**Course: Promoting staff wellbeing**

**Unit 5:** **Sustaining a wellbeing culture**

**Overview**

**Aims and outcomes**

This is the final unit of this wellbeing programme. It draws together all the learning from the previous units to provide a clear ‘going forward’ plan. It provides practical advice and guidelines to support healthy change and wellbeing interventions employing time and energy management.

Participants will:

* evaluate long-term objectives
* assess whole-school and personal priorities
* explore effective energy and time management
* examine wellbeing sustainability.

**Participants**

This unit is for all staff. You may wish to hold an SLT-only meeting prior to the whole staff unit in order to clarify SLT priorities and how best to present the leadership vision alongside facilitating staff ideas.

It will be helpful if groups of 4-6 participants work at tables for this unit. If at any time during the unit the participants seem restless, invite them to stand up, have a stretch and refuel or take a comfort (toilet) break.

**How this fits in with whole-school improvement**

* Developing a whole-school wellbeing culture.
* Raising the quality of teaching and learning.
* Developing a reflective and resilient workforce.

**Resources**

* PowerPoint presentation for Unit 5
* A1 paper or whiteboard sheets
* Flipchart
* Coloured markers
* Coloured felt pens
* Handout 5.1: 24 hour activity and energy graphs
* Handout 5.2: Supporting and improving your energy levels
* Handout 5.3: Work-life balance time diary
* Handout 5.4: Stephen Covey’s time management boxes
* Handout 5.5: In-school support structure suggestions
* Handout 5.6: Time management top tips
* Handout 5.7: Rewards and incentives
* Handout 5.8: Personal wellbeing top tips
* Handout 5.9: Whole-school live well top tips
* Handout 5.10: Feel good top tips
* Handout 5.11: Wellbeing forum start-up resources
* Handout 5.12: Henleaze Junior School Staff Wellbeing Policy
* Digital camera to record outcomes
* Audio 5.1: Relaxation meditation
* Video clip 5.1: A Whole-School Approach to Promoting Staff Wellbeing

For Handouts 5.5-5.11, decide whether to have copies printed or have them available on the school drive for those interested in further support (to save printing costs).

**Timing**

This training unit is designed to take 90 minutes. It concludes the formal training.

**Rationale and background**

Managing time and energy are two of the greatest challenges in teaching. It is not just workload that generates pressure and increases demand on mental and physical human resources. The emotional demands of managing behaviour, supporting pupil welfare and presenting engaging lessons are all highly demanding energetically. This unit serves to further develop staff wellbeing and engagement, to cultivate awareness of what can be done to improve the unspoken (flog yourself to death) work culture and create opportunities for inclusive idea generation for whole-school wellbeing.

A thriving school has ‘flourishing’ teachers and pupils. This unit offers strategies to explore how best to prioritise, manage teaching, planning and personal time and sustain energy levels appropriately. All suggestions are simply that. There are no hard and fast rules about what is best to implement. It is crucial to adapt the training to meet your school agendas and the unique needs of your staff, pupils and school environment.

**Step 1: Prioritisation (15 minutes)**

Clarify the objective for the final unit – To leave with clear whole-school and personal wellbeing plans. Ask participants to stand up, have a stretch and to literally brush off any negativity that may be stuck to them by repeating a sweeping motion down their body, including their arms, legs, back and front.

Explain that you will be following on from last unit and developing practical strategies to improve whole-school wellbeing. Emphasise how much you value their input.

Using **slide 2**, in groups of four to six, invite participants to debate the high-priority stressors in the school that need addressing and to decide on the top three school stress reduction priorities.

Repeat the process to establish the top three school wellbeing initiative priorities they would like to see implemented.

For example:

1. There isn’t enough time for movement between lessons.
2. There are not enough male toilet facilities.
3. Noise levels are a concern.

Record the findings on a flipchart.

**Step 2: Personal energy (10 minutes)**

Ask participants to plot their activity graph on **Handout 5.1: 24 hour activity and energy graphs**. Use another coloured pen to plot where they believe would be a more balanced place for their time and energy to be spent.

Once this is done, ask them to plot their energy graphs, illustrating where their energy is highest and lowest over a period of 24 hours. Ask them to quietly reflect on

* where their stress danger areas are,
* where their energy strengths are
* and what they could do to improve personal effectiveness during the teaching day (such as go to bed earlier, stop marking at x o’clock).

Ask participants to fill in the handout for the suggestions they believe will help them feel more energised on **Handout 5.2: Supporting and improving your energy levels**. They should tick the ones that they are genuinely willing and feel able to commit to.

**Step 3: Time management (5 minutes)**

Discuss with your group where the time goes during a teaching day and what could be done to reduce wasted time. List as many suggestions as possible on how to reduce or eliminate procrastination. Groups to feed back, record the suggestions on a flipchart.

Invite participants to keep a time diary on **Handout 5.3: Work-life balance time diary** to deepen their understanding of where they might be able to save time and where they might be procrastinating.

Explain the four boxes on **Handout 5.4: Stephen Covey’s time management boxes** and **slide 5** and ask the group to discuss how using this tool might be helpful in managing ‘overwhelm’.

