



## Rush Common School Professional Practice Document (“PPD”) for Stress

### 1) Introduction

The Directors are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of the school workforce and recognises work-related stress as an organisational issue. The Directors acknowledge the requirement under the Management of Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Regulations, 1999 to assess and control the risks arising from work-related stress. This policy will apply to all school employees. The Directors will delegate to the Headteacher the responsibility for the implementation of the policy and for ensuring that the necessary resources are available to support it.

### 2) 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. It arises when they worry that they can’t cope”*

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

### 3) Policy

Following the HSE guidance HSG218 - “Tackling work-related stress” the school will proactively identify workplace stressors (through an annual whole school risk assessment) and provide suitable strategies to eliminate or minimise the risk of stress amongst the school workforce.

After a stress risk assessment has been carried out, the effectiveness of measures taken to reduce stress will be reviewed on a regular basis.

All staff will be encouraged to consult with their line manager and/or Headteacher as well as trade union representatives if necessary around issues relating to work-related stress.

Training will be undertaken by designated school staff on stress awareness and how to carry out a stress risk assessment

The contact number for access to confidential counselling for staff affected by stress, caused by either work or external factors, will be displayed in the staff room.

### 4) RESPONSIBILITIES

**4.1 The Directors** will be responsible for ensuring that the school has a Stress Management Policy and that the Headteacher has sufficient and suitable resources to enable effective delivery of this policy.

**4.2 The Chair of Directors** will be responsible for arranging a stress risk assessment for the Headteacher. Following the stress risk assessments the Chair will ensure that an action plan is jointly agreed between the Headteacher and the chair of Directors to reduce work-related stress factors.

**4.3 The Headteacher will:**

- develop and encourage a positive style of management, which is supportive towards all school staff affected by both work-related stress factors as well as external stress factors e.g. divorce or bereavement.
- be responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all school staff.
- ensure that every effort is made to have a physical working environment that is free from stressors such as excessive noise levels, inadequate space etc.
- ensure effective communication between management, trade union representatives and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- ensure school staff are appropriately trained and resourced to effectively carry out their duties.
- ensure that, through performance management and supervisory systems, all staff are provided with appropriate developmental opportunities.
- ensure that workloads are realistic and manageable.
- ensure that employees are aware that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within the school.
- recognise that staff may have experiences in their personal lives which may make them vulnerable to pressures at work and which may have a temporary influence on their work performance e.g. bereavement or separation
- ensure that sickness monitoring information is up to date and identifies any stress related illness whether work related or as a consequence of external stress.
- treat all discussions with staff around personal stress factors as confidential unless the member of staff gives written agreement for disclosure
- upon identifying that an employee is suffering from stress or a stress related illness, ensure that an identified individual carries out a stress risk assessment around that individual and associated work-related stress factors.
- following stress risk assessments for individuals, ensure that an action plan is jointly agreed between the Headteacher and the member of staff involved to manage work-related stress factors

- review the action plan at regular intervals agreed between the two parties to ensure the effectiveness of any control measures put in place.

**4.4 The Directors will:**

- monitor the implementation of the stress policy through regular updates from the Headteacher
- receive reports from the Headteacher on stress-related sickness absence within the school
- review the PPD every three years

**4.5 School Staff will:**

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and co-operate with management in stress reduction measures including attending any training provided.
- on recognition that they may be suffering from stress, either work-related or due to external stress factors, which may impact upon their work performance, raise this with the headteacher or line manager or alternatively with a trade union representative.
- accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.

Where staff feel it inappropriate to discuss issues around stress with their Headteacher, line manager or trade union representatives, they have the option to self-refer to a confidential counselling service.

**4.6 Trade Union Representatives and Safety Representatives will:**

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

Safety Representatives should conduct joint inspections of the workplace with headteachers or senior leaders at least every 12 months to ensure that stress factors are properly controlled.

**7) Review of this PPD**

The Leadership Team reviews the PPD every 3 years. It may review the PPD earlier, if required.

Approved by the Leadership Team meeting on 2014

Signed: .....

Headteacher

Review Date: 2017

