



# St. Gregory's Catholic High School

## Stress Management Policy For Schools

### Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Director of Finance and Resources.

### Evaluation

The policy was reviewed by the Director of Finance and Resources and Senior Leadership Team on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Resources Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Board for approval.

### Policy Review Dates:

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The School aims to provide all employees with a working environment which is safe and without risks to health. This includes the provision of suitable control measures in the case of any work activity that may create a risk of work related stress.
- 1.2 The School acknowledges that employees may encounter stress in their work as well as in their personal lives and is committed to identifying, managing and reducing work related stressors.
- 1.3 This Policy, through the proactive management of stress, aims to reduce the occurrence of work related stress conditions among staff, thus enhancing the education provision for children and providing a safer working environment for all staff.

## **2. Definition**

- 2.1 The Health & Safety Executive has defined stress as:

***“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them”***

- 2.2 There is a clear distinction between pressure and transient stressful periods in a normal work routine, which can be a motivating factor, and adverse stress which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive and, if not controlled and reduced to a tolerable level, can be detrimental to mental and physical health and performance at work.
- 2.3 It is important to remember that some level of stress is a normal aspect of everyday life. However, the harmful effects of stress, particularly when chronic, are now regarded as having a significant negative impact on the overall physical and psychological well-being of individuals. In addition, it can undermine performance at work and is costly to the school.
- 2.4 This policy focuses on work related stress, however, it is recognised that excessive pressure and demands outside of work – or conflicting demands of work and home – can also play a part. It is difficult to control outside stressors, but to manage work related stress effectively the importance and interaction of work and home problems must be recognised.

## **3. Scope of the Policy**

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all teachers, support staff and school leaders.
- 3.2 Any absence which is attributable to stress related symptoms will be managed in accordance with the School’s Managing Attendance Policy, in conjunction with this Stress Management policy.

## **4. Policy Statement**

- 4.1 The Governing Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees.
- 4.2 The school values all of its employees and the contribution each of them makes to its overall success. It strives to create and maintain a working environment in which communication, support and mutual respect are the norms.
- 4.3 The school is committed to improving and safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- 4.4 The Governing Board is responsible for the implementation of this policy through the school management structure and for providing the necessary resources to support it.

## **5. Potential Causes of Stress**

It may not be possible to predict how or when a person will be adversely affected by the pressures they experience. Within school there are times that may be particularly stressful for staff, for example during an Ofsted inspection, however there are also a range of on-going causes of both non work-related and work related stress, for example:

### 5.1 Potential causes of non-work related stress

- Bereavement
- Relationship breakdown
- Problems relating to children/parents
- Illness in the family
- Financial problems
- Personal issues such as gender, sexuality
- Experience of chronic illness
- Addiction
- Abuse
- Violence
- House move

### 5.2 Potential causes of work-related stress

- Long hours/high workload
- Dealing with challenging behaviours
- Management style/poor communication
- Organisational change
- Poor relationship with co-workers
- Lack of participation in decision making
- Unsupportive feedback
- Training needs
- Job security

These are not exhaustive lists, just a few examples of what may cause stress.

## 6. Responsibilities

### 6.1 The Governing Board/Heads/Principals

- Will provide adequate resources to enable the school to implement the Stress Management Policy.
  - Will identify all workplace stressors and conducts risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
  - Will ensure there is a nominated Governor who leads on Health and Safety
  - Will ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties
  - Are responsible for ensuring that good communication exists between all levels of employee in their area, especially during periods of organisational or procedural change.
  - Are responsible for using the PR&D/Appraisal process and other formal and informal supervision sessions as a means of monitoring workload and spotting potential risks and training needs, making sure that all staff are adequately supported.
  - Are responsible for monitoring the working hours, absence levels, overtime and workload of all team members, ensuring that excesses are monitored and managed and that holiday entitlements are taken. A directed time calendar is a useful tool to use to ensure all staff are clear about their working time and responsibilities.
  - Should offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stressful situations outside work e.g. bereavement or separation, where such a situation comes to their attention.
  - Are responsible for making constructive use of return to work interviews, as required under the Managing Attendance Policy, for exploring reasons and potential causes of absence, and for encouraging an open dialogue about employees' concerns.
- (g) Have a duty to recognise the limits of their skills in counselling employees and the potential conflict of interest with their position. Where an employee exhibits symptoms of stress, a manager should discuss this with the employee and, if appropriate, suggest that the person seeks help. This may involve discussing the issue with Human Resources to determine whether an appointment for the employee with the Occupational Health Service is appropriate.
- (h) Have responsibilities to ensure an understanding of the inherent pressures and expectations of posts within their remit and the requisite skills required to meet them.

