

CREATED WITH IMPACT. @malesomeimpact



EXCELLENCE | REFLECTIVENESS | TOGETHER | INCLUSIVITY | LEADERSHIP | INTEGRITY | HUMILITY | KINDNESS

Wellbeing Charter



Northern Leaders Trust,
Kenton School, Drayton Road,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3RU

Tel: 0191 214 2201
joinus@northernleaderstrust.org
www.northernleaderstrust.org

LEADERSHIP | EXCELLENCE | INTEGRITY | KINDNESS | INCLUSIVITY | HUMILITY | TOGETHER | REFLECTIVENESS

WWW.NORTHERNLEADERSTRUST.ORG

We're firmly committed to promoting and delivering a positive and supportive working environment for colleagues throughout our Trust.

Welcome to wellbeing

Our Trust vision is to put 'students at the centre of everything we do.' One aspect of this is to ensure we attract and look after and develop the best staff who share our passion for educating children and young people.

We are committed to the holistic wellbeing of our staff and believe it is a shared responsibility. This charter contains examples of how

Northern Leaders Trust and our academies will ensure you are supported. In addition, all NLT schools have signed up to The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter published by the DfE.



Lee Kirtley
Chief Executive Officer



What is the DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter?

The DfE Expert Advisory Group on Education Staff Wellbeing defines wellbeing as; 'A state of complete physical and mental health

that is characterised by high quality social relationships.'

The DfE has committed to:

- 1 'Design-in' wellbeing
- 2 Support the sector to drive down unnecessary workload
- 3 Measure and respond to changes in staff wellbeing
- 4 Ensure that DfE guidance meets user needs

- 5 Champion flexible working and diversity
- 6 Break down stigma around mental health
- 7 Embed wellbeing in training and professional development
- 8 Improve access to mental health and wellbeing resources
- 9 Review progress

The principles of wellbeing

While the phrase 'wellbeing' is often used, it's frequently misunderstood. So what exactly does it mean?

WELLBEING IS SUBJECTIVE (but can be measured)

Wellbeing can be described as a state of total health that is not merely the absence of disease or illness. For NLT, this means we use a bank of questions that can be used to measure and monitor the wellbeing of employees.

WELLBEING HAS MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Improving the wellbeing of staff, including by creating supportive cultures, is a crucial means of increasing and safeguarding workforce supply in the long-term. Wellbeing is not the only factor

involved in recruitment and retention, but it is recognised that improving wellbeing in the sector can help to both increase the chance of keeping current talent and heighten the appeal of the sector to new talent in the long-term.

WELLBEING IS HOLISTIC

The wellbeing of individuals is affected by many interrelated factors. This means that levels of low or high wellbeing are rarely due to just one factor, and that the issue should be looked at holistically. Wellbeing in the workplace can be grouped in to **five** categories, some of which overlap.

1 HEALTH Including mental and physical health.

2 SECURITY Including working conditions, safety, bullying and harassment, and financial security.

3 ENVIRONMENT This is a broad category that in education can cover both:

3a) THE ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

including the physical environment (school or college facilities) and systems (such as the availability and effectiveness of flexible working arrangements). This may also include the degree to which a member of staff identifies with organisational values.

3b) THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

including the policies of the government of the day, and public perceptions of the status of the profession.

4 RELATIONSHIPS

In particular, the degree of support and respect

an individual has from immediate colleagues, line managers, and leadership. It can also include relationships with parents.

5 PURPOSE

In particular, high-quality job design. For staff, this can mean:

- ★ the right type of work for the individual
- ★ a sense of 'belonging' - including shared vision and organisational goals
- ★ the opportunity to develop and demonstrate competence, and progress in their career.

WELLBEING IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

We recognise that the responsibility for wellbeing and mental health must be shared across the entire education system. It must be a long-term and concerted effort from everyone.

UNITED IN OUR SHARED VALUES

Across the Trust we have a shared expectation, our **One Trust Rule**, which states: Every student and adult is expected to behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other people and their wellbeing at all times.

Whilst our academies are unique and retain their own identities, we expect members of our community to align with our Trust vision and values:

LEADERSHIP Leaders help themselves and others to do the right thing. We firmly believe that all

students and staff within our Trust are leaders.

EXCELLENCE We are a Trust that strives to achieve excellence in academic, sporting and artistic pursuits.

INTEGRITY We are honest and driven by a clear moral purpose. Acting with integrity means we strive to do the right thing at all times.

KINDNESS We value being kind to one another, using our manners and being considerate of each other's feelings.

INCLUSIVITY All students are welcomed into our classrooms and their uniqueness is celebrated. We have high aspirations for all students: no

groups or individuals will be left behind.

HUMILITY We are humble in both success and failure. We acknowledge that our successes are achieved through the hard work of our students, parents, teachers and community.

TOGETHER We believe that the Trust is stronger together and that collaboration is always more effective than competition.

