Wellbeing Policy

September 2026

Introduction

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust is committed to promoting and supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees. The Trust recognises that the wellbeing of its workforce is fundamental to creating positive, inclusive and high-performing schools where both staff and pupils can thrive.

This policy sets out the Trust's commitment to promoting employee wellbeing, defines the responsibilities of Trustees, Trust leaders, Headteachers, line managers and employees, and outlines the support available to maintain both physical and psychological health. It also explains the Trust's approach to health promotion, communication, training and the management of individual wellbeing concerns.

The Trust adopts the UK Department of Health's definition of wellbeing as *feeling good and functioning well*, recognising that wellbeing encompasses both an individual's personal experience of life and the wider social, environmental and workplace factors that influence it. Wellbeing includes both subjective experiences and objective measures of health and quality of life.

While every employee has a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing, Tyne and Wear Learning Trust is committed to fostering a positive working environment where staff are supported to achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

The Trust recognises the strong connection between employee wellbeing, staff engagement, attendance, organisational performance and positive outcomes for children and young people. By promoting a culture of wellbeing, the Trust aims to support staff to perform at their best while maintaining good physical and mental health.

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust will meet its statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**,** the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**,** and all other relevant health, safety and employment legislation. The Trust will ensure that its policies, procedures and working practices reflect these responsibilities and will review them regularly to ensure they remain effective and compliant.

The Trust is committed to identifying, assessing and, wherever reasonably practicable, reducing workplace factors that may adversely affect employees' physical or mental wellbeing, including work-related stress. This commitment applies to risks that arise from work activities and are within the Trust's control, while recognising that wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors both inside and outside the workplace.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Promoting and maintaining staff wellbeing is a shared responsibility. Everyone within Tyne and Wear Learning Trust has a role to play in creating a safe, healthy and supportive working environment.

Trust Executive Leaders and Headteachers

Trust Executive Leaders and Headteachers will:

- Demonstrate visible leadership and commitment to staff wellbeing across the Trust.
- Foster a culture of inclusion, respect, collaboration and psychological safety where all staff feel valued and supported.
- Promote positive management practices that encourage a healthy work-life balance and discourage unnecessary working hours or practices that may contribute to work-related stress.
- Ensure effective communication and meaningful consultation with staff regarding organisational change, working practices and developments that may affect them.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that wellbeing is considered when making strategic and operational decisions.
- Support and promote initiatives that enhance the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of staff.
- Ensure that appropriate resources, policies and support services are available to staff across the Trust.
- Monitor wellbeing trends and take appropriate action where concerns are identified.

Senior Leaders and Middle Leaders

Leaders and managers are responsible for creating supportive working environments and will:

- Lead by example, treating all colleagues with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Build positive, trusting relationships with their teams and encourage open conversations about wellbeing.
- Be familiar with Trust policies and procedures and address behaviours that fall below expected standards.
- Ensure staff understand their roles, responsibilities and performance expectations.
- Keep employees informed of developments that may affect their work and involve them, where appropriate, in decisions that impact their role.
- Hold regular one-to-one meetings and wellbeing conversations with staff.

- Identify potential workplace stressors and take reasonable steps to reduce or manage risks, including completing stress risk assessments where appropriate.
- Encourage staff to access professional development, wellbeing initiatives and support services available through the Trust.

- Recognise signs that an employee may be experiencing difficulties and provide appropriate support, referring to Human Resources or Occupational Health where necessary.

Employees

All employees have a responsibility to contribute to a positive working environment and to take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing. Employees are expected to:

- Take an active role in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing.
- Raise concerns at an early stage with their line manager, Headteacher, HR or through the Trust's Employee Assistance Programme where work-related issues are affecting their wellbeing.
- Treat colleagues, pupils, parents and visitors with professionalism, dignity and respect.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to promote a supportive and inclusive workplace.
- Participate in wellbeing, health and safety, and professional development activities where appropriate.
- Work with their line manager to identify any support, adjustments or development opportunities that will enable them to carry out their role effectively.

