

Worklife Support Well-Being Programme

An Introduction to Well-Being

Welcome to the Well-Being Programme from Worklife Support.

Worklife Support Ltd was established in 1999 by the national charity Teacher Support Network. Our primary aim is to work in partnership with schools, local authorities and charities, encouraging them to invest in the health and wellbeing of their staff by providing innovative and practical ways to support the whole organisation. The public sector attracts some of the most passionate, creative and dedicated individuals in the workforce. We encourage them to make the most of every individual and the unique contribution he or she brings to the organisation.

Our work draws on our extensive experience in education and the wider public sector, ensuring that our programmes are of direct relevance and value to school and local authority staff. To date approximately more than 3,000 schools and 110 local authorities nationwide have benefited from our services.

The ultimate aim of our programmes is to unlock the potential of every member of staff and to support the whole team to perform to its best. We help our partner organisations to empower individuals to make a positive difference to their working community.

What is the Well-Being Programme?

The Well-Being Programme is a unique, tried-and-tested organisational development process that was designed specifically for use in the public sector. The aim of the programme is to help organisations bring about positive change and realise their potential by focusing on the wellbeing and effectiveness of all members of staff. The programme draws on sustainable methods, ensuring lasting benefits for all.

Well-Being is a positive and proactive intervention, focusing on solutions and ideas for the future. It uses a process of self-evaluation that involves the whole staff, enabling staff members themselves to identify their organisation's individual strengths and areas for development. Through Well-Being, everyone decides together on the best course of action through which to make constructive changes to their organisation.

As part of the programme, each school receives:

- an independent service that has been specifically tailored to the education context
- detailed training and guidance for members of the school Well-Being team
- an initial audit of staff wellbeing in which every member of staff is encouraged to participate: the Well-Being survey
- a confidential 'data profile' containing the outcomes of the Well-Being survey
- information, support, structured guidance and practical suggestions on understanding the data and how best to feed it back to - and involve - all staff
- access to a wide range of printed and electronic resources (such as guidance materials, case studies and workshops), all based on best practice from other Well-Being organisations

The programme is supported by an extensive, continually expanding bank of data collected from participating organisations. This database enhances Worklife Support's knowledge and understanding of the main sector in which we work and enables the development of national and regional profiles.

How will Well-Being benefit you?

The programme has a proven positive impact on organisational culture and ethos, communication and morale. Individuals who have participated say they feel they have more control over their working lives and that - as the Well-Being Programme supports and promotes the emotional health and wellbeing of staff - they are generally healthier, happier and more effective. And it goes without saying that a healthy school environment has a positive influence on pupils.

The Well-Being Programme can also contribute to the school improvement agenda by:

- enhancing teaching and learning
- improving recruitment and retention
- reducing staff absence
- supporting the National Healthy School Standard

By participating in the Well-Being Programme, an organisation is recognising that its staff are its greatest asset. Through ongoing work, everyone can enjoy improvements such as:

- enhanced communication, relationships and teamwork
- more inclusive working practices, helping to ensure there are no 'outsiders'
- individuals feeling more valued and their contributions acknowledged
- fewer stresses and strains, as staff learn how to handle difficult situations and demanding workloads more successfully
- a healthier, safer and more stable workplace

"The Well-Being Programme from Worklife Support has been developed specifically for schools and is broadly equivalent to the HSE Management Standards approach. Participation in the Well-Being Programme will enable schools to demonstrate they have met their duty of care under Health and Safety legislation."
Health and Safety Executive,
2006

What is the process?

Although the Well-Being Programme is taking place across the UK, it is always managed locally - to fit in with local priorities and timescales.

After an initial briefing, each Well-Being organisation nominates a 'Well-Being team' in consultation with the staff. Following training, this team will be on hand to guide staff through the process, the first stage of which is to take part in a review of staff wellbeing by way of an online survey. Through this review, staff will be able to identify, collectively, their organisation's strengths and achievements as well as any areas for development.

All staff are involved in interpreting the resulting data before deciding on priorities and bringing about a positive course of action. Individuals have the opportunity to say what they think could be improved as well as how they personally could begin to address some of the issues. Staff wellbeing features as a continuing theme in meetings, training, policies and practices. The organisation may also carry out follow-up surveys to measure its progress year on year.

By joining the programme, an organisation's leadership team is demonstrating its commitment to ensuring that all staff feel included, valued and able to be creative and inspiring. However, the programme's success is not just down to the leadership and Well-Being teams. On the contrary, every individual needs to take a personal responsibility for bringing about change in his or her own area of work.