



# STRESS POLICY

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Policy Renewal: July 2024

Reviewed by the SLT MAT Board

“The Trustees of the Southport Learning Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every opportunity and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”

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### Introduction

We are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

This policy will apply to everyone in the company. Managers are responsible for implementation and the Trust and its schools are 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.

#### i) Policy

- The Trust school will identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- The Trust school will consult with Trade Union Representatives on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.
- The Trust will provide training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices e.g. [Mental Health at Work training through Sefton CLC](#).
- The Trust will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors through our [Employee Assistance Programme](#).
- The Trust schools will provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the school's agreed stress management strategy.

### Responsibilities

#### ii) Senior Leadership Team and Line Managers

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments within their jurisdiction.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.
- Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.

**iii) Occupational health and health and safety staff**

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Inform the employer and the health and safety committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

**iv) Human resources function and staff**

- Give guidance to managers on the stress policy.
- Train and support managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their management on a planned return to work.
- Refer to specialist agencies as required.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.
- Advise line managers and individuals on training requirements.
- Provide continuing support to line managers and individuals in a changing environment.
- Inform all line managers of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.
- Raise issues of concern with your line manager, Senior Leaders or Trade Union representatives.
- Accept opportunities for counselling or support when recommended.

**v) Trade Union or/and Health and Safety representatives**

Trade Union or/and Health and Safety representatives must be:

- Meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.
- Able to consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys.
- Meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process.

**vi) Trade Union or/and Health and Safety representatives should:**

- Be allowed access to collective and anonymous data from HR.
- Be provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend any Trade Union training relating to workplace stress.
- Conduct joint inspections of the workplace at least every 3 months to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

## Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work

Competency	Sub-competency
Respectful and responsible: Managing emotions and having integrity	<b>Integrity</b> Being respectful and honest to employees  <b>Managing emotions</b> Behaving consistently and calmly around the team  <b>Considerate approach</b> Being thoughtful in managing others and delegating
Managing and communicating existing and future work	<b>Proactive work management</b> Monitoring and reviewing existing work, allowing future prioritisation and planning  <b>Problem solving</b> Dealing with problems promptly, rationally and responsibly  <b>Participative/empowering</b> Listening to, meeting and consulting with the team, providing direction, autonomy and development opportunities to individuals
Managing the individual within the team	<b>Personally accessible</b> Available to talk to personally  <b>Sociable</b> Relaxed approach, such as socialising and using humour  <b>Empathetic engagement</b> Seeking to understand each individual in the team in terms of their health and satisfaction, motivation, point of view and life outside work
Reasoning/Managing difficult situations	<b>Managing conflict</b> Dealing with conflicts decisively, promptly and objectively  <b>Use of organisational resources</b> Seeking advice when necessary from managers, HR and Occupational Health  <b>Taking responsibility for resolving issues</b> Having a supportive and responsible approach to issues and incidents in the team