

Mental Health and Wellbeing policy

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1. Definitions

- 1.1 **DEMAT** means the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.
- 1.2 **Academy** means a constituent academy of DEMAT.
- 1.3 **Central Team** means Staff who are not employed within an Academy.
- 1.4 **Central Leadership Team** means any Director or Head of a Function in the Central Team other than the Director of Education, the COO and the CEO.
- 1.5 **CEO** means the Chief Executive Officer of DEMAT, or any officer or other person exercising relevant authority delegated by the Chief Executive Officer to them.
- 1.6 **Line Managers** refers to those with line management responsibilities including but not limited to Hub Directors, Head of Department and Headteachers.
- 1.7 **Staff** means any person employed by DEMAT, temporarily or permanently.
- 1.8 **Employee** means any person employed by DEMAT, temporarily or permanently.
- 1.9 **MHFA** means Mental Health First Aider employed by DEMAT and appropriately trained in mental health first aid.
- 1.10 **Mental Health** 'A state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 1.11 **Work-related Stress** is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work'.

2. Application of this Policy

- 2.1 The policy is applicable to all employees (permanent and temporary) of DEMAT. Where applicable, it is also applicable to all casual workers and volunteers supporting DEMAT.
- 2.2 The above definitions are included for reference purposes for both School and Central Team staff to enable clarity and transparency when applying this policy.

3. Relationship with DEMAT Values

The application of this policy must be applied at all times in a way that reflects the values of DEMAT:

Love – We engender love and tolerance between and for our staff, pupils and others to foster an inspiring atmosphere of mutual support.

Community – We are committed to ensuring our schools are a living part of the community and contribute positively to its needs.

Respect – We do everything to provide a caring, safe and secure place for our staff and pupils to be happy and respected in our schools so they may achieve their potential.

Trust – We acknowledge accountability and responsibility for our actions and ensure that we encourage each other to make brave decisions and then learn from any mistakes.

Ambition – We are determined that our schools offer a place for the joy of learning, enabling those of all abilities to thrive and go on to lead rewarding lives

This is further defined in the four key strands of DEMAT, all of which are underpinned by our Christian distinctiveness,

- Children are at the heart of all we do
- Keep close to the work
- Maintaining a legacy, creating new traditions
- Aspirational, yet sustainable

4. Associated Policies and Documents

This Policy/Procedure should be read in conjunction with the following DEMAT Policies/Procedures:

Sickness absence policy
Menopause policy
Flexible working policy
Health and Safety policy

5. Version control

Policy type	DEMAT Trust Policy
Author	Helen Fisher, HR
Reviewed by	Helen Rothwell, Head of HR
Approved by	Personnel Committee Date: 19 January 2024
Release date	15 April 2024
Review	ANNUAL Review April 2025 no changes Policies will be reviewed in line with DEMAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force.
Description of changes	The policy has been reviewed in line with legislation and best practice to provide clarity, greater consistency and support for staff.

For further information regarding the specific changes please contact the HR Team at hrteam@demat.org.uk

6. Purpose and Scope

- 6.1 The overall aim of the Wellbeing policy is to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff in a holistic way within an inclusive and positive working environment. This policy will provide a framework within which DEMAT will encourage and facilitate working practices and measures that will support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing at work.
- 6.2 The objectives of the Wellbeing policy are;
- To build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports and promotes wellbeing through workplace practices and policies;
 - To encourage healthy lifestyle choices;
 - To highlight the availability of effective interventions to managers and staff through increased provision and availability of information;
 - To provide appropriate training, information, and support for managers to allow them to discuss concerns with and provide support to their staff;
 - To increase employee knowledge and awareness of health and wellbeing issues;
 - To facilitate employee participation in a range of initiatives that support health and wellbeing;
 - To manage the physical and psychological aspects of work, and to embed wellbeing initiatives into everything we do.