## 6.2 Human Resources

- Are responsible for providing guidance to heads/principals and managers on the application of the stress policy and other associated policies in connection with the health and well-being of employees.
- May be required to advise and support managers on the re-integration of employees back into the work place following a period of absence due to a stress related illness. This may involve assisting with identifying suitable, available, temporary or permanent options to ensure compliance with contractual and legal obligations and the duty of care. It may also include advice on the provision of a transitional period or phased return to work following absence.
- Will assist with referrals to the Occupational Health Service where appropriate.
- Are responsible for providing advice/guidance/support to managers in the management of absence in accordance with the School's Managing Attendance Policy.

## 6.3 Occupational Health and School Safety Staff

- Will provide specialist advice on stress related problems and coping strategies, including counselling where appropriate, and advise on re-integration into work following absence related to stress.
- Will actively encourage employees who are experiencing stress related problems to seek professional help and to take responsibility for their own recovery.
- Will refer/ signpost employees to other appropriate providers for specialist help when necessary.
- Will provide stress related risk assessment advice when requested.
- Trained Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives will advise and assist employees on stress and other related matters.

## 6.4 Employees

- All employees have a personal responsibility to be aware of their own levels of stress and to take action to prevent deterioration in their health including raising issues of concern with their line head/principal or manager (or other appropriate manager where they do not feel comfortable speaking to their own line manager).
- Where an employee perceives that there is a problem at work which has resulted in them being absent due to stress related symptoms it is expected that the employee will engage with the relevant procedures and any support

offered to facilitate a return to work. In such circumstances the employee may wish to seek the advice and support of their Trade Union representative.

- Where employees are concerned that colleagues are showing signs of suffering from stress it is appropriate to offer support and/or refer them to their Manager.
- Employees should recognise their own training and development needs, bringing these to the attention of their line manager/head teacher.
- Employees should seek professional help/support as early as possible and engage with measures of support offered by the School.

## **7.0 Procedure for Managing Stress**

- 7.1 Tackling stress has been shown to have real benefits to organisations. It can, for example, help improve staff morale and commitment and in turn bring higher productivity and lower absenteeism.
- 7.2 The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has identified six broad categories of risk factors for work related stress (see Appendix 1). It is important to use a structured approach to risk assessment which includes:
- a) Look for the stress hazards/risks
  - b) Evaluate the risks and record what needs to be done in an action plan
  - c) Review and revise the assessment and actions taken
- 7.3 “Stress” is a term that tends to be used quite broadly ranging from situations when someone is feeling particularly busy at work, is finding their job difficult for some reason, or is worried about having their performance managed more closely due to concerns about under-performance, to situations where working conditions, relationships, change, or other factors place demands on an employee which could be considered unreasonable. Regardless of ‘which end of the spectrum’, the key factor is the ability of the employee to cope / the employee’s reaction.
- 7.4 This can be quite challenging for managers to deal with. Very broadly the areas to consider are:
- a) what are the pressures and demands at play in this situation, are the pressures / demands reasonable and being applied in a considered manner;
  - b) regardless of whether the demands are considered ‘reasonable’, what could be done to help the employee cope better with the situation in order to help them minimise the “adverse reaction”;
  - c) is there anything else that can be done for the employee concerned, or the school/academy generally, to address the underlying concerns being raised?
- 7.5 Stress is not an illness, but, if experienced for a prolonged period, can result in psychological illness such as anxiety or depression, or physical symptoms such as headaches or digestive disorders. If particularly severe, it is thought

to be able to contribute to physical illnesses such as high blood pressure or heart disease, and susceptibility to frequent minor illnesses.

