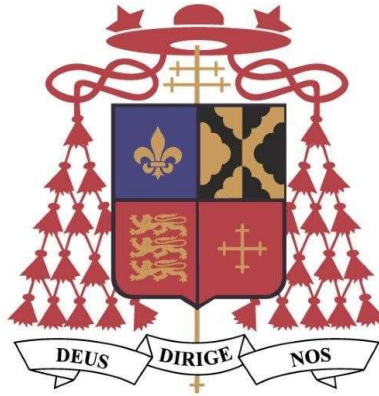


CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Stress Policy

Approved by
Governors

Signed:

Date:

25/01/2024

Review due date

(3 years):

January 2027



CARDINAL POLE
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

OUR MISSION

'Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of *service* guiding young people on a path to *opportunity*, *aspiration*, and *reward*, founded on Catholic values.'

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Cardinal Pole School Vision

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a learning community for all based upon partnership and respect. It is a strong and vibrant place which recognizes the importance and individual needs of every pupil and member of staff. Praise and encouragement is vital in creating a climate of learning and high expectations supported by teaching of the highest quality. The school is full of confident, creative and fulfilled young people and staff. They are celebrated as individuals – unique creations of God – who deserve our support, love and trust as they begin the great journey of life.

Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of **service** guiding young people on a path to **opportunity**, **aspiration** and **reward**, founded on Catholic values.

Stress Management Statement

Research has shown that stress from the work-life of an individual can damage their physical and mental health. As a result, the Health and Safety Executive have asked organisations including schools to work with them to manage work-related stress effectively.

The Governors of Cardinal Pole Catholic School values the health, safety and welfare of their staff and has accordingly responded to the Health and Safety Executive's request.

This Stress Management Policy has been drawn up together with Advice, guidance procedures for both employees and their managers. For ease of reference the advice, guidance procedures that goes with this policy has been written both in the form of word documents and also as flow-charts.

Stress is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation and we must all learn to manage stress and communicate effectively.

Introduction

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees, recognises that work related stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and where possible reducing workplace stressors.

This policy and accompanying advice, guidance and procedures sets out best practice for operation within Cardinal Pole Catholic School. It will apply to everyone in the school and all managers and staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

1. Definition of Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health. Stress can cause both mental and physical ill health and can affect anyone. It is not a sign of weakness.

1.2 Spotting Signs of Stress

If you are stressed you may notice changes in the way you think or feel, for example:

- feeling negative;
- being indecisive;
- feeling isolated;
- feeling nervous;
- being unable to concentrate;
- Unusual pattern of absence.

You may act differently, for example:

- eat more or less than usual;
- smoke, drink or take drugs 'to cope';
- have difficulty sleeping.

If you are feeling signs of stress at work, it is important to talk to someone, for example your manager. If you talk to them as soon as possible, it will give them the chance to help and stop the situation getting worse.

1.3 Mental health

Stress isn't a psychiatric diagnosis, but it's closely linked to your mental health in important way. Stress can cause mental health problems, and make existing problems worse. For example, if you often struggle to manage feelings of stress, you might develop a mental health problem like anxiety or depression.

2. Policy

The School will:

- Work to identify workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. Carry out risk assessments which will be regularly reviewed.
- Consult with Trade Union and/or Safety Representatives on matters relating to work-related stress.
- Provide training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices in relation to stress.
- Seek to provide access to confidential and accredited counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors where resources are available.
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the School's agreed stress management strategy within the context of budget demands.
- Use HR policies in place to secure support, including referral to Occupational Health.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Managers

1. Avoid knowingly putting themselves or others at risk of work-related stress through their own acts or omissions.
2. Will carry out and act on recommendations of risk assessments within their areas of remit.
3. Ensure good communication between themselves and their staff, particularly when there are organisational and procedural changes.
4. Ensure staff are trained to discharge their duties.
5. Ensure staff are provided, as appropriate, with meaningful developmental opportunities.
6. Monitor workloads to ensure that inappropriate levels of pressure or demands are not placed upon their staff.
7. Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.
8. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are encouraged to take their full entitlement. 9. Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
10. Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their areas of remit.
11. Provide positive feedback and recognition of good performance where appropriate.
12. Be vigilant and, where appropriate, recommend additional support to any member of their staff who is experiencing stress.
13. Encourage a culture where stress is not regarded as a weakness.
14. Address under-performance appropriately.
15. Schedule whole school and group events to avoid clashes.
16. Ensure that the school calendar is mindful of staff workload/life balance.

