



Menopause Policy

Approved by:
B.Suddhi

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Signed by:

Headteacher

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Chair of governors

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Statement of intent

Pear Tree Infant and Nursery is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff members.

The school recognises that menopause is a natural stage of life that **primarily affects women**, typically occurring between the ages of 45 and 55. However, the school also recognises that menopause and perimenopause can affect **other individuals**, including trans men and non-binary people, and that experiences will vary from person to person.

The school acknowledges that menopausal symptoms can have a significant impact on physical and mental health, and therefore on an individual's experience at work. As an employer, the school is committed to ensuring that all staff experiencing menopause are treated with dignity and respect, and are provided with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments where needed.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Create an environment in which staff members can openly and comfortably discuss menopause.
- Ensure all staff understand what menopause is and the common signs and symptoms.
- Ensure line managers are equipped to provide appropriate support and implement reasonable adjustments.
- Reduce absence related to menopausal symptoms where possible through early and supportive intervention.
- Promote flexible working and supportive management practices for staff experiencing menopause.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- ACAS guidance

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following school policies and procedures:

- Attendance Management Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

Menopause refers to the biological stage in life when menstruation ceases and a person reaches the end of their natural reproductive cycle. This is typically confirmed after 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. Menopause primarily affects women, although it may also be experienced by some trans men and non-binary people.

Perimenopause refers to the transitional period leading up to menopause, during which hormonal changes occur and symptoms may begin. This stage can last for several years.

Postmenopause refers to the stage following menopause, beginning after 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period, during which symptoms may continue for some individuals.

The school recognises that the age at which menopause occurs, the symptoms experienced, and their severity will vary between individuals.

3. Signs and symptoms

Common symptoms of the menopause include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hot flushes, i.e. sudden feelings of hot or cold in your face, neck and chest which can cause dizziness
- Palpitations
- Headaches and migraines
- Night sweats
- Difficulty sleeping
- Changed body shape and weight gain
- Skin changes, e.g. dry and itchy skin

- Vaginal dryness and pain
- Low mood or anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Loss of concentration
- Depression
- Reduced sex drive
- Problems with memory and concentration

Menopausal symptoms can occur months or even years before a woman's periods stop and can last for several years after they have stopped. Not every woman will experience the signs and symptoms of the menopause; however, the list provided above is common for most women.

The school will encourage all members of staff who are, or who suspect they may be, experiencing the menopause to arrange a meeting with their GP or nurse.

The menopause can have a significant impact on women at work and their relationships with colleagues, e.g. if they are experiencing severe anxiety, this may have negative side effects on their happiness at work.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Staff members experiencing menopause are responsible for:

- Being aware of the common signs and symptoms of the menopause to help with their diagnosis or to support others experiencing the menopause.
- Engaging in open and honest conversations with relevant individuals, e.g. line managers, and the HR manager.
- Seeking help where necessary from relevant professionals, e.g. GPs.
- Creating an action plan in conjunction with their line managers.
- The school recognises that staff may not always feel able to initiate conversations and will ensure proactive, supportive engagement where concerns are identified.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Creating a respectful and productive working environment.
- Ensuring that unlawful conduct towards staff members experiencing menopause is avoided and reported to the headteacher where incidents occur. The following are examples of unlawful conduct:
 - Discrimination of any kind, whether it be indirect, discreet, or direct
 - Harassment
 - Victimisation
 - Failure to make reasonable adjustments
- Ensuring they have a good understanding of the menopause and how this can affect the workplace.

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the procedures in this policy.
- Organising discussions with staff members experiencing the menopause.

- Acting sensitively and empathetically towards staff experiencing the menopause.
- Deciding on which reasonable adjustments need to be made to support staff members experiencing the menopause and ensuring they are implemented.
- Implementing an action plan in conjunction with staff members experiencing the menopause.
- Recording all reasonable adjustments and reviewing them as necessary.
- Making changes to action plans and reasonable adjustments, as necessary.
- Monitoring staff absence in line with the school's Attendance Management Policy.

The School Business Manager is responsible for:

- Offering guidance to line managers to enable them to effectively support staff experiencing the menopause.
- Identifying issues with staff absence and responding in line with the school's Attendance Management Policy.
- Attending training sessions and developing briefing sessions for staff (where deemed necessary).
- Maintaining effective communication with line managers and staff experiencing the menopause.

5. Informing the school

Where any staff member believes they are experiencing symptoms of menopause which may affect their work, or where they will require reasonable adjustments, they will notify their line manager.

The line manager will hold a one-to-one discussion with the employee to discuss the symptoms and which reasonable adjustments are required.

The one-to-one discussion will be held in an appropriate location on-site to maintain confidentiality, e.g. an office.

All information relating to menopause will be handled sensitively and in accordance with data protection legislation.

The line manager will conduct a risk assessment for any staff member experiencing the menopause and will review working conditions.

The line manager and employee will devise a written action plan which details the following:

- Their signs and symptoms
- The perceived or actual effects on their work
- Necessary reasonable adjustments
- Time frames for reasonable adjustments to be in place
- Next steps
- Review date

The line manager will ensure any recommendations for reasonable adjustments from the individual's GP or nurse, or other relevant agency, are included in the action plan.

The line manager and employee will discuss whether any other staff members should be notified – if so, who and how the employee would like them to be notified.

The line manager will notify the School Business Manager of the action plan.

The line manager will schedule a follow-up meeting **one month** after the initial discussion to review progress so far. Any changes will be made as necessary.