- 7.6 Through the proactive management of stress a school can significantly improve the working environment of its employees. Though often a challenging and long term commitment, a school will benefit from improved staff attendance, reduced mental health problems, and consequently fewer performance related problems.
- 7.7 The approaches outlined below, when implemented either independently or simultaneously, act to protect both the school and employee from stress, and are recommended as good practice. Each situation is different, and Heads / Principals should feel able to adapt the process / tools to best fit the circumstances. **Please note every effort should be made for confidentiality to be observed.**
- 7.8 Whole School Well-being
- 7.9 A genuinely proactive approach will help to highlight issues that may be hidden from management, either because individuals are not aware of the problem and don't actually recognise it themselves, or are aware but feel that mentioning it might be a sign of weakness.
- 7.10 Whether or not they perceive there is a problem to be addressed, a school may choose to carry out an employee survey (the "wellbeing ready reckoner" in Appendix 2 can be used – adapted as necessary). The results could then be taken forward, perhaps as part of wider health & well-being activities.
- 7.11 The Individual Approach
- 7.12 Every effort should be made by the school/academy to resolve individual cases proactively and within a supportive environment, which encourages employees to raise concerns and make suggestions for improving the school and the management of stress.
- 7.13 A suggested approach for doing so may be:
- An individual highlights a concern
  - The Head / Principal / line manager has an initial discussion, and (if appropriate) provides the employee with a copy of the stress action check list (Appendix 3)
  - Following completion of the checklist the Head / Principal / line manager has a further discussion with the employee about the findings of the checklist, and consider if the employee should be referred to Occupational Health, counselling or another support service.
  - Guidance notes for managers accompany the stress action checklist to help provide solutions (Appendix 4)



- The Head / Principal / line manager should work with the employee to create an action plan (Appendix 5) - and agree a timeframe for action, with another meeting scheduled to discuss progress.
- Stress-related sickness absences should be managed sensitively and pro-actively in line with the Management Attendance Procedure, and Heads / Principals should ensure that contact with the individual is maintained during their absence.

#### 7.14 The Group Approach

- There may be occasions when a larger group of staff indicate concerns, or the Head / Principal / line manager has concerns and/or decides to take a proactive approach in response to a forthcoming event.

#### 7.15 A suggested approach for managing this may be:

- Distribute the stress action checklist to either specific areas of the school or to the staff as a whole, so areas of concern can be identified
- For example, identify a group of staff to involve – this might be a particular team / department if there are concerns, or a focus group consisting of a variety of staff members from different areas and levels of the school staffing structure
- Group members complete the stress action checklist and review and discuss the collated results, or they use the stress action checklist as a starting point for a focus group discussion without necessarily completing it on an individual basis.
- The group then meet to create solutions / action plan, and where appropriate carry out stress risk assessments

#### 7.15 The Risk Assessment Approach

7.16 A stress risk assessment (Appendix 6) should be carried out as an assessment of the overall situation in a school, for example as part of a regular health & safety inspection process. This document is not intended for an individual situation.

7.17 Stress risk assessments in place at school must be reviewed regularly.

### 8.0 **Additional sources of information**

HSE's guidance on work-related stress: [www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

**The Education Support Partnership** offer a free, confidential helpline, grants to education staff experiencing financial issues and guidance on handling stress and managing work/life balance. Tel: 08000 562 561  
<https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>

#### **The Department for Education**

In July 2018 the DfE published a [Workload reduction toolkit](#). This provides support for schools with a range of materials to help review and streamline

workload through solution-focused and collaborative discussions. This is accompanied by a short advice document with [tips from school leaders on ways to reduce workload](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-teachers-workload/reducing-teachers-workload>

### **Happy, Ok, Sad**

Whether you are feeling great and want to stay that way, you're a bit fed up or you're struggling to manage your feelings, this site has links to information and tips ranging from how to boost your mood to where to get help if you are unable to cope.

This website has been developed for people living in Warrington, so some of the services are for local people only. Many of the links are for national sites, so the information will be relevant wherever you live.

<http://happyoksad.warrington.gov.uk/>

### **Trade Unions**

The recognised trade unions can offer advice and support along with a wealth of information that you can access.

#### Support Staff Trade Unions

Unison - <https://www.unison.org.uk/>

GMB - <https://www.gmb.org.uk/>

Unite - <https://unitetheunion.org/>

CYWU - <https://www.cywu.org.uk/>

AEP - <https://www.aep.org.uk/>

Voice - <https://www.voicetheunion.org.uk/>

#### Teachers Unions

NEU - <https://neu.org.uk/>

NASUWT - <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/>

NAHT - <https://www.naht.org.uk/>

ASCL - <https://www.ascl.org.uk/>

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Health & Safety Executive – Stress Management Standards**

The HSE website provides information on Management Standards which define the characteristics, or culture, of an organisation where the risks from work related stress are being effectively managed and controlled to help combat work related stress. The stress action checklist is based on these standards, which are summarised below.

