

Health and Wellbeing Policy for Staff

Policy Code:	HR34
Policy Start Date:	March 2025
Policy Review Date:	March 2028

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HS5 Health & Safety Policy
- HR3 Grievance Policy
- HR13 Annual and Special Leave and Absence Reporting Policy
- HR18 Staff Sickness Absence Policy
- HR23 Whistleblowing Policy
- HR25 Flexible Working Policy
- Trust Workload Charter

Other policies contribute to staff wellbeing by providing certainty, fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff in different contexts, including:

- HR2 Appraisal Policy for Teaching Staff, CEO and Directors
- HR11 Teachers' Pay Policy
- HR15 Time off for Dependants Leave
- HR19 Maternity Leave Policy
- HR20 Paternity Leave Policy
- HR21 Adoption Leave Policy
- HR31 Shared Parental Leave Policy
- HR40 Support Staff Appraisal Policy
- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy outlines The Priory Federation of Academies (the Trust) principles relating to the health and wellbeing of their staff.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all staff working for the Trust and aims to ensure that staff are appropriately supported in their workplace.
- 1.3 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire SCITT.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Wellbeing.
- 2.2 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 The Trust recognises that mental health is as important as physical health and is aware that the majority of people who experience mental health difficulties can recover or learn to manage their symptoms, especially if they are supported early on.
- 3.2 The Trust recognises that its workforce is its most valuable asset. The Trust places an expectation on all staff to contribute to building healthy, supportive relationships in the workplace leading to a productive atmosphere where both staff and students flourish.
- 3.3 The Trust has developed a wellbeing policy to manage its obligations to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers our commitment to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff; the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health; health promotion initiatives; communicating and training on health issues; the

range of support available for the maintenance of mental health and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

- 3.4 This policy describes the Trust's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing of staff in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how the Trust fulfil our legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help staff maintain health and wellbeing. The Trust recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving staff's ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved performance.
- 3.5 As part of its ongoing commitment to the wellbeing of its staff, the Trust has signed up to the Department of Education Staff Wellbeing Charter. The charter is a declaration of support for, and set of commitments to, the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working in education.
- 3.6 Mental wellbeing is relevant for all staff, which means every member of staff can play a part in improving wellbeing in the workplace. By addressing mental health issues, the Trust can improve the general wellbeing of staff, reduce absenteeism, lower staff turnover and increase productivity.
- 3.7 Any information you provide to us about your health will be processed in accordance with the Trust's HR6 Data Protection Policy.

4 Legal Obligations

- 4.1 The Trust have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that your health is not put at risk by excessive pressures or demands arising from the way work is organised.
- 4.2 This policy takes account of our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

5 Our approach to mental wellbeing

- 5.1 The Trust will:
- promote a culture of open communication by providing both formal and informal channels through which staff can raise concerns;
 - facilitate requests for flexible working where reasonably practicable and in accordance with the Trust's HR25 Flexible Working Policy;
 - consider reasonable adjustments, on a temporary or permanent basis, in conjunction with relevant medical advice; and



- provide support services such as occupational health, confidential counselling, and training for Mental Health First Aiders (Wellbeing Champions), which is accessed via the Human Resources Department.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 Staff

All staff should ensure that they are familiar with this policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. Staff should plan and organise their work to meet personal and organisational objectives and co-operate with support, advice and guidance that may be offered by line managers or the HR Department.

6.2 Line Managers

All Line Managers have a responsibility to recognise potential issues of work-related stress or mental ill health in the staff they manage. They should seek advice from the HR Department if they have concerns. All managers should provide support to staff by working with the HR Department. Managers need to:

- promote a culture of open communication;
- effectively plan and provide feedback on performance;
- ensure that staff receive necessary training and support;
- monitor workloads and reallocate work where necessary; and
- ensure that staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and others, and act on behaviour that falls below those standards.

6.3 Human Resources

The Trust will engage with the HR Team to develop Trust-wide policies and procedures, to protect the wellbeing of staff, assist Line Managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping staff to maintain good psychological health.

The Trust operates practices and policies that ensure staff can achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and other commitments and adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998.

6.4 Occupational Health

The Trust has engaged occupational health professionals who will provide a comprehensive service designed to help staff stay in work, or to return to work,

after experiencing health problems. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from the HR Department.

Occupational health professionals will play a critical part in developing rehabilitation plans for staff returning to work after absences related to ill health, and work with GPs and line managers on designing/amending jobs and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is successful.

6.5 Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)

The Trust has appointed a number of Wellbeing Champions who are trained in Adult Mental Health First Aid, who can be contacted by any member of staff experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. Wellbeing Champions can discuss your concerns and provide details of available support.

6.6 Health promotion initiatives

The Trust has developed 'Wellbeing on a Page', which gives individuals guidance on where to access additional support.

Staff will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example lunchtime walking or dancing clubs. Prior approval from the Trust is required before any club/group is set up.

6.7 Training and communications

Line managers and staff should regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

Wellbeing Champions, members of the Wellbeing Strategic Group and HR Staff will receive training in mental health first aid so they are able to recognise the symptoms of mental ill health.

Managers and staff are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including staff surveys. All staff are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and Trust-wide methods. The Trust will ensure that structures exist to give staff regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.



Managers and staff are encouraged to utilise the HR Clinics set up at each Academy to seek any help or support they may need.

6.8 Other services

Other measures available to support staff in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- special leave arrangements;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities; and
- the Trust's HR3 Grievance Policy.

Help and information can also be obtained from Mind, the mental health charity: www.mind.org.uk or the Samaritans: www.samaritans.org.

6.9 Reasonable Adjustments

There may be reasonable adjustments that can be made to your role if you are experiencing a health issue. These adjustments could be on a temporary basis or they could be permanent changes. Examples of the types of adjustments that can be considered are as follows:

- changes to your physical working environment;
- changes to your working pattern;
- adapting the way our policies are applied;
- reviewing tasks or deadlines to help someone have a reasonable workload while managing their mental health;
- providing rest areas away from the main staff room to allow a member of staff to rest, away from social demands;
- modifying supervision to provide regular check ins, prioritising work and creating structure in the working day;
- providing training or coaching to build confidence in skills relevant to the job; and/or
- agreeing a preferred communication method to help reduce anxiety.

7 Confidentiality

- 7.1 Information about mental health and mental wellbeing is highly sensitive. Every member of staff is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required when dealing with information about mental health whether they are supporting a colleague or because they are otherwise involved in the operation of a workplace policy or procedure.

8 Policy Change

- 8.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by the Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



The Priory Federation of Academies Trust

Health and Wellbeing Policy for Staff

This Policy has been approved by the Pay Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.