



**Mission Statement**

*“A Caring Christian Family Where We Grow Together”*

# STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

**Effective Date:** 01/10/2019

**Review Date:** October 2026 Biennial

Review Date	Signed Head Teacher	Signed Director RCSAT
01/10/2020	<i>J M Badger</i>	<i>P. Bartlett</i>
30/09/2022	<i>J M Badger</i>	<i>P. Bartlett</i>
30/09/2024	<i>J M Badger</i>	<i>P. Bartlett</i>

Persons Responsible for Policy:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT
Approval Date	
Signed:	Director RCSAT
Signed:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The RCSAT Health and Safety Policy involves a commitment to providing a working environment that is healthy and safe for all its employees. This includes a duty of care for both physical and mental well-being in the workplace.
- 1.2. The prevention and effective management of stress that is work related is essential to the school's responsibility to its staff and to the role of those who have work related responsibility for others. Tackling stress has been shown to have real benefits by improving staff morale and commitment.
- 1.3. The key messages from the HSE on work related stress are:
  - 1.3.1. Work related stress is a serious problem for organisations. Tackling it effectively can result in significant benefits for the organisation and individuals.
  - 1.3.2. The law requires organisations to take action.
  - 1.3.3. There are things an organisation can do to prevent and control work place stress.

## 2. Definition of Stress

- 2.1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them."
- 2.2. Pressure can have a positive effect in stimulating motivation and alertness, providing the incentive needed to overcome challenging situations. However, extreme, persistent and unrelieved pressure can lead to stress and feelings of anger, fear and frustration, and cause a variety of short-term and long-term illnesses with damaging effects on individual mental and physical well-being.
- 2.3. The HSE management standards identify 7 broad categories of risk factors for work-related stress:
  - 2.3.1. Culture - of the school and how it approaches work related stress,
  - 2.3.2. Demands – such as work load and exposure to physical hazards,
  - 2.3.3. Control – how much say an individual has in the way they do their work,
  - 2.3.4. Support – from peers and managers, training, catering for individual differences,
  - 2.3.5. Relationships – issues such as bullying and harassment,
  - 2.3.6. Role – an individual's understanding of the work role and prevention of role conflicts,
  - 2.3.7. Change – how change is managed and communicated.

## 3. Rationale

- 3.1. Ethical Case. Prolonged periods of stress can have an adverse effect on health. These can be:
  - 3.1.1. Physical: e.g. heart disease, back pain, headaches, multiple minor illnesses;
  - 3.1.2. Psychological: e.g. anxiety, depression.
  - 3.1.3. Stress can also lead to inappropriate coping strategies such as smoking, drinking, drugs, over or under eating.
- 3.2. Legal Case. Organisations are legally obliged to take action against work-related stress. In part this is a duty under health and safety law, however other legislation also applies. For example:
  - 3.2.1. The Employment Rights Act 1996
  - 3.2.2. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
  - 3.2.3. The Working Time Regulations 1998
  - 3.2.4. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - 3.2.5. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, employers have a general duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protect the health of their employees at work.
  - 3.2.6. Similarly, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers have a duty to assess risks, apply principles of prevention and provide training.
- 3.3. Business Case. The effects of work-related stress can be many-fold on the individual, their colleagues and the organisation and results in many hidden costs, such as:
  - 3.3.1. It can be a major factor in reduced staff performance, commitment and motivation, increased sickness absence, and general absenteeism.
  - 3.3.2. Having effective people management and development policies and practices are key drivers for good performance and productivity, such as encouraging staff to take their full annual leave entitlement.



- 3.3.3. Having a positive, satisfied, and psychologically healthy workforce will produce economic benefits for individuals and the organisation.
- 3.3.4. Tackling work-related stress is an investment in the long term.

#### 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. RCSAT wishes to address the issue of stress in the workplace and believes that the measures as set out in this policy will have a substantial effect on reducing those potential causes of stress.
- 4.2. RCSAT is committed to taking all reasonable steps to identifying sources of stress in the workplace and taking action to reduce or, where possible, eliminate the causes of stress within its control.
- 4.3. RCSAT depends upon the commitment and motivation of its staff and, recognising their value by ensuring measures are in place to promote the well-being of all staff, will be beneficial to individuals and the organisation.