**Step 4: Work-life balance (10 minutes)**

In groups, mind map simple measures you could implement to thread wellbeing throughout your teaching day from the question on **slide 6**. Give a few examples such as:

* Have a bottle of water with you at all times. Sip from it regularly.
* Start each lesson with a two-minute wellbeing technique of your choice.
* If pupils get fidgety, stop the lesson, invite them to stand up and stretch and take three deep breaths – this will help the teacher as much as the pupils.

Ask groups to feed back, and note ideas on a flipchart for the wellbeing forum.

**Step 5: A low stress culture (10 minutes)**

Invite the groups to mind map all the underlying structures that could be improved to lower the stress culture of your school, as on **slide 7**. Give a few examples such as SLT encouraging staff to:

* go home at a reasonable time,
* take lunch breaks,
* ask for help when feeling stressed,
* improve the ICT system or technical support available during school time,
* invest in the teaching environments by improving lighting or space issues.

**Step 6: Sustaining culture (15 minutes)**

Allocate one question from **slide 8** to each group for discussion. Invite them to mind map what individual contributions can be and the impact this might have on whole-school wellbeing.

Explore what can be done as a whole staff (if a small primary school) or what can be done in departments (if a secondary school).

Ask groups to feed back, and note ideas on a flipchart for the wellbeing forum.

Discuss and agree your definition of ‘flourishing’ for your school. Write it on the flipchart for the wellbeing forum mission statement.

In positive psychology, flourishing is ‘to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience’. Flourishing is the opposite of both pathology and languishing, which are described as living a life that feels both hollow and empty.

Flourishing is a positive psychology concept which is a measure of overall life wellbeing and is viewed as important to the idea of happiness. Many components and concepts contribute to the overall concept of flourishing and the benefits of a life that can be characterised as flourishing. It incorporates many other concepts in the positive psychology field such as cultivating strengths, subjective wellbeing, positive work spaces, etc.

**Step 7: School wellbeing and plenary (25 minutes)**

Ask each group to suggest underlying support mechanisms that demonstrate that ‘the school’ cares for them. See **slide 9** and **Handout 5.5: In-school support structure** **suggestions**. Ask them to consider practical support mechanisms and unspoken, implied ethos expectations.

Play **Video clip 5.1: A Whole-School Approach to Promoting Staff Wellbeing**. Ask participants to watch and consider if there are strategies or suggestions they could borrow from Eagle House’s approach to whole-school staff wellbeing.

Ask groups to feed back, and note ideas on a flipchart for the wellbeing forum.

Provide commentary for each point on **slide 10**, giving your school’s perspective on the strategies.

**Plenary**

Have copies made of:

* **Handout 5.6: Time management top tips**
* **Handout 5.7: Rewards and incentives**
* **Handout 5.8: Personal wellbeing top tips**
* **Handout 5.9: Whole-school live well top tips**
* **Handout 5.10: Feel good top tips**
* **Handout 5.11: Wellbeing forum start-up resources**

or upload them to the school drive to save printing costs. These include tips and guidance for individuals and for setting up a wellbeing forum.

Give your staff a PAT on the back, as on **slide 11**, and thank them for attending the units, participating fully and committing to healthy change for the benefit of the whole school. Remind them that if ever they are struggling with stress, the Teacher Support Network helpline is available 24/7.

Invite staff to complete the Evaluation form. To close, play the YouTube clip of the staff flash mob[[1]](#footnote-1) (**slide 11**). Remember to take photographs of all flipcharts from this unit for future planning.

Advise senior leaders to reassure, reassure, reassure! (Especially in the face of radical change.) You may wish to do this in a post-programme SLT evaluation meeting.

**What’s next?**

Ask for a show of hands for who is interested in being a member of the wellbeing forum and set up

the first meeting, date and time. Discuss what commitment staff members will make in the light of the training.

You can follow up this unit by…

* distributing **Audio 5.1: Relaxation meditation** for staff to listen to at their leisure
* creating a wellbeing forum that is held once a month – see **Handout 5.11: Wellbeing forum**

**start-up resources**

* beginning a mindfulness meditation group
* providing relaxation classes
* SLT having a post-training unit to evaluate the training and the feedback received about the training.

**Alternative/additional development activity**

Create or develop a wellbeing policy, as in the Henleaze School example in **Handout 5.12: Henleaze**

**Junior School Staff Wellbeing Policy**.

Discuss whole-school and departmental rewards and incentives for originating and implementing

wellbeing practices.

**What’s changed?**

Evaluate the impact of the unit. Ask participants to complete the evaluation form.

Before closing:

* Thank the staff for their enthusiasm, professionalism, honesty and commitment to improving teaching and whole-school wellbeing.
* Describe in your own words your desire for them and that you hope this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful school wellbeing journey together.

**Further reading**

Browne D, The Energy Equation, Pearson, 2013

Chapman G, The Five Love Languages, Moody Publishing, 2010

Covey S, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Rosetta Books, 2009

Olson J, The Slight Edge, Success Books, 2011

Kataria M, Laugh for No Reason, Madhuri International, 1999

Wellbeing blogs, Kathryn Lovewell on www.kathrynlovewell.com and on the Teacher Support Network website: www.teachersupport.info/

1. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\_881KKfHCY [↑](#footnote-ref-1)