

# **POLLYANNA PRE-SCHOOL**

## **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY**

### **Statement of Intent**

Promoting and protecting the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing, and productivity. Staff wellbeing is relevant to all employees, and everyone can contribute to improving wellbeing at work.

This workplace mental health and wellbeing policy covers the following aspects of mental health and wellbeing:

- Promotion of mental wellbeing
- Promoting the mental wellbeing of all staff through:
  - providing information and raising awareness about mental wellbeing
  - providing opportunities for employees to look after their mental health and wellbeing
  - promoting policies and practices that promote wellbeing.
- Developing skills for managers and supervisors to:
  - promote the mental wellbeing of employees
  - deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively.
- Providing support to employees through:
  - providing a work environment that promotes and supports mental wellbeing for all employees
  - offering assistance, advice and support to people who experience a mental health problem while in employment
  - support for staff returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.
- Helping people get back to work after a period of absence due to mental illness through:
  - recruitment practices
  - making reasonable adjustments
  - retaining staff who develop a mental health problem.

Mental health problems and stress can affect anyone, regardless of their position in the organisation. This policy applies equally to all employees. The implementation of this policy will also be supported by other health and safety policies, e.g., sickness absence, alcohol, drug, and substance abuse, and bullying and harassment.

### **Procedure**

Pollyanna aim to create and promote a workplace environment that supports and promotes the mental health and wellbeing of all employees. We acknowledge that certain working conditions and practices can negatively affect employees' mental wellbeing, including aspects of work organisation and management, and environmental and social conditions that have the potential for psychological as well as physical harm.

Pollyanna give staff the opportunity to influence how they do their jobs, scope for varying their working conditions as far as possible, and opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills. We set employees realistic targets, which are reviewed twice annually. All staff have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and provide them with good management support, appropriate training, and adequate resources to do their job. The management team aim to manage any conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination, and racism. We promote good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change and develop a culture based on trust, support, and mutual respect within the workplace.

Pollyanna aim to create and promote a culture where employees are able to talk openly about their job and mental health problems and to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

We will aim to provide non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental health problems and deal sympathetically with any staff suffering from mental health or wellbeing problems due to circumstances outside the workplace, and who consequently find it difficult to do their job properly.

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Pollyanna ensure that new employees receive a comprehensive induction programme providing an understanding of the organisation, the established policies and procedures, and the role they are expected to carry out. We provide support and assistance for employees experiencing mental health difficulties.

Pollyanna ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently and are not made to feel guilty about their problems. We will investigate the contribution of working conditions and other organisational factors to mental ill health and remedy this where and when possible. We treat all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know' basis only with consent from the individual concerned.

Pollyanna provide a fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures regarding applicants with any mental health issues.

### **Children's mental health and wellbeing:**

There are a range of factors in children and young people's lives which can result in them being at increased risk of developing mental health difficulties such as loss or separation – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships especially in adolescence, family breakdown that results in the child having to live elsewhere. Life changes, e.g. birth of a sibling, moving to a new house, changing schools and traumatic events – abuse, violence, accidents, injuries, war, or natural disaster.

At Pollyanna preschool we actively promote the emotional wellbeing of the children at our setting as well as ensuring good staff training in child development; adequate staff to child ratios; and positive behaviour management.

Practitioners ensure that we establish good professional relationships with children, other practitioners, between practitioners and children and with parents and workers from other agencies.

We plan activities that promote emotional, moral, spiritual, and social development alongside intellectual development and provide support and a structured approach to achieve the successful social and emotional development of vulnerable children and those with particular behavioural and communication difficulties.

Effective engagement with parents and children, especially those parents who are particularly hard to reach and who may be experiencing mental health problems themselves, could be developed through:

- home visits conducted before a child starts at the setting.
- information on parenting classes which enable parents to build on their strengths and learn new ways of engaging with their children.
- work with small groups of vulnerable children or vulnerable children individually around strategies to promote positive behaviour, social development, and self-esteem
- the teaching of interpersonal problem-solving skills to young children

### **Further Guidance**

- Statutory Framework 3.52 – 3.53
- Study of Early Education and Development: Good Practice in Early Education



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## Review and Approval

This policy was adopted on: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Management Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ 

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Carl Sautereau \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Renewal: \_\_\_September 2024\_\_\_\_\_