<p><b>Standard 1: Demands</b> Includes issues like workload, work patterns, and the work environment</p>
<p><b>The standard is that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and</li> <li>• Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What should be happening / states to be achieved:</b> where applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work;</li> <li>• People’s skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;</li> <li>• Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and</li> <li>• Employees’ concerns about their work environment are addressed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 2: Control</b> How much say the person has in the way they do their work</p>
<p><b>The standard is that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work; and</li> <li>• Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What should be happening / states to be achieved:</b> where applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work;</li> <li>• Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;</li> <li>• Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;</li> <li>• The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills;</li> <li>• Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and</li> <li>• Employees are consulted over their work patterns.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 3: Support</b> Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues</p>
<p><b>The standard is that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors; and</li> <li>• Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.</li> </ul>

- What should be happening / states to be achieved:** where applicable
- The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees;
  - Systems are in place to enable and encourage line managers to support their staff
  - Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues;
  - Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it;
  - Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job; and
  - Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

**Standard 4: Relationships**

Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour

**The standard is that:**

- Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

**What should be happening / states to be achieved:** where applicable

- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage line managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.

**Standard 5: Role**

Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles

**The standard is that:**

- Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

**What should be happening / states to be achieved:** where applicable

- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible;
- The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities;
- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear; and

- Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

**Standard 6:**

Change How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organization

**The standard is that:**

- Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

**What should be happening / states to be achieved:** where applicable

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- The organisation conducts a stress risk assessment when considering a change to the school's structure
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

## APPENDIX 2 Well-Being Ready Reckoner

This questionnaire may be used by school management as the starting point for a stress risk assessment. The findings will give an indication of general levels of stress, and can then be used to identify the most likely causes of stress. Wherever evidence of stress emerges – the earlier it is tackled, the easier it is to put right.

**Higher scores are suggestive of greater levels of well-being amongst those answering the questionnaire, whilst lower totals tend to indicate elevated degrees of stress/poor mental health. Please note that a score of 100 or more does not necessarily indicate the absence of a problem.**

**Instructions:** For each of the following questions, enter the number matching the description which most closely represents how you feel.

**1 – Not at all   2 = Not much   3 = Sometimes   4 = Mostly   5 = Very much so**

	SCORE
Do you feel able to concentrate on what you are doing at school?	
Do you feel that you are playing a useful part in school life?	
Do you feel capable of making decisions at school?	
Do you generally feel relaxed in your home and school life?	
Do you feel most problems you encounter at school can be overcome?	
Do you generally manage to keep your sense of humour?	
Do you feel happy at work, all things considered?	
Are you sleeping well?	
Are you eating well?	
Are you drinking sensibly?	
Do you cope well with changes to your job?	
Do you have a reasonable amount of energy?	
Do you feel in control of your job?	
Do you feel you are coping well in the classroom? (if you do not work in the classroom, please answer this question on how you feel you are coping generally)	

Do you get on well with pupils?	
Do you get on well with colleagues?	
Do you get on well with your managers?	
Do you feel free from the threat of bullying & harassment at school?	
Do you enjoy a reasonable degree of autonomy, unaffected by excessive monitoring regimes?	
Do you manage to leave work "on time" fairly regularly?	
Do you find your job satisfying and fulfilling?	
Do you enjoy a satisfying life outside of work?	
Do you intend to remain working in education for the foreseeable future?	
Do you look forward to returning to school after a weekend or holiday?	
<b>NOW ADD UP YOUR SCORES</b>	

**More than 100** = low evidence of stress (but this does not necessarily indicate the absence of a problem)

**51 to 100** = moderate evidence of stress

**Up to 50** = high evidence of stress

*Reproduced from the NUT, GMB, Unison & Unite publication "Guidance for School Leaders on preventing work-related mental health conditions by tackling stress"*

## APPENDIX 3

### Stress Action Checklist

Name:	School:
Job Title:	Date Completed:
Manager:	Date received by Manager:

Please take some time to complete this checklist which will be used to assist you and your manager to agree an action plan to enable potential issues to be resolved. The checklist is based on the National Management Standards for Stress issued by the HSE, and has been developed from a questionnaire in the NUT, GMB, Unison & Unite publication "Guidance for School Leaders on preventing work-related mental health conditions by tackling stress"

**Please note that this document is confidential and will not be shared with anyone else without your permission.**

**Instructions:** rank the following statements from 1 to 5 where

1= Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Ambivalent, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**This document is intended to help identify and resolve the issues that you consider to be having the greatest impact on work related stress at the moment, so please try to use the range of responses available.**

If the source of your stress / excessive pressure is coming from outside of work, please stop here and discuss alternative sources of help and support.