7. Policy statement

- 7.1 DEMAT recognises that health and wellbeing are important to employee success at work and is committed to creating an environment that promotes good mental health and wellbeing where staff can thrive and feel supported. There is also a recognition that everyone in the workplace has a responsibility to promote and maintain a healthy workplace.
- 7.2 The Trust recognises it is important to develop and promote policies and systems to ensure that our pupils, staff and anyone associated with our Trust are not unlawfully discriminated against and we encourage a commitment to equality, diversity and fair treatment of all. We have therefore considered the impact of this policy, on those individuals with a protected characteristic(s).

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- 8.1.1 The CEO is responsible for ensuring all leaders within the organisation are positive role models, championing and shaping a culture where the importance of wellbeing is recognised and supported.
- 8.1.2 Develop a culture that encourages employees to talk about wellbeing issues they may have, whilst equipping managers to respond.

8.2 Headteachers / Managers

- 8.2.1 Provide an environment where employees feel able to discuss mental health and wellbeing.
- 8.2.2 Be empathetic in their approach to managing and supporting employees.
- 8.2.3 Encourage and support employees to take personal responsibility for their own wellbeing, by signposting employees to appropriate support services and giving them, where reasonably practicable the time and encouragement to participate.
- 8.2.4 Champion wellbeing within their teams and departments, challenging ways of working that impact wellbeing.
- 8.2.5 Maintain confidentiality of employees when supporting their wellbeing, disclosing to others only with the employee's consent or when the employee is deemed at risk and their wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, needs preserving.
- 8.2.6 Seek advice from the HR Department or MHFA at an early stage if any concerns arise.
- 8.2.7 Monitor attendance and encourage employees to take regular breaks e.g. if using computers or laptops for their work and taking their lunch breaks.
- 8.2.8 Commission stress risk assessments (and wellbeing action plans) where appropriate and ensure that the measures that the assessments identify are implemented.
- 8.2.9 Encourage employees to undertake learning and development activities to develop their awareness of wellbeing and wellbeing-related issues.
- 8.2.10 Ensure all staff are aware of the Health and Wellbeing policy and the Sickness Absence Management policy.

8.3 Employees

- 8.3.1 Manage their own wellbeing and take steps to seek support at an early stage if needed.
- 8.3.2 Maintain communication by raising concerns with their line managers, or other appropriate colleagues when factors are impacting their wellbeing.
- 8.3.3 Support colleagues, by providing information, and sharing knowledge and resources on managing wellbeing where appropriate.
- 8.3.4 Take reasonable care that their actions do not affect the health and safety of other people in the workplace.

8.4 Human Resources Department

- 8.4.1 Provide advice and information that promotes general wellbeing.
- 8.4.2 Provide wellbeing related learning and development opportunities.

8.4.3 Promote healthy working practices and provide all employees with appropriate support to allow them to achieve their potential.

8.4.4 Monitor and review HR metrics as an indicator of organisational well-being and work with leaders to implement appropriate solutions to any areas of concern.

9. Work-related Stress

9.1 Symptoms of Stress

9.1.1 Stress can cause many different symptoms and can affect how you feel physically, mentally, and also how you behave. Some of the common symptoms of stress include;

- Headaches
- Muscle tension
- Stomach problems
- Difficulty concentrating
- Struggling to make decisions
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Constant worry
- Being irritable
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Drinking or smoking more

9.1 Managing workplace stress

9.1.1 DEMAT are responsible for ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees, including operating in a way that manages stress at work.

9.1.2 DEMAT will ensure that employees are provided the following.

- The tools needed to do the job including appropriate training and support;
- Employees will have a say in the way in which they carry out the work;
- Have an acceptable workload;
- Have an acceptable work/life balance.
- Are treated with respect by managers and colleagues; and
- Are given safe working conditions.

9.2 Employees are encouraged to speak to their line manager if they are experiencing feelings of stress so appropriate support can be provided.

10. Risk Assessments

- 10.1 Risk Assessments will be carried out for any task/activity that is judged to have a potential to cause harm to persons including, where required stress risk assessments.
- 10.2 More information about risk assessments can be found in the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.