School Mental Health Leads

School Mental Health Leads play a key role in promoting a whole-school approach to wellbeing and supporting the mental health of staff and pupils. They will:

- Promote a positive culture of mental health and wellbeing across the school, helping to reduce stigma and encourage open, supportive conversations.
- Act as a point of contact for advice and signposting on mental health and wellbeing, ensuring staff are aware of the support available both within the Trust and through external agencies.
- Work collaboratively with Headteachers, senior leaders, line managers and Human Resources to support the implementation of the Trust's wellbeing strategy and initiatives.
- Help identify emerging wellbeing themes or concerns within the school and contribute to the development of appropriate action plans.
- Support the planning and delivery of mental health awareness and wellbeing activities, campaigns and training for staff.

- Encourage early intervention by promoting available wellbeing resources and supporting staff to access appropriate services, including the Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health and other specialist support where appropriate.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality while recognising their safeguarding responsibilities and the need to share concerns where there is a risk of harm or where support cannot be provided without involving others.
- Work with the Trust to monitor the effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives and contribute to the continuous improvement of staff wellbeing across the school.
- Keep up to date with national guidance, research and best practice relating to mental health and wellbeing to inform the school's approach.

Arrangements for Implementation

Wellbeing and Stress Risk Assessment

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust is committed to identifying and managing workplace factors that may adversely affect the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

Each school will undertake risk assessments relating to work-related stress where appropriate, including where concerns have been identified through wellbeing surveys, absence data, staff feedback, individual discussions or organisational change. Assessments will be undertaken using the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards as a framework (see Appendix 1).

The HSE Management Standards identify six key areas that, if not effectively managed, may contribute to work-related stress:

- **Demands –** including workload, work patterns, working hours and the physical working environment.
- **Control –** the degree of influence employees has over how they organise and undertake their work.
- **Support** – the encouragement, resources and assistance provided by managers, colleagues and the Trust.
- **Relationships** – promoting positive professional relationships, preventing bullying or harassment, and resolving conflict appropriately.
- **Role** – ensuring employees understand their responsibilities and are not subject to conflicting expectations.
- **Change** – ensuring organisational change is planned, communicated and managed effectively, with appropriate consultation and support.

Where risks are identified, managers will work collaboratively with employees to agree reasonable actions to reduce or manage those risks. Risk assessments will be reviewed periodically and whenever significant changes occur.

Promoting Wellbeing Through Good Management Practice

The Trust believes that staff wellbeing is best supported through positive leadership, effective people management and a healthy organisational culture.

To achieve this, the Trust will:

- Operate fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment and selection processes.
- Provide clear job descriptions, role expectations and induction programmes.
- Offer high-quality professional learning and development opportunities.
- Ensure staff have access to regular supervision, performance development and wellbeing conversations.
- Recognise and celebrate employee contribution and achievement.
- Promote flexible working arrangements where operationally feasible and in accordance with Trust policies.
- Support employees through effective attendance management, reasonable workplace adjustments and phased returns following periods of absence where appropriate.
- Maintain effective communication and meaningful consultation with staff regarding matters affecting their work.
- Provide safe, suitable and well-maintained working environments, including appropriate staff facilities.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion across all Trust workplaces.

Encourage staff to participate in wellbeing initiatives and activities that support healthy lifestyles and positive mental health.

The Trust will ensure that this policy operates alongside other relevant policies, including those relating to Health and Safety, Attendance Management, Flexible Working, Equality, Dignity at Work, Grievance, Performance Development and Safeguarding.

Raising a Wellbeing Concern

The Trust encourages employees to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity where they believe that work-related factors are affecting their health, wellbeing or ability to undertake their role safely and effectively.

Employees are encouraged, in the first instance, to discuss any concerns with their line manager. Where this is not appropriate, employees may speak to their Headteacher, Human Resources, School Mental Health Lead, Trade Union representative or another appropriate senior leader.

