

STAFF WELL-BEING POLICY

Policy Statement

At Micklands Pre-School we promote the good health and well-being of all our staff. We endeavour to support staff well-being not only to ensure that children receive high quality care but also to ensure our employees feel supported and cared for as part of a team.

Mental ill-health is usually caused by a combination of work and non-work-related factors. There is a myriad of reasons for mental ill-health, from the pressure of ongoing change at work to longer or more intense hours exacerbated by financial pressures at home, or relationship problems and greater caring responsibilities.

Striking the balance between what is considered appropriate results or output and robust mental health is tricky. We are committed to knowing about how to create and maintain conditions that support and encourage good mental health, as well as recognise the signs of mental ill-health and provide appropriate support.

We recognise the importance of safeguarding the mental health of all of our employees by providing a happy and nurturing working environment. We are committed to acknowledging and supporting our staff's physical and emotional needs.

Our Ethos

We know that the care and education of young children is highly rewarding. However, we are also aware of the day-to-day demands and pressures of modern life such as family life, financial worries, health concerns and work-life balance and how these pressures, alongside the role of providing high quality care and education to babies and young children, can place a high level of demand on all of our employees.

In order to support our staff, the management team put procedures in place that ensure staff well-being remains one of the key focuses of our practice. In doing this, we aim to provide our team with a safe, inclusive and nurturing working environment that acknowledges their needs, not just within the workplace but as a whole person.

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The Pre-School Manager is the named member of staff who leads our setting's well-being practice. They offer support on staff well-being and know where to access external support.

The Pre-School Manager is also committed to keeping their well-being and mental health knowledge up to date. They are responsible for reviewing our practices, supporting the developing knowledge of the whole staff team to ensure we are implementing the necessary strategies to safeguard the well-being of our staff.

Procedures to minimise work related stress

- To ensure staff are supported within the setting, new staff will receive a full induction so they feel competent and capable to carry out their role and responsibilities.
- Staff will receive ongoing training, coaching and mentoring to ensure that they are supported to feel confident in their role and to minimise stress within the workplace.
- Regular supervisions take place in which staff well-being is discussed and recorded.
- Staff are respected and valued in their work, whatever their role. Tasks are shared out appropriately according to their role and level of responsibility. The workload is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Staff are encouraged to have a healthy work-life balance; this is supported by ensuring the workload is monitored so that it is not necessary for staff to work outside of scheduled hours. All contributions to work are valued and celebrated.
- We carefully review our expectations around the amount of paperwork that staff must complete, including observations and assessments of children. We work as a team to ensure all record keeping is meaningful and kept to an appropriate level so as not to add undue pressure to staff members.
- We work hard to maintain a reflective culture within the setting that encourages feedback from staff about management procedures and working relationships. This reflective culture supports an environment of teamwork, facilitating the involvement of every member of staff in the practice of our setting.
- The Pre-School Manager is available for staff to come and discuss any issues or concerns.
- We ensure that confidential conversations take place in private, away from other staff members and children.

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- All information remains confidential, or on a need-to-know basis, to support the facilitation of open and honest conversations. However, where the Pre-School Manager feels there is a question around the safety of the staff member, they will refer to outside agencies for support and guidance. These measures will be discussed in a sensitive and understanding manner with the staff member, as appropriate.
- We actively promote a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation tolerance, in line with the British Values.
- Team meetings are facilitated to support with team development, to raise awareness of mental health and well-being by engaging staff in conversations about how the setting maintains a supportive environment.
- We promote a culture that supports any staff member who is experiencing a mental health related illness to discuss this and reasonable adjustments will be made to support any staff experiencing stress and any mental health issues.
- If we are made aware of any member of staff who requires support, a plan for more regular support sessions and adjustments to their working day will be discussed and decided in partnership with the staff member. This plan will be reviewed regularly and adapted to ensure it is a relevant and appropriate.
- If adjustments are unable to meet the needs of the member of staff or the pre-school, then further advice support will be sought.
- Leaders and managers support staff in a safe culture where bullying, harassment and discrimination is not tolerated, along with a culture that challenges and deals with any inappropriate behaviour in a timely manner.