11. Wellbeing Support

11.1 Requesting Support

- 11.1.1 If an employee believes that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they are encouraged to speak to their line manager. If for any reason they are unable to approach the line manager, the HR Department is available for support and advice.
- 11.1.2 We urge employees to be as open as possible about any particular issues that they are experiencing or adjustments that may be needed to ensure the right level of support is provided.
- 11.1.3 Any health-related information disclosed during discussions with the line manager, or the HR department will be treated sensitively and in confidence.
- 11.1.4 In some cases, we may seek consent to make a referral to Occupational Health so that they can advise on the type of support that may be appropriate. Occupational Health may also signpost the employee to external sources of help and advice.

11.2 Employee Assistance Programme

- 11.2.1 Help and support is available through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) 'Employee Assist'. Employees and their family members can use the EAP to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis about any issue that may be causing concern including, but not limited to financial concerns, stress, anxiety and depression.
- 11.2.2 The Employee Assist Helpline can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year on 0800 328 1437. Alternatively, an appointment can be arranged online at www.employeeassistance.org.uk. The login access code is diocese.

11.3 Wellness Action Plans

- 11.3.1 Wellness Action plans (WAP's) are a personalised, practical tool to help identify what keeps an employee well at work, what may cause them to feel unwell and the support they may like to help maintain their wellbeing.
- 11.3.2 They can also be helpful during the return-to-work process when an employee has been absent from work due to a mental health problem as they provide a structure for conversations about what support will help and what reasonable adjustments may be useful to consider.

11.3.3 WAP's are not mandatory but the Line manager may suggest a WAP is completed so appropriate support can be provided to the Employee. Employees can also approach their Line Manager to discuss this further should they feel it would be beneficial to their health and wellbeing. The HR Department can also be contacted for further information.

11.3.4 A template Wellness Action Plan can be found at appendix 1.

11.4 Stress Action Plans

11.4.1 The aim of a Stress Action Plan is for individual employees and their managers to investigate the causes of (and solutions to) stress together.

11.4.1 Stress Action Plans can also be a helpful tool, when an employee has been absent from work due to stress to facilitate a discussion about the stressors and what support may be needed in the workplace.

11.4.2 Wellness Action plans may also be used in conjunction with Stress Action Plans to help identify and manage stressors and maintain wellbeing at work.

11.4.3 A template Stress Action Plan can be found at appendix 2.

11.5 Flexible working

11.5.1 The Trust recognises that there may be times when employees wish to adjust their working arrangements to balance their work and personal lives.

11.5.2 Employees who have worked for the Trust continuously for 26 weeks have a statutory right to request flexible working.

11.5.3 The Trust also realises that there may be occasions where an employee wishes to make an informal request to adjust their working arrangements on a temporary basis and such requests will also be considered.

11.5.4 The Trust is committed to supporting requests for flexible working but the needs of the children in our schools are paramount and will be considered in relation to any flexible working requests.

11.5.5 Please refer to the flexible working policy for more information.

11.6 Mental Health First Aiders

11.6.1 DEMAT have trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) based in the Central Team and Academies across the Trust.

11.6.2 The role of the MFHA is to be a point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress.

11.6.3 MHFA's are not trained therapists but they provide initial support through non-judgemental listening and guidance.

11.6.4 For further information about DEMAT's MFHA's including contact details please contact your Line Manager or the HR Team.

12. Employee Self Care

12.1 Five ways to Wellbeing

12.1.1 Employees may find it challenging to improve their own mental health especially when working in a busy environment. Mind (the national mental health charity) and NHS suggest the five ways to wellbeing can provide simple steps for employees to help manage their own mental health;

- **Connect** – connecting with others can make us feel close to people and valued for who we are.
- **Get Active** – Physical activity can help raise our self esteem, have happier moods and reduce feelings of stress and anxiety.
- **Take notice** – Reminding ourselves to take notice can help us to be aware of how we are feeling and understand what triggers our feelings of stress or anxiety.
- **Learn** – Feeling like you are learning and developing can help boost self-esteem.
- **Give** – helping other can make us feel happier.

