

Promoting Resilience Amongst School Staff During COVID-19

Definition

Resilience can be defined as the process of overcoming adversity and being able to adapt and cope in challenging circumstances. It is not an internal trait that you either possess or do not possess; it can be developed (or eroded) and can fluctuate over time dependent on the situation.

What Enhances Resilience?

- Having a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Being able to seek help or support
- Having the opportunity and willingness to learn and adapt

Fostering Connectedness and Belonging

Improving and maintaining good quality relationships between head teacher and staff; staff and staff; staff and students; staff and their personal relationships is key.

How? Promoting a sense of being 'held in mind':

Head Teacher to:

- Check in with staff little and often through texts, emails and virtual staff meetings
- Explicitly encourage staff to check in with one another
- Continue to give praise and feedback to ensure staff feel valued and efforts are recognised
- Communicate updates with staff regularly
- Plan rotas in school so staff have safe contact with one another
- Use online technology to have a virtual staffroom for staff to chat and check in; discriminate between optional and expected liaison
- Create buddy networks so staff have a small group they can contact when needed

Teachers can:

- Email students to see how they are / getting on with work set
- Provide an online learning platform for this purpose
- Record short videos and share with students
- Check in with more vulnerable students more frequently
- For those without laptop / PC access, may text, with parent consent

For all:

- Take regular breaks
- Follow a routine or structure
- Go out walking
- Check in with those who live alone
- Limit how often you check work emails
- Do something enjoyable every day

Promoting Support-Seeking Behaviour

- Senior leaders to seek regular feedback from staff
- Model help-seeking behaviours visibly to staff
- Staff to contribute through polls and voting for any decisions being made
- Promoting the idea that seeking and giving help and support is mutually beneficial

Promoting Learning and Adaptation

- Recognise that reflective conversations promote learning and change and make this visible to the team
- Acknowledging that change is hard and stressful
- Identify what is working well and what needs to be adjusted; seek feedback
- Provide websites that enable further CPD to take place for staff working at home (list available on School Information Portal)

Reference

Taken from *Teacher Resilience During Coronavirus School Closures*, by Duffield and O'Hare (2020); *British Psychological Society, Division of Educational and Child Psychology*

Produced by: Derby City Educational Psychology Service (part of the Specialist Teaching and Psychology Service)