3.2 Employees

1. Avoid knowingly putting themselves or others at risk of work-related stress through their own acts or omissions.
2. Raise issues of concern about work related stress, either individually or in respect of work colleagues, with their Line Manager, Human Resources or their Safety Representative.
3. Accept opportunities for training/awareness training when recommended.
4. Accept opportunities for counselling and support when recommended.
5. Understand that bullying and harassment is unacceptable behaviour.

3.3 External Health & Safety Consultant

1. Provide specialist advice and awareness information on stress.
2. Support managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
3. Inform the school of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

3.4 Human Resources

1. Give guidance to managers on the stress policy.
2. Assist in undertaking stress risk assessments when required.
3. Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics and any other related data.
4. Advise managers and individuals on legal obligations and training requirements.
5. Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to occupational workplace advisors/counsellors or specialist agencies if required.
6. Support individuals who have been absent with stress and advise them and their managers on a planned return to work.
7. Retain in safe keeping all formal stress risk assessments.
8. Ensure support mechanisms are in place.
9. Carry out an annual review of stress risk assessment.
10. All stress disclosures will be dealt with confidentially between the HR Office and Headteacher unless otherwise agreed with the member of staff.

4. Role of the Safety Committee

The school Health and Safety Committee will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this policy is implemented.

The Health and Safety Committee will oversee monitoring of the implementation of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety. Items of concern should be reported to Leadership.

5. Support Mechanisms in place

- Access to internal/external counselling and occupational health services
- Performance and Absence management
- Appraisal
- Return to work interviews
- Staff bulletin
- Mediation
- Wellbeing events

6. Communication and Confidentiality

All stress disclosures will be dealt with confidentially between the HR Office and Headteacher unless otherwise agreed with the member of staff.

This policy is notified to staff via the Staff Bulletin, Staff Handbook, school website, shared network drive, when inducted to the school and is signed off by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1 – Checklist of Stress Risk Assessment

CHECKLIST FOR STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

Date of Assessment	
Name of Assessor	
Name or Description of person to be assessed	
Job Title	
Brief Description of Functions of the Team, the principal job roles and activities of member of staff	
Information Used to Complete Checklist	Notes/Comments
Hazards or Stressors already known:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews with Managers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussions with Staff Member	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from Meetings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common themes from appraisals or Supervision	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any other known stressors	
Review of Current Practice	
Stress Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sickness Absence Statistics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long Working Hours	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accidents / Incidents	

Identified Stressor	Present		Details of Stressor & Controls in Place	Take forward for Detailed Assessment	
	Y	N		Y	N
Intrinsic to Job					
• Face to face contact with students					
• Verbal Abuse or physical violence					
• Dealing with death, dying or relationships					
• Lone working					
• Repetitive, low simulation, boring, monotonous tasks					
• Having the skills to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities of your job?					
Organisational factors					
• Lack of career development /encouragement to take on new, challenging work					
• Sufficient training to do your job/opportunities for training					
• Availability of support					
• Poor team working and support					
• Control over your pace of work					
• Lack of control and participation in decision making/ management of change					
• Opportunities to approach your manager if you have any concerns about your responsibilities at work					
• Opportunity to voice your opinion at times of change?					
• Lack of feeling valued					

Identified Stressor	Present		Details of Stressor & Controls in Place	Take forward for Detailed Assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poorly defining responsibility, authority and accountability/ Role conflict 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to discuss work related problems 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have control over your own work? 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have an imposed change of role as a result of reorganisation? 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs of School against budget constraints 					
Relationships at work					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult line management relationships 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harassment and Bullying 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor relationships at work 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor handling of disciplinary capability issues 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Factors identified within the team Department 					
Workload					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling of work burdensome 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long hours culture 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underload 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor communication 					
Home Work Interface					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular requirements to take work home /lack of flexible working 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On call commitments from home 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift work/unsociable hours 					
Physical Environment					

Identified Stressor	Present		Details of Stressor & Controls in Place	Take forward for Detailed Assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems with your work environment (e.g. excessive noise, temperature extremes, etc.)? 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open plan working where this is noisy/disruptive/distracting 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cramped poorly planned working conditions 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of School 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travelling to work/ Long Distances 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking 					
Other stress factors identified?					
OH Referral Required?	Yes	No	Comment		
Signature					

Detailed Stress Risk Assessment & Action Plan

Staff Name:

Stressor/ Hazard	Existing Action	What Further Action Needed	By Whom and When	Date Achieved

Date Carried out:

Signed:

Position/Team:

Interview Date:

Review Date:

Appendix 2 – Guidance for Employees

From time to time we all experience stress. It can result from pressures coming from our home life, our work life and, in some instances both. Normally it is very transitory and has no adverse effects on our health but in some instances it can be ongoing and cause damage to both our mental and physical health.

