

Menopause Policy

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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE	3
2	STAGES OF THE MENOPAUSE	3
3	SYMPTOMS OF THE MENOPAUSE.....	3
4	REQUESTING SUPPORT	4
5	WORKING ENVIRONMENT	4
6	SICKNESS ABSENCE.....	5
7	EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME	5
8	EXTERNAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT.....	5

1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees and workers. The initial policy has been subject to consultation with Trade Unions it has then been adapted by the menopause group to best suit the needs of the women at Fearnhill. It does not form part of anybody's contract of employment and may be varied. We are committed to creating an open and supportive culture. We want you to feel comfortable speaking about how menopause-related symptoms may be affecting you at work and able to ask for the support that you need to help you manage your symptoms. The aim of this policy is to create awareness and support to all of you who are experiencing menopausal symptoms.

2 STAGES OF THE MENOPAUSE

The menopause usually starts in women between the ages of 45 to 55 however in some cases can be earlier.

- Perimenopause is when you may be experiencing symptoms of the menopause however your periods have not stopped.
- Menopause is when perimenopause ends once your periods have stopped for 12 months.
- Post menopause is when your hormone levels have stabilised.

3 SYMPTOMS OF THE MENOPAUSE

The symptoms of menopause can have a huge impact on your daily life including social / family relationships and at work. Symptoms can vary significantly and can include:

- Hot sweats/flushes
- Night sweats
- Memory loss – commonly termed 'brain fog' and can include increased processing time
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Fatigue/exhaustion
- Depression
- Reduced concentration
- Irregular and/or heavy periods sometimes with painful cramps/flooding
- Slowed metabolism and possible weight gain
- Thinning hair, skin irritation, dryness, and itching
- Joint and muscular aches and stiffness
- Headaches and migraines
- Dizziness and / or palpitations
- Increased risk of UTIs

- Stress incontinence
- Low self-esteem, self-confidence, leading to previously performed activities becoming more challenging. This could include leading meetings, driving, and confronting poor behaviour.

During the menopause, the extent and number of symptoms will vary over time.

4 REQUESTING SUPPORT

Should you be finding it difficult to cope with the symptoms you may be experiencing please speak to your line manager in the first instance. If you are unable to speak to your line manager, then you may wish to consider speaking to a mental health first aider (Cate Brown), HR (Nikki Warren) or to the headteacher. All discussions will be kept in the strictest confidence unless you have agreed by prior arrangement that HR can speak on your behalf. If you feel able to speak to your line manager, they may also be able to help.

Fearnhill has a menopause support group which meets once a half term for women to meet and discuss what they are experiencing. There is a Google folder on the shared drive which contains information about the menopause and useful resources such as books and videos that other members have suggested.

If you are teaching and experience a symptom that requires urgent attention, but that can be dealt with quickly (5 mins), please email [Move](#) and the menopause group with the subject line "Urgent assistance required room XX (menopause)". This message will alert the On Tour staff along with any other available members of the menopause group.

To offer short term support we will allow for periods of cover. Women who are struggling with their symptoms will be able to request support. This arrangement will be monitored and reviewed at the start of the 2026-27 school year.

Should menopausal symptoms cause an ongoing health issue, we will consider an occupational health referral where necessary. You may wish us to also consider flexible working either on a temporary or permanent basis. If that is the case, please refer to our Flexible Working policy and submit a request to your line manager to consider.

5 WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Your working environment may at times exacerbate your symptoms e.g., it is too hot. If this is the case, please speak to your line manager as there may be some reasonable adjustments we can make to the environment. This could include:

- Ensuring windows / doors can be safely opened
- Fans being provided
- Fitting blinds to windows
- Access to cold water
- Access to a cool working area such as the airconditioned maths office (hot/cold desking)

- Access to a quiet space for breaks/PPA to avoid having to ask for cover or for sick leave

6 SICKNESS ABSENCE

If you are too unwell to attend work due to menopausal symptoms, then our normal sickness absence procedure must be followed. Please refer to our Health & Attendance policy.

7 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

We offer an employee assistance programme (EAP) to all employees to access. If you feel that you would like to speak to someone on a confidential basis about how you are feeling and what you are experiencing, you can contact them on https://wellbeing.spectrum.life/support_hub/.

8 EXTERNAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- [Menopause matters](#), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options
- the [Daisy Network](#) charity, which provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency
- the [Menopause Café](#), which provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea, and discuss the menopause
- [British Menopause Society](#), provides confidential, independent service to advise, inform and reassure people about gynaecological and sexual matters and post reproductive health
- [Davina McCall's top tips](#)
- <https://rockmymenopause.com/>
- <https://www.drlouisenewson.co.uk/>