Discussions may include consideration of:

- workload and work demands;
- working practices and priorities;
- training or professional development needs;
- workplace relationships;
- reasonable adjustments;

- temporary support arrangements; or
- referral to specialist services where appropriate.

The Trust is committed to responding sensitively, fairly and promptly, working collaboratively with employees to identify appropriate support and practical solutions wherever possible.

Sources of Support

A range of support is available to employees to help maintain positive health and wellbeing. This may include:

- the Trust's Employee Assistance Programme (Appendix 2);
- Occupational Health services;
- support from Human Resources;
- School Mental Health Leads and/or Wellbeing Champions;
- access to counselling or other specialist wellbeing services where appropriate;
- flexible working arrangements in accordance with Trust policy;
- reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities or long-term health conditions;
- health and wellbeing initiatives, training and awareness events deliver/across the Trust.

The Trust will regularly review the effectiveness of its wellbeing provision and seek feedback from employees to ensure that support remains responsive, accessible and effective.

Management Practices

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust is committed to fostering a positive working environment where employee health, safety and wellbeing are integral to everyday practice. The Trust recognises that effective leadership, supportive management and positive workplace culture are fundamental to promoting wellbeing and enabling staff to perform at their best.

The Trust will support staff wellbeing through the implementation of this policy alongside other relevant Trust policies and procedures, including those relating to Attendance Management, Flexible Working, Performance Development, Equality, Grievance and Health and Safety.

To promote a healthy and supportive workplace, the Trust will:

- Operate fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment and selection processes, supported by clear job descriptions and person specifications.
- Provide comprehensive induction, training and professional development opportunities to ensure employees have the knowledge, skills and confidence to fulfil their roles effectively.

- Promote a culture where staff feel valued, recognised and supported through regular feedback, professional development and fair appraisal management.
- Support employees during periods of illness through effective attendance management, occupational health referrals where appropriate, reasonable workplace adjustments and phased returns to work.
- Maintain open, timely and effective communication with employees regarding matters affecting their work, the school and the wider Trust.
- Encourage regular wellbeing conversations between managers and employees to identify concerns early and provide appropriate support.
- Provide safe, secure and well-maintained working environments, including suitable staff facilities such as rest areas, refreshments, seating and welfare facilities.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring all employees are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Encourage participation in Trust and school wellbeing initiatives that promote positive physical and mental health.
- Regularly review management practices and seek staff feedback to ensure wellbeing remains a key consideration in decision-making and organisational improvement.

These management practices are intended to create a culture where staff wellbeing is actively promoted, concerns are addressed promptly and employees are supported to maintain a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

Raising a Concern

If an employee feels that their work or working conditions are affecting their own wellbeing or putting other people at risk, they should first discuss their concerns with their line manager.

The conversation should include topics such as workload, job demands, and any training or support the employee feels they need.

The Trust will consider the concerns, provide appropriate support, and discuss possible solutions based on the individual's circumstances.
Additional support available to employees includes:

- The Trust's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
- Flexible working arrangements, where appropriate, in line with the Flexible Working Policy.
- Support and reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities.

Appendix 1

Health Assured Wisdom Wellbeing Core Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust has purchased the Core Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) from Health Assured, trading as Wisdom Wellbeing, to support staff with their personal and work-related wellbeing. This appendix explains the support available and how to access it. It should be read alongside this Trust Employee Wellbeing Policy.

Who can use the service?

The service is available to Trust employees covered by the contract, including teaching, support and central team staff. It is funded by the Trust and available at no cost to eligible staff. Participation is voluntary, and staff can contact the provider directly without permission or a referral from their manager.

The Core package also provides cover for eligible spouses, partners and dependants. Family eligibility and the support available are subject to the provider's terms; check with Wisdom Wellbeing before a family member uses the service.

