

# Wellbeing Policy

Approved by Cornerstone Trustees on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
Review Due in 2025

If anything in this policy contradicts an employment contract between Cornerstone Church Grays and an employed individual, the employment contract takes precedence.

## 1. Overview

- 1.1 We are committed to maintaining a workplace in which the health, safety and welfare of those working for us is safeguarded.
- 1.2 This policy sets out our approach to identifying wellbeing issues, mitigating their effects, and supporting our people through difficult times, whether because of issues at home or at work.
- 1.3 This policy applies to employees and workers (including casual workers and agency workers).
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employment or other contract. It may be updated from time to time. It should be read alongside our policies on Absence Management, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Harassment and Bullying, Performance Improvement and Whistleblowing.

## 2. Meaning of 'wellbeing'

Wellbeing is defined in the dictionary as 'the state of feeling healthy and happy'. It encompasses physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing.

## 3. Our responsibilities

- 3.1 We comply with our statutory duties to protect those who work for us. We will, for example, take all reasonable steps (sometimes with the benefit of risk assessments) to make sure that you:
  - have a safe place and safe system of work;
  - can take appropriate breaks;
  - are not put under excessive working pressures;
  - are not subjected to discrimination or harassment at work.

We aim to identify, minimise the effects of, and wherever possible remove hazards that could harm your wellbeing.

- 3.2 We also take our wider responsibilities towards our workforce seriously and do everything we can to ensure that you feel engaged, respected, and supported at work.
- 3.3 We promote an organisation-wide understanding of the importance of individual wellbeing, and of ways that each of us can take care of ourselves, as well as others.
- 3.4 The Church Elders and Trustees have overall responsibility for our Wellbeing Policy and for its implementation.
- 3.5 We treat everyone who works for us fairly and we do not discriminate against people because they might have mental health conditions. We aim to offer an environment in which stigma has no place and in which you can thrive.

## 4. Stress

- 4.1 Any working environment creates pressures. In most situations that pressure is not harmful; in fact some people find it helps them do their job well. However, where pressure is excessive or is applied in particular ways it can lead to stress.
- 4.2 Stress is negative. Its effects include anxiety and depression, as well as physical health problems.



- 4.3 Symptoms of stress may include absenteeism, uncharacteristic errors, temper outbursts and lack of motivation.
- 4.4 Stress can be brought about not just by the pressure of having too much work, or work that is overly challenging. It could also be the result of a difficult relationship with a colleague, not understanding your role, or change within our organisation. Pressures outside of work can cause or add to stress at work.
- 4.5 We recognise the debilitating effects that stress can have, and we do everything we reasonably can to minimise the impact within our workforce. However, we rely on you to tell us if you are feeling the effect of stress, or if you think somebody else is.
- 4.6 We recognise that similar circumstances can result in different reactions from different people. We are not all the same. Just because one person copes in a particular situation, it does not mean that others will not find it stressful.

## **5. Talk to us**

- 5.1 We encourage open conversation about all aspects of wellbeing. If you are worried about anything to do with your physical or mental health, or that of a colleague, you should speak with one of the Church Elders.
- 5.2 Don't put this conversation off. The earlier you tell us about any difficulties you are having, or your concerns about a colleague's wellbeing, the quicker we will be able to start helping. It means you (or they) will not be struggling alone.
- 5.3 Once we know about any wellbeing issues you are having, we will have a better understanding of any changes in your behaviour and performance at work. We will then be able to address those in the right way – perhaps via this policy, rather than our Performance Improvement Policy or our Disciplinary policy.

## **6. How we will respond**

- 6.1 Whether you have told us about an issue relating to your wellbeing, or it has come to our attention in a different way, we will meet with you to discuss it.
- 6.2 We may carry out a risk assessment. We would expect you to cooperate with this and contribute, where asked, to the process.
- 6.3 We will agree with you a strategy for supporting you and making adjustments to your working environment, your role and your terms of employment. For example:
  - Reducing your workload;
  - Giving you different responsibilities;
  - Altering your hours of work;
  - Homeworking or part-time working.
- 6.4 We will treat things you tell us as confidential. However, we may need to speak to your colleagues, including one of the Church Elders, about things they could do to help you, particularly if we need them to take over some aspects of your work. Should the need arise we may need to seek the advice of others from outside our Church, including, an occupational health adviser or mental health specialist. You will, of course, be advised of all developments.
- 6.5 It will be difficult for us to help you unless you let us have those conversations about your wellbeing and potential remedial steps. Duties of confidentiality will apply. If confidentiality is breached by a member of staff, we may decide to take disciplinary action.
- 6.6 If we are concerned that you may pose a threat to yourself or to others we may take immediate appropriate action without your consent. That could include contacting your family members, specialist support, or the emergency services, and sharing with them information about your mental health.
- 6.7 If issues to do with your wellbeing involve colleagues, customers, clients or others associated with our organisation, we will address those. That will usually mean we will need to discuss with them at least some of the issues you have told us about. Where somebody in the organisation has behaved inappropriately, we may investigate and take disciplinary action against them.



- 6.8 When you talk to us about your mental health, or you tell us your genuinely held concerns about a colleague, we will do everything reasonable to ensure that you are not victimised or otherwise treated badly for having done so, or subjected to bullying or harassment as a consequence. We want you to report issues and ask for support without fearing negative consequences. Our Grievance Policy is in place to provide you with a formal way of complaining about any adverse treatment you receive, although you may find that the issue can be resolved via discussions with your manager.
- 6.9 We have an over-riding responsibility for your health and safety. Sometimes this may mean we make decisions you disagree with. We will always listen to your input and if there are occasions when we act against your preferred course of action, we will explain why we are doing so.

## **7. Absence**

- 7.1 If you are absent from work because of your physical or mental health our Absence Management Policy will apply.
- 7.2 We will keep in touch with you during your absence to check on your condition. We may also be in contact with your GP and/or occupational health.
- 7.3 We will discuss with you ways of safely bringing you back to work when you are ready.
- 7.4 If identified risks mean that it is not possible for you to return to the same job, with adjustments in place, we will make all reasonable efforts to find a suitable alternative role for you.
- 7.5 We will continue to monitor your wellbeing once you have returned to work and do everything reasonable to support you.
- 7.6 If, having returned to work, you are then absent for a significant period, or at regular intervals, we may need to implement steps under our Absence Management Policy.

## **8. External support**

- 8.1 We aim to provide comprehensive wellbeing support from within our organisation and our network of associates and contacts.
- 8.2 If you need time off from work for support purposes we will try and accommodate this; however it is important that you discuss this need for time off in advance.
- 8.3 We also recognise that external support can be valuable, and you may find the following useful:
- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
  - [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
  - [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

If you have any comments or questions regarding this policy please contact our charity trustees at **[trustees@cornerstonegrays.org](mailto:trustees@cornerstonegrays.org)**

This policy is based on a policy provided by Ashfield HR Limited to the Anglican Mission in England.

Cornerstone Church Grays is a registered charity  
Registered Charity Number 1192558  
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