12.1.2 For more information about the five ways to wellbeing and suggested activities please visit <https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

12.2 NHS guides, tools and activities

12.2.1 The NHS have a range of online tools which may be help employee manage their own mental health and wellbeing. These can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/>

13. External Support

13.1 There are a number of external agencies that may be able to provide Mental Health and wellbeing support.

13.2 There are Mental Health Crisis helplines for those in crisis and need to talk immediately including:

- Samaritans **116 113**
- National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK **0800 689 5652**



- Shout provides a 24/7 text service for those who may prefer not to talk. Text Shout to **85258**

13.3 More information and contact details for other external agencies that may be able to provide Mental Health and Wellbeing support can be found at appendix 3.

Appendix 1

Individual Wellness Action Plan

The below template can be used to facilitate a conversation and to determine actions to support employees' wellbeing in a proactive way, with the aim of preventing any occurrences of significant stress or poor mental health.

EMPLOYEE NAME:	
ACADEMY:	
DATE OF MEETING:	

Any background information which may be relevant:	
What helps you stay mentally healthy at work?	
What can your manager do to proactively support you to stay mentally healthy at work?	
What do you find are your triggers for stress? <i>(For example, this could be situations, environment, people)</i>	

What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or help you to manage the impact?	
Are there elements of your individual working style or temperament that it is worth your manager being aware of?	
Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to experience poor mental health?	
If we notice early warning signs that you are experiencing poor mental health – what should we do?	
Is there anything else that you would like to share?	
Any additional Information:	
Any agreed actions:	

SIGNED: (Employee)		DATE:	
SIGNED: (Line Manager)		DATE:	

Appendix 2

Individual Stress Management Action Plan

The below template can be used to facilitate a conversation and to determine actions to support employees who may be experiencing stress and poor mental health.

EMPLOYEE NAME:	
ACADEMY:	
DATE OF MEETING:	

Background Information:	
Employees' perception of stressors (<i>can be both work and non-work</i>)	

Action Plan

What is the stressor?	What can be done to reduce or eliminate this?	How can this be done?	Who needs to be involved?	When does this need to be done by?
Further Review Comments:				

SIGNED: (Employee)		DATE:	
SIGNED: (Line Manager)		DATE:	

Appendix 3

External support

Employment and Mental Health

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

Phone: 0300 123 1100

Website: www.acas.org.uk

<https://www.acas.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing>

Crisis and emotional support helplines for everyone

The following helplines provide emotional, and crisis support for everyone affected by mental ill health:

Samaritans

Phone: 116 123 (Freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: www.samaritans.org

The Samaritans provide emotional support for people 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They allow people to talk about feelings of distress and despair and are confidential and offer non-judgement support.

SaneLine

Phone: 0300 304 7000 (Local call rates, 6pm – 11pm, 7 days a week)

Website: http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpline/

SaneLine provides out of hours mental health and emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental ill health, including family, friends and carers.

Abuse (domestic violence, child, sexual abuse)

NAPAC

Phone: 0808 801 0331 (Freephone, see website for opening hours)

Email: support@napac.org.uk

Website: www.napac.org.uk

The National Association for People Abused in Childhood provides support for people affected by sexual abuse in childhood through a dedicated support line, free online resources and training.

NSPCC

Phone: 0808 800 5000 (Freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – for adults concerned about children)

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

The NSPCC is the children's charity dedicated to ending child abuse and child cruelty. They are a dedicated helpline for adults concerned that a child might be at risk of abuse.

Refuge

Phone: 0808 2000 247 (Freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Email: helpline@refuge.org.uk

Website: www.refuge.org.uk

Refuge provides help and information about domestic violence. It runs a 24/7 domestic violence helpline in partnership with Women's Aid. Refuge runs a number of safe houses for women and children escaping domestic violence as well as other services.

