

Health and Wellbeing Policy

Your Mental Health and Wellbeing First Aider is **Sarah Holmes**

The need for a health and Wellbeing at work policy

Physical activity

Physical activity is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as coronary heart disease, strokes, obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), colorectal cancer, stress, anxiety, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and low back pain – are associated with physical inactivity.

For general health benefit, adults should achieve at least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity. This should be taken in bouts of 10 minutes or more to count towards your weekly total and we should try to be active on every day of the week.

Any activity during leisure, working or travel counts. Physical activity includes activities such as walking, cycling, gardening, dancing and housework, as well as participation in sport and formal exercise.

The workplace is an important setting in which people can increase their levels of activity to benefit their health and protect against illness. At Mad Hatters staff are lucky to have access to the outdoor environment at least twice a day, which is a fantastic opportunity to get yourselves and the children active through different games such as tig, or jumping, or running etc.

Physical activity helps staff manage stress, back pain, weight and medical conditions. Physically active employees also report less illness and recover more quickly from the illnesses they do get.

Employees engaged in physical activity initiatives have reported greater enjoyment of their work, improved concentration and mental alertness and improved cooperation and rapport with colleagues.

Healthy eating

Healthy eating is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as obesity, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, mental ill health and osteoporosis – are associated with poor nutritional choices.

A healthy, balanced diet contains a variety of different types of food, including: lots of fruit, vegetables; plenty of starchy foods such as wholemeal bread and wholegrain cereals; some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs and lentils; and some dairy foods. We should also be drinking about 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water, or other fluids, every day to stop us getting dehydrated.

At Mad Hatters we promote healthy eating for both children and staff, and staff are encouraged to eat with the children at meal times to allow them to increase their intake of healthy foods to benefit their health and protect against illness. A healthy, balanced diet also helps people to recover more quickly from illness.

The food we eat, and what we drink, not only have a physical impact on our body, but can also contribute to our mental health, resulting in improved levels of concentration, mental alertness and ability to cope with everyday stresses and strains.

Mental wellbeing

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity.

Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work.

Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health conditions and support them once they are at work.

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Important aspects of mental wellbeing includes providing information and raising awareness, management skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, providing a supportive work environment, offering assistance, advice and support to anyone experiencing poor mental wellbeing or returning to work after a period of absence due to poor mental wellbeing.

Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is:

- to promote and encourage employee participation in regular moderate intensity physical activity
- to support and encourage employees to make healthy eating choices
- to create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees
- to support and encourage employees to access smoking cessation services, raise awareness of the risks of smoking and help staff to quit

Objectives

1. Physical activity

Employees are encouraged to make use of the outdoor environment and not only plan activities to benefit the children's physical development but also to actively take part, to support their own physical exercise.

Leaflets promoting an active lifestyle provide useful tips and information to support this. If you would like any further information please speak to your Mental Health and Wellbeing First Aider.

Mad Hatters has teamed up with The Gym Group Shirley, Parkgate to offer a discount to all employees and parents of Mad Hatters Day Nursery. Please use code SHIRLEYFRIENDDOIT or SHIRLEYFRIENDLIVEIT dependant on the type of membership you require. Please speak to Sarah Holmes for more details.

Bikes are allowed to be left under the shelter on the front of the nursery by the Pushchair Storage however, please note this are left their at your own risk, and nursery takes no responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen personal belongings.

2. Healthy eating

Mad Hatters is fully committed to healthy eating, and has developed a healthy eating policy regarding children's health however, staff are also encouraged to eat with the children and are included in our planning of meals therefore, staff are able to have 3 healthy balanced meals, as well as nutritional snacks in between meal times. Staff are encouraged to drink water throughout the day and have access to their own water bottle while working within the rooms.

During lunch breaks staff have access to a fridge to be able to store meals brought in from home, to prevent staff buying take out food, and food which is easier to purchase as a quick fix such as crisps and chocolate.

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3. Mental wellbeing

Confidentially Counselling Helpline number: 0333 000 2082

Mad Hatters is fully committed to the Mental wellbeing of all its staff. To support this staff have access to a trained Mental Health First Aider, and access to a counselling helpline if needed. We operate an open-door policy whereas staff are always welcome to have a chat if need, and a non-judgemental and proactive approach is offered to all staff who experience mental health problems.

There are posters located in staff rest rooms to support staff in different areas of health and mental wellbeing and are encouraged to seek support from these outside companies, or their GP if needed. Mad Hatters takes an active approach from the start of employment and on induction all staff are made aware of the health and wellbeing policy, and who their Mental Health First Aider is, and where they can be located. All relevant information is relayed to staff in their induction to ensure they are fully aware of their own roles and responsibilities and how they will be supported within the workplace to achieve their full potential at Mad Hatters.

We believe team building can play a big part in our staff's mental health therefore, we encourage all staff to attend our monthly team meetings where staff are able to discuss as a team anything that arises throughout the month, and on occasions Mad Hatters organises day trips, and evenings to encourage team building.

Where able Mad Hatters maybe able to offer flexible working arrangements however, due to maintaining ratios this can become difficult, but not always impossible. Due to flexible working shifts we maybe able to offer earlier or later shifts on days to be able to accommodate things such as doctors/hospital appointments etc. Every effort will also be made where able to accommodate graduated return to work plans, in cases of long-term sickness.

Supervisions are held regularly, if not termly and focus on staff's performance within Mad Hatters, and offer the opportunity to talk about and health and mental wellbeing circumstances which may have arisen however, staff also receive a yearly appraisal to discuss, and set realistic and achievable targets moving forward and if applicable any training opportunities to develop their own professional development. These may also be identified through supervisions.

Working with children can be challenging, emotional, rewarding, exciting, and spontaneous to name but a few, so to ensure staff are supported we encourage them to take an active role in the decisions for their base room, and for the nursery, and their input on new and existing ideas/routines is encouraged and listened to, and if not acted upon. Our staff work closely with the children to understand their needs and wants and allowing them to have a choice on how to manage their routines, and daily activities allows both staff and children to be respected and enjoy their day at Mad Hatters.

Mad Hatters will continue to support the Health and wellbeing of all its employees and will review this policy yearly or when needed.