	DEMANDS	1	2	3	4	5
1.	My physical working conditions are acceptable					
2.	Our rest facilities are clean and well maintained					
3.	My total working hours are satisfactory					
4.	The number of after school meetings is manageable					
5.	I have enough time to carry out all my tasks / deadlines and time pressures given to me are achievable and reasonable					
6.	Ofsted inspections do not cause me excessive pressure					
7.	The balance between work and home life is about right					
8.	My academy values the time I put in at home					



9.	I am able to take a proper break during the school day					
10	(if applicable) Lesson planning requirements are realistic					
11.	(if applicable) Marking requirements are sensible and not overly bureaucratic					
	<b>CONTROL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
12.	I have opportunities to express my ideas and points of view					
13.	(if applicable) Classroom observation is not excessive					
14.	I am encouraged to use my initiative to do my work					
15.	I feel trusted by management to carry out my role					
	<b>SUPPORT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
16.	I receive appropriate training					
17.	My managers are supportive					
18.	I regularly receive positive feedback on my own work					
19.	There are enough support staff in the academy					
20.	The academy benefits from effective leadership					
21.	The appraisal system is supportive rather than critical					
	<b>RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
22.	I have a good relationship with my line manager					
23.	I get on well with colleagues					
24.	Management promote positive behaviours to avoid conflict and ensure fairness					
25.	Staff are able to complain without risk of repercussions					
26.	I rarely have to deal with disruptive pupils					

27.	I rarely have to deal with violent pupils					
28.	I do not have to worry about violence from aggressive parents					
	<b>ROLE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
29.	I'm clear about what is expected of me at work					
30.	My skills are well-used					
31.	I feel valued in my role					
	<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
32.	I find it difficult to cope with the pace of organisational or curriculum change					
33.	I find the introduction of new initiatives daunting					
34.	There is full staff consultation when any significant change is proposed					
35.	Changes are accompanied by appropriate support and training, where necessary					

**Selecting up to five statements, please indicate which factors listed above have the biggest impact on your workplace stress. Please list the numbers below:**

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Please list any issues causing work related stress which are not addressed in the questions above (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

Thank you for completing this checklist. The next stage is for you and your manager to discuss areas where there may be issues and decide on an action plan to resolve them as far as possible.

## APPENDIX 4

### Stress Action Checklist – notes for managers

This section gives guidance to managers on how to resolve issues identified in the Stress Action Checklist. Options need to be discussed with the member of staff, and agreed actions should be recorded on the Stress Action Plan.

The Individual Approach This approach most likely to be taken reactively, in response to concerns being raised. Following the completion of the checklist by an employee, the Headteacher / Principal or designated member of staff should meet with the employee to discuss the factors that have or are causing the most stress to the individual – the “top 5” listed at the end of the checklist, and any others scoring a “1 = strongly disagree”.

In some cases these factors may have simple solutions and where this is the case the school/academy should act swiftly to rectify any problem. In other cases the solutions may not be straight forward and the Headteacher / Principal or member of staff should not feel as though they are personally responsible for finding the solution to the difficulties raised during the meeting.

The Group approach The “wellbeing ready reckoner” (Annex 3) or “stress action checklist” (Annex 4) can be used proactively to assess the workplace stress experienced by all staff at an academy. By giving each member of staff (or a representative sample of staff) a copy of the questionnaire and allowing an anonymous return, the academy will benefit from knowing the root causes of stress in the school at a particular time. It can be tempting for the management team to believe that they are aware of the causes of stress in the school, however, this type of “stress audit” could reveal resolvable issues that management had not considered.

Next steps Possible actions and solutions to each question in the Stress Action Checklist are provided below. These are intended only as prompts, and the discussion should be guided by the circumstances in each case.