Supporting staff members individually

- We include well-being as part of our discussions at staff supervision sessions and appraisals. During these sessions, we work with staff on an individual basis and have well-being discussions to ascertain any individual well-being needs.
- Where the manager and staff member feel it is appropriate, they will draw up an individual action plan, including reviewing workload and any stress triggers. With the needs of the pre-school also in mind, reasonable adjustments will be made for the member of staff.
- If a member of staff is returning to work after a period of absence, a back to work interview is carried out.

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- We follow all statutory guidance on the safeguarding of our workforce. If the Pre-School Manager is concerned about the safety of a member of staff, we will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ask for support from the appropriate external agencies. This is to ensure the continued safety of our workforce at all times.

Menopause

The menopause is a natural stage of life which affects around half of the population.

This can include:

- women
- trans people
- intersex people

The menopause usually happens between 45 and 55 years of age but each case is different. Symptoms can last for about four years but may be longer.

There are 3 different stages of menopause:

- peri menopause
- menopause
- post menopause

All stages and types of menopause are different and symptoms can vary from person to person and range from very mild to severe.

At Micklands Pre-School, we are aware that the menopause and its symptoms can affect our staff at any time including:

- women, trans and intersex people going through the menopause
- relatives, colleagues and carers who are supporting someone going through it.

If an employee is put at a disadvantage or treated less favourably because of their menopause symptoms, this could be discriminatory if connected to a protected characteristic.

Supporting and creating a positive and open environment between an employer and someone affected by the menopause can help prevent the person from:

- losing confidence in their skills and abilities,
- feeling like they need to take time off work and the hide the reasons for it,

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- having increased mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression,
- leaving their job.

Supporting staff through menopause

At Micklands Pre-School we aim to support staff through every stage of the menopause. We feel that having regular follow up conversations with staff to understand their needs can help make sure support and procedures are in place so they can continue to do their jobs effectively.

We will take into consideration how the job role and responsibilities could make their menopause symptoms harder. With this in mind, we will ensure that the work uniform is made of breathable materials and not restrictive. The uniform consists of several layers, so items can be removed if required. Regular toilet breaks can be taken. The job role has a degree of flexibility, but the children's safety is paramount. If breaks are required, other staff must be made aware due to remaining within the correct ratio.

Within our setting we would like to think that staff feel they could talk to the manager or deputy about the effects of the menopause on their work. As a setting we aim to:

- talk and listen sensitively,
- find ways to give support,
- have knowledge of the menopause and its effects,
- know what support and guidance the organisation can offer.

Risk Assessment

At Micklands Pre-School we carry out risk assessments, generally assessing health and safety risks, reducing and removing hazards where possible. For staff affected by the menopause this includes:

- ensuring menopause symptoms are not made worse by the workplace or its practices,
- managing changes to help staff manage their symptoms when doing their job,
- adjusting the temperature and ventilation of the building if necessary,
- considering the material and fit of our uniform,
- ensuring there is a quiet place to rest (staff room),
- ensuring the toilet is accessible,
- ensuring drinking water is available at all times,
- ensuring senior staff have an understanding of the menopause.

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Staff will not be discriminated against because of their menopause symptoms. They will be allowed to attend medical appointments related to the menopause at the discretion of the Pre-School on an individual basis.

We will respect the staff's wishes for privacy and not disclose any information to other colleagues without their permission. We will treat everyone as individuals and keep conversations confidential and private.

At Micklands Pre-School we know how the menopause relates to the law including the:

- Equality Act 2010, which protects workers against discrimination,
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which says an employer must, where reasonably practical, ensure everyone's health and safety and welfare at work.

Whilst the menopause is not a specific protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, if an employee is put at a disadvantage and treated less favourably because of their menopause symptoms, this could be discrimination if related to a protected characteristic such as

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- sex