REFLECTIVENESS We value reflection as a way to achieve improvement. We believe in inspiring all our learners to question, research, engage and therefore thrive.

We're empowering staff to take ownership of their own wellbeing and look out for the wellbeing of others.

Support for everyone

Our dedicated teams all share a passion for educating our children and young people and it is essential that our Trust enables this within a supportive and caring environment where we all feel valued, respected, and trusted.

We will empower staff to take ownership of their own wellbeing and look out for the wellbeing of others. This will include ensuring that all staff are familiar with the different dimensions of wellbeing, including mental health, financial wellbeing and physical wellbeing. We will ensure that staff know how to access appropriate guidance, support and tools, and that their use is encouraged throughout the organisation.

We will also work to provide managers with tools, resources and training to support their staff. Where

additional support for staff may be required, we will ensure that there are clear routes in place for managers and staff to escalate for further support.

Continuing to work with staff and pupils to maintain and implement a school-wide behaviour policy is another key wellbeing commitment. As a result, all staff and pupils will have a shared understanding of how good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded, and the sanctions that will be imposed if pupils misbehave.

All staff will be supported to create calm, safe and disciplined environments, which allow teachers to teach and pupils to learn. Our approach will go hand-in-hand with understanding and supporting pupil mental health issues.

NLT WELLBEING CHARTER OUR COMMITMENTS

- 1 Prioritise staff mental health
- 2 Give all staff the support they need
- 3 Wellbeing resources for all line managers
- 4 Establish a clear communications policy
- 5 Give staff a voice in decision making
- 6 Drive down unnecessary workload
- 7 Champion flexible working and diversity
- 8 Create a positive organisational culture
- 9 Support staff with career progression
- 10 Wellbeing and mental health for NLT leaders
- 11 Hold ourselves accountable

Wellbeing Charter: Our commitments

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

1 Prioritise staff mental health

OUR AIM

We will:

- ★ tackle mental health stigma within the organisation, promoting an open and understanding culture.
- ★ give the same consideration and support to mental health as physical health, including in the management of staff absence.
- ★ fulfil our legal duty to control the risks associated with work-related stress in the education setting so far as is reasonably practicable.
- ★ channel support to individuals whose role is known to have a significant emotional component. This might take the form of peer support, supervision, and/or counselling.
- ★ ensure that staff understand the real benefits that sensitive pastoral support can have, while also recognising where their limits are as non-specialists. We will therefore ensure there are opportunities to increase joint working in support of pupils, as well as routes to refer for specialist support.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Specialist support from Occupational Health.
- ★ Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme with early access to counselling.
- ★ Risk Assessments to support an individual within the workplace.
- ★ Opportunity for funded team building activities outside of the workplace.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

2 Give all staff the support they need

OUR AIM

We will empower staff to take ownership of their own wellbeing and look out for the wellbeing of others. This will include ensuring that all staff are familiar with the different dimensions of wellbeing, including mental health, financial wellbeing and physical wellbeing. We will ensure that staff know how to access appropriate guidance, support and tools, and that their use is encouraged throughout the organisation.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Health surveillance.
- ★ Access to physiotherapy.
- ★ DSE assessments.
- ★ Access to occupational health support.
- ★ Specific training for role e.g. manual handling.
- ★ Access to support from Health Assured.
- ★ Mental health champions supported by mental health first aiders.
- ★ Access to free fitness facilities.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

3 Wellbeing resources for all line managers

OUR AIM

We will work to provide managers with tools, resources and training to support their staff. We will not, however, expect managers to provide professional wellbeing support for which they have no professional training, and will ensure that there are clear routes in place to escalate for further support.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Work in partnership with individuals to complete Risk Assessments.
- ★ Advice and guidance from HR.
- ★ Medical advice from Occupational Health.
- ★ Access to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- ★ Access to training courses.
- ★ Increased departmental CPD time and link meetings.
- ★ Provision of PPE, outdoor coats and other clothing.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

4 Establish a clear communications policy

OUR AIM

We will provide clear guidance to all stakeholders (internal and external) on remote and out-of-school/college hours working, including when it is and isn't reasonable to expect staff to respond to queries. This should not necessarily include preventing staff from accessing email at 'unsociable' hours if it suits them personally.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ No emails to be sent between 6.30pm and 7am. Staff choosing to work outside of these times will schedule send emails. Exceptions to this will include matters involving safeguarding.
- ★ Weekly briefing and bulletins.
- ★ Central collation of workforce wellbeing issues coordinated through Workforce Wellbeing Champion (DEEPS role).

