

CASE STUDY

How to ensure mentally-healthy schools in a MAT

Debbie Duggan, Operational Resources Director, The Two Counties Trust, Notts, discusses the challenges of ensuring the wellbeing of all MAT staff

About Two Counties Trust

'The Two Counties Trust is a medium-size Trust with nine secondary schools and 1300 staff, operating across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Formed in April 2016, the Trust grew rapidly in the initial years. Now we are at a stage of consolidation with a focus on empowering staff to lead and maximising opportunities for collaboration across our family of schools. Although all schools maintain a local and distinctive approach, they all share a common mission and values - to enhance the life choices of our students. The Trust is passionate about improving student outcomes and ensuring all our schools are great places to learn and work.'

The challenges of 'taking a temperature test'

'We recognise that mentally-healthy schools function at a higher level - staff can focus on their 'real' job – teaching their students – rather than battling the stress that can be created in an unsupportive and negative work environment. With teacher focus on learning and attainment, the Trust can, 'provide our students with the opportunities and experiences that will enhance their life choices and make a positive contribution to the world we share'.

'In order to do this we regularly take a temperature test of wellbeing across the Trust, to identify where additional support is required, and find solutions to any problems to ensure the ongoing welfare of our workforce community.'

'Previously we had created our own survey using a popular create-your-own survey platform Survey Monkey. With 1300 staff, across nine secondary schools in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, the survey took an extensive amount of time to prepare, and cutting and analysing the resulting data in the ways that we needed was extremely challenging. What we wanted this time was a user-friendly survey tool that used the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Management Standards, so we contacted Welbee.'

Simple solutions from Welbee

'Welbee listened to our needs, found ways to accommodate them and managed the survey on our behalf. The process is straightforward. The 10-minute online staff survey is emailed out when the survey opens and includes reminders encourage all staff to participate, once the anonymous responses are in, the survey is closed and a report is created. This gave our employees the confidence to answer honestly and openly and was a clear signal that we were taking the survey and their wellbeing very seriously.'

Accessing the data and a clear way forward

'The results identified areas on which the Trust needed to focus involving the whole staff or specific groups, or roles within our schools that needed support. The data dashboard allowed us to cut and analyse the data by the Trust or by schools and provided fast and focussed advice on next steps.

'Each headteacher had the benefit of accessing the same tools on their individual dashboard, giving them ownership over their school's results. They could also respond to the anonymous feedback from their staff using Welbee Chat, and build appropriate action plans within their school.

'Welbee provides an amazing foundation to our wellbeing strategy. It's cost-effective, easy to use and provides excellent support, making the complex job of managing multiple pieces of data from 1300 employees, easy.

'Welbee is a highly effective staff wellbeing evaluation and improvement tool, making staff wellbeing simply part of what happens every day.'

Find out more about Welbee at www.welbee.co.uk.

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About Welbee

Welbee from School Wellbeing Accelerator is a highly effective online evaluation and staff wellbeing improvement tool, designed to help senior leaders and HR Directors create mentally healthy schools, retain and motivate staff, reduce costs, drive up student attainment, and enhance their Ofsted Leadership and Management Judgement. It can also be used by schools choosing to publish a DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter - a voluntary declaration of support for, and set of commitments to, the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working within their establishment.