#### 5. Aims and Objectives

- 5.1. To recognise that work related stress is an issue that should be addressed at an organisational level,
- 5.2. To adopt a pro-active approach towards physical and mental health risks by assessing the foreseeable causes of work-related stress, ensuring all appropriate control measures and actions are introduced.
- 5.3. To provide suitable training and guidance for people with work related responsibilities for others to enable them to recognise symptoms of stress and be equipped to undertake risk assessment commensurate with their supervisory responsibilities.
- 5.4. To provide information and training to staff in general on the effects of stress and appropriate actions to be taken.
- 5.5. To ensure that suitable support mechanisms are in place for staff who may be suffering the adverse effects of work-related stress.

#### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.1. Monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for any effective policy of stress management in the work place. This will provide information that is critical to the maintenance and development of strategies and procedures to control stress in the workplace.
- 6.2. Organisational. The overall responsibility for applying the provisions of this policy lies with the head teacher. This will include ensuring that the strategic aims and objectives are supported and clearly communicated to all staff.
- 6.3. Individual. The responsibility for identifying, responding to and managing stressful situations in the workplace appropriately is the responsibility of all of the Senior Management Team (SLT). They will be supported by the functions of Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources, Staff Development, Counselling and Safety Representatives who have responsibility to provide specialist advice on stress related issues, including risk assessment, training, referral options, legislation, and the provision of confidential advice.
- 6.4. All individuals have a responsibility to bring to the attention of the SLT any risk factors, stressful situations or adverse responses to stressful conditions.
- 6.5. RCSAT has a responsibility to respond to any notifications by individuals or the organisation.

#### 7. Work-Related Stress – Risk Assessment Steps

- 7.1. Work-related stress is defined as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them”. This distinguishes between the beneficial effects of reasonable pressure and challenge and work-related stress, which is the natural but distressing reaction to demands or pressures that the person perceives they cannot cope with at a given time.
- 7.2. Apart from the ethical and economic arguments that are beyond dispute, the law requires RCSAT, through its schools, to assess risk from stress, to apply the principles of prevention, to ensure employees capability and to provide training.
- 7.3. STEP 1 – Looking for the Hazard The main types of hazard are defined as:
  - 7.3.1. Culture - of the school and how it approaches work related stress,

- 7.3.2. Demands – such as work load and exposure to physical hazards,
  - 7.3.3. Control – how much say an individual has in the way they do their work,
  - 7.3.4. Support – from peers and managers, training, catering for individual differences,
  - 7.3.5. Relationships – issues such as bullying and harassment,
  - 7.3.6. Role – an individual's understanding of the work role and prevention of role conflicts,
  - 7.3.7. Change – how change is managed and communicated.
- 7.4. STEP 2 – Decide who might be Harmed and How Work-related stress could affect any member of staff for any of the seven risk factors identified in Step 1. For example, at certain busy times of the year, those returning to work after a stress related illness, or those who have a domestic crisis such as bereavement.
- 7.5. STEP 3 – Evaluate the Risks and Decide if Enough is being Done Consider how likely it is that each hazard mentioned in Step 1 could cause harm in your School. For each hazard, consider:
- 7.5.1. What action is already being taken,
  - 7.5.2. Whether it is sufficient,
  - 7.5.3. If not, what more must be done.
  - 7.5.4. Risks should be combated at organisational level at source before considering training needs, in terms of pressure management, or counselling.
  - 7.5.5. Action to protect everyone should be taken rather than for just a few.
- 7.6. STEP 4 – Record your Findings The main findings of the risk assessment must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant employees. The document should be used to monitor progress.
- 7.7. STEP 5 – Review the Assessment and Revise where Necessary Assessments must be reviewed regularly or whenever significant changes occur in the School, or in the way it handles its business. This should be in consultation with employees.

## 8. Review

- 8.1. The Board of Trustees will review this policy every two years.
- 8.2. The Trustees may review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.