All of us have a responsibility to look after ourselves at work and there is effective action, we personally can take to manage any stress we might experience. However, there are times in life when support, advice or guidance can be extremely helpful.

Your well-being is a priority to the school – if you feel you need support, advice or guidance on how to manage stress in your life take the following action:

STEP 1

If you feel that you are experiencing stress or you feel that you are under pressure at work and that it may lead to ill health, arrange to meet with your manager to discuss your concerns (you can do this verbally or in writing). You may bring a work colleague or a trade union representative to the meeting for support if you wish (unless the causes are not work related when the presence of a friend or relative may be more appropriate). If you are not comfortable with speaking to your manager in the first instance, you may contact a member of the Human Resources Department (your manager will however need to be informed soon after in order that he/she is able to support you and in a position to make any reasonable adjustments which are thought to be necessary).

It should be noted that no “off the record discussions” can be conducted with Human Resources

STEP 2

When you meet with your manager the aim of the meeting will be to identify if your stress is personal or work-related.

IF PERSONAL:

You do not have to disclose details about your personal life that are causing you stress, however, if you do so, your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) may be able to offer you support to ease the situation.

You may feel that due to your personal circumstances short-term adjustments to your role would help ease the pressure. If this is the case discuss this with your manager [or member of the Human Resources Department] and see whether such adjustments are possible. Your manager [or the member of the Human Resources Department] may also suggest the option of counselling via the school or via an alternative external source and may be able to provide you with a list of names and contact numbers of local support agencies that may be able to offer you help.

IF WORK RELATED:

Your manager [or the member of the Human Resources Department] should identify the source(s) of stress with you and should ask you what adjustments you feel could be made to improve your working environment e.g. review of work volumes, prioritising tasks, review of deadlines, training/coaching/support to increase expertise/confidence etc. assuming that they are considered operationally feasible. You do not have to agree these at this meeting; you may want to take time to think it over. Once decided, arrange to meet with your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) to confirm.

At the meeting, your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) should start to develop a stress action plan with you to try and help you tackle the problem[s] for the short-term and long-term periods. In order that there is a record of the possible causes and remedial action taken your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) will draw up a Stress Risk Assessment Form which they will ask you to read and sign.

Your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) may also suggest the option of counselling via the school or via an alternative external source and may be able to provide you with a list of names and contact numbers of local support agencies that may be able to offer you help.

Your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) will set a review period of 3 months (or other appropriate agreed period), from your initial meeting, to monitor your progress. Your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) should also meet with you regularly on an informal basis within that period to offer you support. During the review period it is your responsibility to make your manager aware of any issues or concerns that you have.

At the end of the review period your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) will arrange to meet with you to discuss your progress and to review the best way forward for you.

After all formal meetings with you are completed, your manager (or the member of the Human Resources Department) will update the Stress Risk Assessment Form and send you a copy to sign and return.

Appendix 3 - Five steps to improving your mental well-being amongst staff

Based on an extensive review of the evidence, five simple steps were identified in the Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project about how people can improve their mental well-being. As a manager you can help by making staff more aware of these steps and the other healthy choices that they could be taking advantage of.

Connect...

1. With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be active...

2. Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Take notice...

