



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

MANAGING STRESS A MODEL POLICY STATEMENT FOR SCHOOLS

**Agreed by the JDC 27.3.06
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Introduction

This policy is designed to complement the Council's policy on managing stress for its employees in schools. It is part of the School's Health & Safety policy. The Governing Body is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees.

It recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

The Governing Body is responsible for implementation of this policy through the school management structure and it is responsible for providing the necessary resources

Definition of stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as:

"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them"

This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health.

Policy

The Governing Body will ensure that the management of the school

- identifies all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- consults with Trade Union Safety Representatives on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.
- facilitates training for all line managers in good management practices.

- provides access to confidential counselling for employees affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- provides adequate resources to enable line managers to implement this policy.

Responsibilities

Governors

The Governing Body is responsible within the School for ensuring the development of a positive and understanding style of management that supports employees who feel under pressure in the workplace.

Headteachers and Line Managers (the GB in the case of the Headteacher)

Managers are expected to recognise the fact that from time to time, employees may have experiences in their personal lives that may make them vulnerable to pressures at work or have a temporary influence on their work performance.

They will also:

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their jurisdiction.
- Ensure good communication between management and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure employees are appropriately trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure employees are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure a reasonable worklife balance.
- Monitor working hours, holidays and overtime to ensure that employees are not overworking.

- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to an employee who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Managers should conduct joint inspections of the workplace with Health & Safety Representatives at least every 3 months to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.
- The Governing Body will access specialist HR advice and referrals to Occupational Health and Physiotherapy and make employees aware of the confidential Counselling service as appropriate

Employees

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety. They should therefore co-operate with management in stress reduction measures including attending any training provided and highlighting potential work related stress issues, including those where personal stress may affect their work.

Employees should:

- Raise issues of concern with their line manager or Health & Safety Representative.
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.
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Function of Health & Safety Representatives

- Health & Safety Representatives must be meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.

- Health & Safety Representatives must be able to consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys.
- Health & Safety Representatives must be meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process.
- Health & Safety Representatives should be allowed access to collective and anonymous data.
- Health & Safety Representatives should be provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend appropriate Trade Union training relating to workplace stress.
- Health & Safety Representatives should conduct joint inspections of the workplace with managers at least every 3 months to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

Role of the Health & Safety Committees

- The Service Health & Safety Committee will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- The Corporate Health & Safety Committee will oversee monitoring of the efficacy of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.