Wellbeing Charter: Our commitments

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

5 Give staff a voice in decision making

OUR AIM

We will constantly strive to improve the ways in which the voice of staff is included in the decision-making process across the Trust. (This will also include engagement with key stakeholders, such as recognised trade unions and others). In particular, we will proactively seek to draw upon the experience of those with mental health issues and/or of discrimination, ensuring that they are able to share their experience confidently and safely.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Termly staff survey.
- ★ Post NLT Conference staff survey.
- ★ Staff Governors on all Local Governing Bodies.
- ★ Opportunities for leaders to work collaboratively across the Trust to shape future practice.
- ★ Line management meetings.
- ★ Redesigned governance structures to ensure a 'golden thread' from classroom to boardroom and back again, ensuring all stakeholders are heard.
- ★ Regular feedback through 'you said, we did' style updates.
- ★ Staff voice boxes available within School to collect workforce improvement suggestions/concerns.
- ★ Workforce wellbeing surveys requesting opinions and suggestions/improvements.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

6 Drive down unnecessary workload

OUR AIM

We will work proactively to drive down unnecessary workload, making use of available tools (such as the Workload Reduction Toolkit for schools).

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Live marking and feedback, no requirement to mark books outside of lessons.
- ★ Shared planning requiring the teacher to amend for their pupils.
- ★ Behaviour system and processes to remove the 'burden' from teachers.
- ★ Completion of periodic reviews looking at tasks and systems to improve/simplify processes and reduce workload.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

7 Champion flexible working and diversity

OUR AIM

We will work to create a supportive culture around flexible working. We will agree an approach that not only recognises employees' legal right to request flexible working but acknowledges that for some staff working flexibly can be a key means of protecting and enhancing their personal wellbeing. We will work to promote diversity – eliminating discrimination, and advancing equality of opportunity.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Leave of absence.
- ★ Maternity/paternity/adoption Policy.
- ★ Flexible work requests.
- ★ Phased returns following long term absence.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

8 Create a positive organisational culture

OUR AIM

We will work with staff and pupils to maintain and implement a school-wide behaviour policy. All staff and pupils will have a shared understanding of how good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded, and the sanctions that will be imposed if pupils misbehave. We will support staff to create calm, safe and disciplined environments, which allow teachers to teach and pupils to learn. Our approach will go hand-in-hand with understanding and supporting pupil mental health issues.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Clear behaviour policy and sanctions using the Lost Learning Boards.
- ★ High staff presence to support.
- ★ Strong praise culture in schools using the Praise Boards.
- ★ Celebration events.
- ★ Additional support for students through Bridge, PLC, PDC, ASPIRE and AP.
- ★ Employee Code of Conduct sets out expected behaviour of the workforce.
- ★ Grievance Procedure provides individuals with the opportunity to raise a concern either informally or formally.
- ★ Dignity at Work Policy sets out that individuals will be treated equally, fairly and with respect.
- ★ Application of consistent behaviour policies for students.
- ★ Publication of regular Trust newsletters.
- ★ Acknowledgement of good individual or team performance or achievement.

Wellbeing Charter: Our commitments

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

9 Support staff with career progression

OUR AIM

We will ensure that staff are able to pursue professional development without adversely impacting their own or other people's workload. In schools, we will ensure that any professional development activity is aligned to the Standard for Teachers' Professional Development.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Performance Management policy for all staff to include a CPD objective.
- ★ Opportunities to apply for a leadership role through the DEEPS model (open to teaching and non-teaching staff).
- ★ Opportunities to work across multiple schools in the Trust.
- ★ Bespoke CPD for staff.
- ★ Trust wide CPD offer underpinned by the Principles of NLT resources.
- ★ Access to Apprenticeship Levy funded courses.
- ★ 'Buddy' scheme for all new employees.
- ★ CPD opportunity/qualifications specific for employees working within pastoral roles.
- ★ Trust wide programme.
- ★ Sharing of all PLP resources.
- ★ Opportunity to shadow colleagues in alternative roles.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

10 Wellbeing and mental health for NLT leaders

OUR AIM

We will ensure that all those with strategic decision-making responsibility should collaborate to develop a sub-strategy specifically for protecting leader mental health. This should include access to confidential counselling and/or coaching where needed.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme with early access to counselling.

WELLBEING CHARTER COMMITMENT

11 Hold ourselves accountable

OUR AIM

We will measure the wellbeing of staff using recognised tools and metrics and be transparent about results. We will monitor trends over time, and act in response to changes. Further, we will work with staff and relevant stakeholders (this might include parents, recognised trade unions and others) to agree an approach to organisational accountability on our commitments, giving due consideration to workload.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE/POLICY TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITMENT INCLUDE

- ★ Monitor grievances and act immediately on any concerns or trends.
- ★ Understand staff absences and any monitor against regional and national performance whilst identifying any trends.
- ★ Staff surveys.
- ★ Termly Joint Consultative Committee meetings.
- ★ People Strategy.



You're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

Christopher Robin
from *Winnie the Pooh*

Wellbeing at work

We're continually striving to create a safe and supportive working environment for all our colleagues. This Wellbeing Charter document not only sets out our key priorities and commitments for staff wellbeing but also provides a clear and concise roadmap for future developments.

If you have comments or questions about any aspect of your role and would like to talk to someone about exploring options mentioned in the Wellbeing Charter, please speak with your line manager or email wellbeing@nothernleaderstrust.org