1	Physical working conditions: Is a risk assessment required? Can equipment be purchased or reorganised to rectify the problem?
2	Rest facilities: Can any improvements be made? Does the employee have any special requirements?
3	Total working hours: Discuss time management. Are there areas of training that could allow the employee to work more effectively? Is the employee being asked to work more hours to cover absent colleagues? Has PPA and if necessary management time been given?
4	After school meetings: Is the staff member’s attendance required at all evening meetings? Can meetings be arranged to take place during the school day?
5	Deadlines & time pressures: Does the employee struggle to prioritise workloads? Are any deadlines moveable? Monitor workloads and

	deadlines. Discuss ways of setting more realistic deadlines, doing things differently or notifying staff earlier that work needs to be done.
6	Ofsted/HMI inspections: Has a stress risk assessment been carried out? Is an OFSTED due soon? Can any support be given to support the employee preceding the inspection? Additional planning time, mentoring etc.?
7	Home / work balance: Would the employee benefit from using a counselling service or Teacher Support Network? Which elements of work are being done at home and how long are they taking? Is the work undertaken a priority?
8	Valuing time put in at home: Can work be reorganised to assist with personal issues at home?
9	Breaks during the school day: The school should ensure that all employees take a reasonable break during the working day. Is the employee taking reasonable breaks? Explore ways of allowing more frequent, short breaks, 'sudden' breaks, breaks from normal work etc. Issues may include pregnancy where frequent short breaks may be needed on a temporary basis. Where / when is PPA and management time to be carried out? Can it be adjusted?
10	Lesson planning: Discuss with the employee the most challenging aspects of lesson planning, and identify whether changes can be made. Is further development in lesson planning skills required?
11	Marking requirements: Discuss with the employee their particular concerns with marking requirements. Is this a concern amongst other staff? Is it an area where an individual employee would benefit from developmental support?
	<b>CONTROL</b>
12	Opportunity to express ideas & points of view: Can the school set up an in school consultation group to improve communication about decision making? Are staff meetings/briefings held? Does the employee feel that they would benefit from discussion about how targets are set? Can the employee be empowered further? Are they able to use their own initiative?
13	Classroom observation: Is the level of classroom observation in line with the performance management policy and/or capability procedure? Explore concerns with employee.
14	Encouraged to use my initiative: Does the employee have scope to make decisions about how they do their job? How does the employee think they could be better encouraged?
15	Feel trusted by management: Explore concerns raised by employee. What leads the employee to feel they are not trusted? Is it appropriate to make any changes?
	<b>SUPPORT</b>
16	Training: What areas of training does the employee feel they would benefit from? Is any training due to be given? Do employees have a facility by which they can request training? Does the employee have access to a mentor? Who would be the most appropriate person? Does the employee know in what direction they want to go with their career? Can the school provide skills either through training or

	experience that would benefit both the school and the employee in the short and long term?
17	Support from managers: Does the employee have regular meetings with line managers? Does the employee's job description match the expectations of the school? What support does the employee feel they would benefit from having?
18	Receiving feedback: How is feedback provided to staff? Does the employee have regular 'catch ups' with their manager to discuss how they are getting on? Have managers received training on giving feedback?
19	Support staff: Is the school carrying vacancies in support staff posts? Are the current support staff covering the areas needed by the school? Is a system in place for administration support to be provided?
20	Leadership: Does the Senior Management Team communicate its vision and its decisions? Does it work cooperatively with employees? Are employees updated on the position of the school including the financial outlook?
21	Appraisal system: Has the performance management policy been fully adopted by the school/academy?
	<b>RELATIONSHIPS</b>
22	Relationship with line manager: Does the employee understand the expectations of management? Assess the nature of the working relationship between the line manager and the employee. Is mediation needed?
23	Relationship with colleagues: Does the employee work directly with other colleagues where there has been conflict? Can their working arrangements be changed? Is mediation required?
24	Promotion of positive behaviours: Have management shared the co-operative values with staff? What else could be done to embed these values as 'ways of working'?
25	Staff can raise complaints: Has the school/academy promoted and embedded the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy? Are staff aware of the Grievance Procedure? Have managers been briefed on how to handle complaints from staff? If the employee raises specific complaints around discrimination, bullying or harassment during the discussion – discuss with the employee and establish their feelings, then discuss with HR promptly before continuing the conversation.
26 & 27	Relationship with pupils / students: Can class groups be altered and specific children moved to other groups? Does the member of staff feel vulnerable? Can support staff be made available? Does the school have a behaviour policy and is it clearly communicated to parents and pupils? Is it adequately enforced?