Women's Aid

Phone: 0808 2000 247 (Freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Website: www.womensaid.org.uk

Women's Aid are a grassroots federation working together to provide life-saving services and build a future where domestic violence is not tolerated.

Anxiety

Anxiety UK

Phone: 08444 775774 (Infoline, 9.30am – 5.30pm, Mon – Fri)

Text: 07537 416 905

Email: support@anxiety.org.uk
Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Anxiety UK is a national charity run by people who have lived experience of anxiety, aiming to support everyone affected by anxiety through information and support.

OCD-UK

Phone: 0845 120 3778
Email: support@ocduk.org
Website: www.ocduk.org

OCD-UK is a national charity working with and for children and adults affected by obsessive compulsive disorder. Provides a wide range of information on OCD and runs self-help services.

Bereavement

Bereavement Advice Centre

Phone: 0800 634 9494 (Freephone helpline, 9am – 5pm, Mon – Fri)
Website: bereavementadvice.org

The Bereavement Advice Centre supports and advises people after death in England and Wales. Their website and helpline provide help with the wide range of practical issues that need to be managed after a bereavement as well as signposting to other support.

Child Bereavement UK

Phone: 0800 028 8840 (Freephone helpline, 9am – 5pm, Mon – Fri)
Email: support@childbereavementuk.org
Website: www.childbereavementuk.org

Supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement.

Cruse Bereavement Care

Phone 0808 808 1677 (Helpline, see website for opening hours)
Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk
Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care offer support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies. They run a helpline as well as bereavement counselling.

The Miscarriage Association

Phone: 01924 200 799
Email: info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk

The Miscarriage Association is a charity that offers support to people who have lost a baby.

Debt

Money Advice Service

Phone: 0800 138 7777 (Freephone, 9am – 8pm Mon – Fri, 9.30am – 1pm Sat)

Website: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

A free independent service set by the government that provides information on all money related matters via a helpline, online information, and free web chats.

Depression

Depression UK

Email: info@depressionuk.org

Website: www.depressionuk.org

Depression UK is a national self-help organisation that offers support to everyone affected by depression.

Education Support Partnership

Phone: 0800 0562 561 (Freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Text: 07909 341 229

Email: support@edsupport.org.uk

Website: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk

Provides free confidential counselling for teachers, including online chat.

Family, Parenting and Relationships

Family Action

Phone: 020 7254 6251

Email: info@family-action.org.uk

Website: www.family-action.org.uk

Family Action transforms lives by providing practical, emotional and financial support to those who are experiencing poverty, disadvantage and social isolation across England. They aim to strengthen families and communities by building skills and resilience. Their support services include a focus on parental mental health issues.

Relate

Phone: 0300 100 1234

Website: www.relate.org.uk

Relate is a national charity offering a range of services to help with couple and family relationships, including counselling support and therapy focusing on relationship issues.

General Advice, Information and Support

Citizens Advice

Phone: 03444 111 444

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Citizen's Advice provides free, independent information and advice for people on money, legal, consumer, housing and other problems.

Gov.UK

Website: www.gov.uk

Gov.uk is the first point of contact for information on all government services, including money, tax, benefits, disability, employment, and carers' rights.

General Mental Health

Mind

Phone: 0300 123 3393

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Mind provides a wide range of services relating to mental health, including information, support as well as research and campaigning work. The national Mind organisation also acts as an umbrella organisation to many independent local Mind organisations, which provide different services, e.g therapy services, self-help groups and alternative therapies.

COVID – 19 Support

Every Life Matters

Phone: 07908 537541

Email: info@every-life-matters.org.uk

Website: www.every-life-matters.org.uk

Gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk

Gov.UK provides specific COVID-19: guidance for the public on mental health and wellbeing. Advice and information on how to look after your mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Frontline 19

Website: www.frontline19.com

Free & confidential psychological support service for all people working in frontline services in the UK (*hospital staff, emergency response teams, ambulance support staff, social care & care home workers, teaching staff, agency & bank staff).