



Focus: Emotional Intimacy

The emotion needs audit asks this question: Do you feel an emotional connection to others?

In the ASE SOS Pilot Study (May 2021) a sense of emotional intimacy scored top in the ranking of the emotional need questions (ranked 1 out of 10). This means that most teachers, 95%, feel this emotional need is met.

What does this mean?

Emotional connections can occur on a number of levels including friendship, loving relationships and intimate relationships (Griffin & Tyrell, p. 98)¹. However, teachers have strong emotional connections with our students on a professional level. Teaching requires emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Brennan, 2006)² in a similar way to other caring professions such as social work.

A common factor in teacher burnout is emotional exhaustion (Iancu et al, 2018)³, so although teachers their need for emotional intimacy is met at school, it could have a long term negative effect if not moderated. For example, being able to switch off and to rest effectively.

Life

Teachers need to balance the amount of emotional energy they give their work, so they are able to function emotionally at home.

Workplace issues

- Teachers can find it difficult to rest effectively and switch off from work.
- Teachers who are parents can often feel torn between the need of their family and the needs of work.

What can you do?

External

- Encourage staff who are new to the area to join a local group that shares their interests
- Encourage staff to socialise if they wish to, especially with new members of staff

Departmental

- Provide accessible to all shared spaces at the start of the day, end of the day or during breaks, away from students, where staff can informally talk
- Provide quiet spaces for staff to rest and unwind during the school day.
- Leaders try to lead by examples and tell your staff how you prioritise or protect family/social life, or at least give individuals permission to do so.

Whole School

- Provide quiet spaces for staff
- Make outside areas accessible
- Identify walks nearby the school or college that are in nature that take 10-20 minutes.



Relevant RISE tools and resources

Wellbeing / emotional needs



Supporting Sign-Posts



Supporting colleagues with mental health issues



Latham's One-to-Ones – Guidance



Department meeting - improved well-being

Job Satisfaction



Work-Life balance analyser



Managing working relationships



Establishing support networks



Acknowledging staff achievements



Latham's One-to-Ones – Guidance



Building effective relationships with SLT

Career Intentions



Individual Career Planning



Ensuring your staff leave happy



Progression Planning



Department size and shape (short, medium and long term)



Effective exit interviews

1 Brennan, K. (2006). *The managed teacher: Emotional labour, education, and technology*. *Educational Insights*, 10(2), 55-65.

2 Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

3 Iancu, A. E., Rusu, A., Miroiu, C., Purcar, R., & Maricuțoiu, L. P. (2018). *The effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing teacher burnout: A meta-analysis*. *Educational psychology review*, 30(2), 373-396.