The line manager will schedule **termly** review meetings to review the action plan and make any changes as necessary.

6. Risk assessments

Where menopausal symptoms may impact health and safety, the school will ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out.

Where an employee has voiced concerns about their symptoms of the menopause, the line manager will conduct a risk assessment of their work practice to identify risks and implement appropriate control measures.

A separate risk assessment will be conducted for each member of staff experiencing the menopause.

The risk assessment will consider the specific needs of staff members experiencing the menopause. Specific information that will be considered includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Temperature and ventilation
- Current symptoms
- Access to toilet facilities
- Access to fresh drinking water
- Workplace stress

Appropriate reasonable adjustments will be implemented in light of the risk assessment.

The risk assessment will be reviewed and updated by the line manager when any circumstances change, e.g. symptoms.

7. Reasonable adjustments

In order to support staff members' symptoms of the menopause, the school will implement a variety of reasonable adjustments, suitable to staff members' individual needs. Menopause is not automatically classed as a disability; however, in some cases, symptoms may meet the legal definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Where this applies, the school will ensure its duty to make reasonable adjustments is fully met." Each case will be treated individually, and the below adjustments are not exhaustive.

Hot flushes – the school will:

- Adjust the temperature control of the work area, such as putting a fan on their desk or moving their desk close to a window.

- Ensure there is easy access to drinking water.
- Make adaptations to dress code, where appropriate, providing that this is in accordance with the school's Staff Code of Conduct.
- Ensure there is adequate access to toilets.
- Provide a quiet area for the staff member if they experience a severe hot flush.
- For teaching staff, ensure the staff member has support from a member of staff who can lead the class should the staff member need to take a break.

Heavy and light periods – the school will:

- Ensure there is adequate access to toilets.
- Ensure that sanitary products are readily available.
- Ensure storage space is available for a change of clothing, should the staff member require it.
- Allow the staff member to bring extra clothing with them, providing it is in accordance with the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

Headaches and lack of sleep – the school will:

- Ensure there is access to fresh drinking water at all times.
- Offer a quiet space to work, if necessary.
- Discuss the effects of a healthy balanced diet on improving symptoms.
- Allow staff members time to take a break if they experience a headache.
- For teaching staff, ensure the staff member has support from a member of staff who can lead the class should the staff member need to take a break.
- Allow staff members to be considered for flexible working, in line with the Flexible Working Policy.

Low mood and loss of confidence – the school will:

- Allow staff members time to take a break whenever required, without needing to ask for permission.
- Identify a 'time out space' where the staff member may go if they need to take a break, e.g. the staff room.
- For teaching staff, ensure the staff member has support from a member of staff who can lead the class should the staff member need to take a break.
- Ensure the staff member has a sufficient support mechanism in place from their line manager, and another colleague should they require it.
- Ensure there are **termly** personal development discussions in place with the staff member's line manager.
- Establish, with the staff member's line manager, an agreed time for the staff member to catch up on any missed work as a result of absence.

Poor concentration – the school will:

- Discuss with the staff member if there are times of the day where concentration is better or worse, and review how working can be managed around this.
- Review the staff member's task allocation and workload, distributing tasks to others where possible.

- Provide materials to assist with concentration and memory, such as action boards.
- Offer quiet spaces to work wherever possible.
- Establish, with the staff member's line manager, an agreed time for the staff member to catch up on any missed work as a result of absence.

Anxiety and panic attacks – the school will:

- Provide the staff member with contacts for external support and counselling – Derby City Council employees have access the Employee Assistance Programme:

The Employee Assistance Programme (provided by AXA) is available to you 24/7, 365 days a year.

Please call 0800 072 7 072 or textphone: 18001 0800 072 7 072 if you would like help and support.

The Employment Assistance Programme can also be accessed through the AXA Health - Wellbeing app. Download the app from the [Google Play Store](#) or [Apple App Store](#) and register with the activation code - A178016.

The [AXA Be supported online](#) website can be accessed using the following details:

Username: derbycitycouncil

Password: supported

- Ensure the staff member has a sufficient support mechanism in place from their line manager, and another colleague should they require it.
- Encourage the staff member to seek help from their GP.
- Identify a time out space where the staff member may go if they need to take a break.
- For teaching staff, ensure the staff member has support from a member of staff who can lead the class should the staff member need to take a break.
- Discuss relaxation techniques, such as breathing exercises, and encourage the staff member to practise these when taking a break.

8. Staff training

The School Business Manager is responsible for organising training for staff members.

The school will ensure that all line managers have been trained to be aware of the signs and symptoms of the menopause, how it can affect work, and what adjustments should be made to support staff members.

The school will ensure that issues of the menopause are highlighted so all staff members understand how it affects staff, and to create a positive attitude towards managing the menopause whilst being employed at the school.

The school will ensure all staff members are provided with sufficient information as to where they can access support for any issues that arise as a result of the menopause.

Training will be refreshed on an **annual** basis for all relevant staff members.

9. Attendance procedures

Attendance of staff members experiencing the menopause will be managed in line with the Attendance Management Policy.

Menopause-related absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be discounted from formal absence procedures where appropriate.

The school will ensure staff members experiencing the menopause are able to request flexible working, in line with the Flexible Working Policy.

Any requests for breaks or flexible working will be outlined in the employee's action plan.

The school will ensure that any appraisal, capability and performance procedures are not applied in a way as to discriminate unlawfully against women staff members experiencing the menopause.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the HR manager in conjunction with the headteacher on an **annual** basis.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff members.