28	Relationship with parents: Are the parents abusive towards the member or staff or towards the child? Is it a police matter? Should the employee be exposed to these specific parents? Does the school have the relevant policies in place?
	<b>ROLE</b>
29	Clear what is expected of me: Does the employee have their job description? Is it up to date? Is the job required by the school? Is the employee aware of their objectives? Are they agreed and understood by the employee, realistic and achievable within the timescale set? Would the employee benefit from specific direction and targets? Can the Performance Management process be used to identify areas for development?
30	My skills are well used: What skills does the employee feel are under utilised? How can the school/academy incorporate these skills? What initiative would the member of staff like to see? How can new skills be developed?
31	Feel valued: Explore concerns raised by employee: what leads the employee to feel they are not valued? Does the employee have regular "catch-ups" with their line manager? Are team meetings and other channels used to recognise employee contribution?
	<b>CHANGE</b>
32	Coping with change: Can communication to employees be improved? Are staff kept informed and updated on changes? Do SLT and Governor decisions get relayed to staff in an effective way? With curriculum changes: has relevant training been provided? Can the employee attend a refresher course? Can the employer have access to a mentor?
33	New initiatives: Has the employee received sufficient training? Who do they contact if they experience problems?
34	Staff consultation: Are staff aware of the consultation process? Enquire if the employee has any suggestions for improvement. Identify areas of required support.
35	Support & training during change: Is the employee being kept informed of proposed changes? Would they benefit from counselling or advice from the Teacher Support Network? What additional support or training do they think would be beneficial?

**APPENDIX 5**  
**Stress Action Checklist - Action Plan**

Question Number	Action Required	By Whom	Review date	Completion date

**Action plan agreed:**

Date agreed:

Member of staff:

Signed:

Manager:

Signed:

## STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Location:</b>	<b>Date of Assessment</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
<b>Name of Assessor</b>	<b>Position of Assessor</b>	<b>Signature</b>	

**Title: Stress**

**Demands (Includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment)**

Standard to be met

- Employee(s) indicate that they can cope with the demands of the Job
- Systems are in place locally to respond to an individuals need

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)
Working Patterns						
Work Environment						
Skills Match						
Working within Capability						



**Control** (How much say the person has in the way they do their work)

Standard to be met

- Employee(s) indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work
- Systems are in place locally to respond to an individual concerns

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)
Timing of Breaks / Work Patterns						
Control over the pace						
Use of Skills & Initiative						
Opportunity to develop						

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)
<p><b>Support</b> (Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by WBC as the employer, the manager and colleagues)</p> <p>Standard to be met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee(s) indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and managers.</li> <li>Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns</li> </ul>						
Organisational Policies & Procedures to support						
Colleagues support						
Managers support						
Access to Resources						

<b>Employees receive Feedback</b>									
<p><b>Relationships (Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour)</b></p> <p>Standard to be met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee(s) indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours e.g. bullying at work</li> <li>Systems are in place locally to respond to any individuals concerns.</li> </ul>									
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Persons at Risk</b>	<b>Potential Harm</b>	<b>Existing Control Measures</b>	<b>Risk Rating (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Further Action Required</b>	<b>Residual Risk (H/M/L)</b>			
Relationship with Manager (Managers able to deal with unacceptable behaviour)									

<b>Relationship Colleagues (Information relevant to work shared.)</b>							
<b>Processes to raise concern in place</b>							
<b>Positive Behaviours promoted with Business</b>							

**Role** (Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles)

Standard to be met

- Employee(s) indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)
Clear roles defined / compatible						
Roles and responsibilities understood						
Reporting concerns / conflicts in role and responsibilities						
<b>Change (How organisation change is managed and communicated)</b> Standard to be met <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee(s) indicate that WBC engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change</li> </ul>						

- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)
Timely information provided regarding reason for change						
Adequate Consultation						
Probable Impact Communicated						
Support Provided						

Other							
Hazard	Persons at Risk	Potential Harm	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Further Action Required	Residual Risk (H/M/L)	