What support is available

- A confidential telephone helpline available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, offering emotional support and access to legal, financial and medical information.
- Up to six structured online counselling sessions per issue, per year, subject to clinical assessment and the Trust's contract. Sessions normally last 50 minutes; the provider will explain suitability and arrangements.
- Access to the Wisdom app and online wellbeing resources, including articles, webinars, mood tracking and mini health checks. The app provides routes to contact counselling support, including live chat.
- Computerised cognitive behavioural therapy through SilverCloud, where appropriate, and a management support line.

Staff may seek help with concerns such as stress, anxiety, low mood, bereavement, relationships, caring responsibilities, money worries or pressures at work. You do not need to wait until a concern becomes serious before asking for support. Wisdom Wellbeing will assess your needs and may signpost you to other services.

How to access support

Telephone: use the confidential employee helpline or the Wisdom app. Identify your employer as Tyne and Wear Learning Trust if asked.

- Trust employee helpline:
- Trust organisation access codes:
    - **Barnwell Academy –** MHA402233
    - **Dunn Street Primary –** MHA402234
    - **East Herrington Primary Academy**-
    - **Hetton Lyons Primary**-
    - **Marine Park Primary –** MHA402237
    - **Whitburn Village Primary –** MHA402238

3 How to access support continued

- Download the official Wisdom app from the Apple App Store or Google Play, or access the online service at https://app.wisdomwellbeing.com/.
- Select the registration option and enter the Trust organisation access code when prompted. Follow the instructions to create your own account and read the provider's terms and privacy notice.
- Use the support or contact options to speak to a counsellor, or explore the wellbeing resources. Keep your account password private.

Ask your school office or the Trust central team for access details if needed; you do not need to explain why you want them. If you require help accessing the service, or an alternative to the app, contact the provider to discuss your needs.

Confidentiality and privacy

Wisdom Wellbeing provides an independent, confidential service. The Trust does not routinely receive the content of your calls, counselling discussions or individual clinical records. The provider may supply anonymised service reports. Limited app registration details may be visible to the employer for access administration, but the provider states that employers cannot see which app content you have accessed.

Confidentiality has exceptions, including a risk of harm to you or others, safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, or a mandatory disclosure to protect the public. The provider will seek consent where appropriate. Calls may be recorded or monitored for training and quality assurance. Read the provider's privacy notice and confidentiality statement for full details.

Support within the Trust

The EAP sits alongside the Trust's support for staff wellbeing. Staff are encouraged to raise workload, working conditions or other workplace concerns with their line manager, Headteacher or the Trust central team so that practical support can be considered. You do not need to share the content of counselling sessions.

Managers should signpost staff sensitively and respect their decision about using the service. Any referral on a member of staff's behalf must be made with their consent. If an appointment falls during working hours, discuss arrangements under the Trust's usual procedures. Using the EAP does not itself authorise absence or change sickness reporting requirements.

Continue to use the Trust's safeguarding, grievance and whistleblowing procedures where appropriate. The EAP complements occupational health and support from your GP or other health services.

Urgent help

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 999 or go to A&E. For urgent mental health help in England when there is no immediate danger, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option. The EAP can offer emotional support but does not replace emergency care.

Review and service information

The Trust will review this appendix alongside the Employee Wellbeing Policy and when the contract or access arrangements change. Service availability and eligibility are governed by the Trust's agreement with Wisdom Wellbeing.

The Wisdom app

With well over 250+ hours of e-learning, our unique app brings everything together in one place. Individuals can access 24/7, 365-day counselling, 1,000s of wellbeing articles, newsletters, podcasts and nutritious recipes.

Plus, individuals can track their wellbeing with our unique tracking tools, mini health checks, and access our bank of perks and discounts through Bright Exchange.

I recently reached out as I didn't know...

"I recently reached out as I didn't know where to turn with my current emotions and found Linda very helpful, she listened and offered proactive advice. It has helped me to think more clear now and also helped me in reaching out to other services that may benefit my situation within the app such as the legal team. Thank you."