



Workplace Stress Policy

Approved by:
The Directors of Strive Alternative Provision

Signed on behalf of the Directors by:
Stacey Hickey, Head of Operations

Date Approved: July 2025
Review Date: July 2026

1. Policy Statement

Strive Inclusive Academy recognises that workplace stress can impact the wellbeing, performance and safety of staff. As an Alternative Provision supporting students with complex needs, we acknowledge that the emotional and professional demands of our work require proactive, structured support.

We are committed to preventing, identifying and managing workplace stress in line with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the HSE Management Standards.

This policy aims to:

- Promote a healthy working environment
- Reduce work-related stress risks
- Provide clear reporting and support routes
- Ensure staff are not left carrying unmanageable emotional or workload pressures

2. Legal & Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- HSE Management Standards for Work-Related Stress

The Health and Safety Executive defines work-related stress as:

“The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.”

Stress itself is not an illness, but prolonged or unmanaged stress can contribute to physical and mental health conditions.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Strive Inclusive Academy, including:

- Tutors
- Instructors
- Behaviour & Interventions Support
- Administrative staff

- Senior Leadership Team
- Directors

4. Responsibilities

Head of Operations

The Head of Operations will:

- Lead on implementation of this policy
- Monitor workplace stress risks across sites
- Ensure stress risk assessments are undertaken where required
- Signpost staff to appropriate internal and external support
- Review workload structures and organisational systems where stress risks are identified

Senior Leadership Team

SLT will:

- Model healthy professional boundaries
- Monitor workload distribution
- Provide regular supervision and reflective space
- Act promptly when stress concerns are raised

Employees

Employees are expected to:

- Raise concerns at an early stage where possible
- Engage constructively in agreed support measures
- Follow organisational procedures
- Maintain professional boundaries

5. Identifying Workplace Stress

Strive recognises that stress may arise from a range of factors, including:

- Safeguarding exposure and emotional labour
- Role ambiguity or organisational change
- Workload volume or competing demands
- Interpersonal conflict
- Organisational growth or restructuring
- External personal pressures impacting work

Possible indicators may include:

- Increased sickness absence
- Irritability, withdrawal or reduced engagement
- Reduced concentration or decision-making capacity
- Emotional exhaustion
- Physical symptoms such as headaches or sleep disturbance

Early identification and open conversation are encouraged.

6. Workload & Organisational Monitoring

Strive operates structured systems, including timetabling, supervision processes and non-contact monitoring where applicable, to ensure:

- Workload is proportionate
- Responsibilities are clearly defined
- Staff are not routinely working beyond contracted expectations

These systems are designed as protective measures to support staff wellbeing and organisational clarity, not as surveillance tools.

Where concerns arise, workload will be reviewed in partnership with the employee.

7. Reporting & Support Process

Staff experiencing workplace stress should:

Staff experiencing workplace stress should speak to their Line Manager in the first instance.

Where appropriate, concerns may be escalated to the Head of Operations, particularly where:

- The concern relates to workload structures or organisational systems
- The employee does not feel able to raise the concern with their Line Manager
- The matter is complex or ongoing

If stress relates to safeguarding exposure, staff may also access DSL supervision structures.

Concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially, within appropriate professional boundaries.

8. Support Available

Internal Support

Strive may offer:

- Supervision or reflective conversations
- Temporary adjustment to duties
- Workload redistribution
- Phased return to work following absence

External Support – Health Assured

All employees have access to the Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme. This provides:

- 24/7 confidential helpline access
- Support from experienced therapists or advisors
- Guidance on stress, anxiety, debt, legal matters, financial wellbeing, relationships and work-related concerns
- Support available to immediate family members (partners and children aged 16–24 in full-time education living in the same household)

This service is independent and confidential.

Occupational Health

In situations where stress-related absence is prolonged, complex, or linked to an underlying health condition, Strive may seek independent occupational health advice to support appropriate workplace adjustments.

This would typically be considered where:

- An employee has experienced extended absence
- There is uncertainty around fitness to return to work
- Adjustments are required under the Equality Act 2010
- Independent professional guidance would support a fair and informed decision

Occupational health advice is advisory in nature and referrals will be discussed with the employee in advance.

9. Reasonable Adjustments

Where stress is linked to an underlying health condition or disability, Strive will consider reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Adjustments may include:

- Temporary reduction in duties
- Flexible working arrangements
- Additional supervision
- Environmental adjustments

10. Sickness Absence

Stress-related absence will be managed in line with the Strive Sickness Absence Policy. A supportive return-to-work conversation will always take place.

11. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if:

- Organisational structure changes
- Significant incidents occur
- Legislative updates require revision