3. Be curious. Catch sight of beautiful things. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Keep learning...

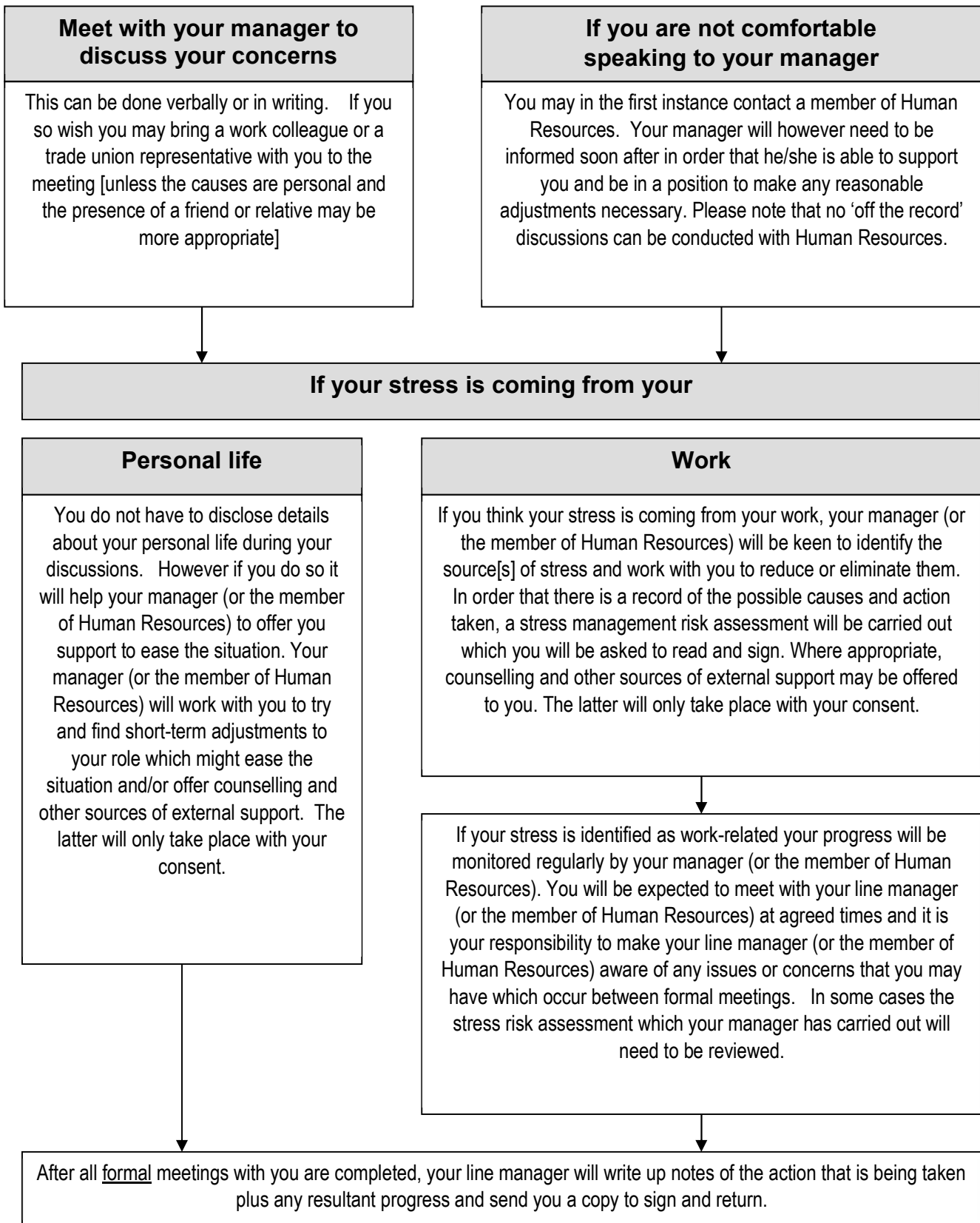
4. Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

Give...

5. Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, as linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Appendix 4 – Employee Flow Chart – Guide to Obtaining Support for Stress

EMPLOYEE GUIDE TO OBTAINING SUPPORT FOR STRESS



Do you feel that you are able to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities of your job?

1. Have you had sufficient training to do your job?
2. Are there any problems with your work environment (e.g. excessive noise, temperature extremes, etc.)? Control Yes/No Comments
3. Do you feel you have control over your pace of work?
4. Are you included to an adequate extent in decision-making which impacts on your working practices and priorities?
5. Do you feel you are using your skills to full effect?
6. Are you encouraged to use your own initiative? Stress Assessment Questionnaire (Employee) www.hackneyeducation.gov.uk
7. Does your manager encourage you to take on new, challenging work?
8. Does your manager allow you to work as flexibly as possible, especially in times of workload pressure (e.g. in terms of working time, taking breaks, working from home where appropriate, etc.)? Support Yes/No Comments
9. Do you feel you get enough support from your manager?
10. Do you feel you get enough support from your colleagues?
11. Are your training and development needs assessed at least once a year?
12. Do you feel your manager is accessible and approachable, especially if you have any work-related problems?
13. Do you receive regular feedback with regards to your work objectives? Relationships Yes/No Comments
14. Are you affected by any conflict e.g. with your colleagues or manager at work?
15. Are you subjected to any bullying, harassment or similar scenarios at work?
16. Do you feel you can talk to your colleagues about any work-related problems? Role Yes/No Comments
17. Do you feel that there are any conflicting responsibilities in your job?
18. Do you understand how your work fits into the overall aim of the organisation?
19. Are you clear what your responsibilities at work are?
20. Do you feel you can approach your manager if you have any concerns about your responsibilities at work?
21. Stress Assessment Questionnaire (Employee) www.hackneyeducation.co.uk
Change Yes/No Comments
22. When a change happens at work, do you receive enough information about why and when the change is happening in time?
23. When changes are made at work, is it being made clear to you how they will impact your job?
24. Do you feel you are given the opportunity to voice your opinion at times of change?
25. Do you feel you are being supported enough at work during times of change?