has also been informed by the NAS/UWT’s sample policy on ‘Health and Wellbeing’.

**A talking, supportive culture**

Staff wellbeing and mental health is led by/overseen by Name of member of staff, role of member of staff.

We recognise the importance of taking care of our teachers, support staff, site staff and adult members of our teaching community. We believe that if we look after the needs of our staff, they will be better able to look after the needs of our young people. Teachers will also be able to teach more effectively and pupils will be more engaged. Pupils will therefore learn better and be more motivated to achieve their academic and social and emotional goals.

Name of school aspires to be a talking community, where staff are encouraged to discuss their physical and mental health openly and to ask for help and support when needed. This includes the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. We do not regard it as a weakness nor a sign of failure when staff acknowledge their stress or physical or mental ill-health. Rather, we consider it an important first step in staff getting the support they need which includes talking it through with a line manager, if appropriate.

**Our responsibility**

It is our responsibility as a caring community to promote positive staff emotional wellbeing. Our duty of care under the Health and Safety Act (2013) requires us to look after the physical and mental health of our staff and we are determined to discharge this duty to the best of our ability. This includes identifying sources of physical and mental ill-health in the school and reducing or removing them entirely.

**The business case**

In addition to improving teachers’ capacity for supporting the mental and emotional health of our young people and improving academic attainment, there are also business-related benefits of taking care of our staff:

* Reduction in staff absence, particularly as a result of stress, anxiety and depression
* Reduction in spending on supply cover
* Higher retention
* Greater pool of applicants to fill vacancies, including from trainees
* Staff stay longer and speak highly of Name of Your School, including when they leave.

**The Teach Well Toolkit**

During the last year, our school has been following the Teach Well Toolkit programme from the Teach Well Alliance to implement a culture of staff wellbeing and mental health. The programme follows a well-established strategy for whole-school change:

1. Identification of issues
2. Action planning to tackle the issues identified
3. Staff feedback on action plan
4. Implementation of action plan
5. Monitoring of progress of action plan
6. Final feedback at end of programme
7. Planning for Year 2 and broad planning for Year 3
8. Written report to governors

The Teach Well Toolkit includes the School Wellbeing iAbacus, developed by the Teach Well Alliance, which enables the school to identify wellbeing and mental health issues, plan to address them and evaluate progress.

**Maslach’s 6 Factors leading to Burnout**

* There is no agreed definition of Burnout and it is not listed in DSM 5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: 5th edition) which is the reference book used by mental health professionals to identify mental illnesses.
* We use the following definition in this policy:

‘…burnout occurs when the balance of deadlines, demands, working hours and

other stressors outstrips rewards, recognition and relaxation.’

(Alexander Michel: Association for Psychological Science).

* The Teach Well Toolkit is partly based on Christina Maslach’s work on Occupational Burnout over the last four decades. Maslach works at the University of Berkeley, California and is a recognised world expert on Burnout. She has identified 6 factors that cause Burnout.
* Maslach agrees that work overload is a major factor in Burnout. Teachers frequently raise workload as a cause of tiredness and exhaustion in surveys, In blogs, on Twitter and in the Press. Maslach believes, however, that addressing workload alone will not solve Burnout. She identifies 5 other factors which must be tackled in order to prevent, reduce or eliminate Burnout.
* The 6 factors, including workload, are:

1. *Workload*: ‘…when the quantity of work exceeds the time available, or when the job is simply too difficult given your current resources…’ (Maslach).
2. *Lack of control* e.g. over decisions, resources, curriculum, testing, data, working day.
3. *Lack of reward*: Pay is not necessarily the main factor – social recognition, acknowledgment and praise are often more important.
4. *Lack of community*: ‘People thrive in community and function best when they share praise, comfort, happiness and humour with people they like and respect. In addition to emotional exchange and instrumental assistance, this kind of social support reaffirms a person’s membership in a group with shared values’ (Maslach).
5. *Lack of fairness*: e.g. promotions are perceived to be biased; favouritism evident; others more appreciated.
6. *Conflict of values*: The values you hold as a teacher – the reasons you went into teaching in the first place - do not coincide with those of the DfE/Govt. Does the school support you or endorse/reinforce/enforce those values?