



Menstruation & Menopause Policy

Approved by: Executive Leadership Team

Date: 13.10.2025

Last reviewed: October 2025

Next review due: October 2027

1. Introduction

This policy is designed to outline the ways in which the trust, senior leaders and colleagues can work together to enhance staff health and wellbeing, ensuring that schools and trust offices are safe, caring and positive places to work.

This policy sets out the rights of employees experiencing menstrual and menopause related symptoms and explains the support available. The policy is designed to help create working environments where employees feel comfortable raising issues, fostering a workplace culture of awareness, inclusive discussions, and support.

This policy does not form part of the contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2. Equality and Legislative Framework

We recognise that menstruation and menopause are a natural cycle that can affect individuals in different ways. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people on the grounds of certain 'protected characteristics' including sex, age and disability. We are committed to fostering an inclusive, supportive and equitable environment where all individuals are given the support, understanding, and resources they need so they can continue to work safely.

We also acknowledge the need for greater awareness and sensitivity surrounding the challenges faced by those experiencing symptoms of menstruation and menopause, ensuring that these individuals are not marginalised, stigmatised, or discriminated against due to this biological cycle.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers. Under the Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to undertake general risk assessments which should include specific risks to those experiencing menopausal symptoms. For the purposes of this policy, a template menopause risk assessment to support with developing personalised employee support plans can be found in Appendix 2.

3. Scope of Policy

The trust is committed to creating an open and supportive workplace culture. We want employees to feel comfortable speaking about how menstrual and menopause related symptoms may be affecting you at work and to feel comfortable asking for the support that you need to help you manage your symptoms.

We want to cultivate a culture that normalises workplace conversations about gynaecological health, reducing the stigma and encouraging open communication. All genders should have an understanding of menstruation and menopause so that they can discuss and engage in related discussion and support sensitively and sympathetically.

Menstrual health symptoms can include:

- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Period pain and cramps
- Irregular periods
- Mood changes
- Tiredness

Menstrual health related conditions can include:

- Premenstrual Syndrome
- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
- Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder

- Endometriosis
- Fibroids
- Adenomyosis

As part of the menstrual health cycle, the menopause is a natural event during which a person stops having periods and experiences hormonal changes, such as a decrease in oestrogen levels.

There are three stages of the menopause transition:

1. **Perimenopause** - time from the start of the menopausal symptoms until after the individual has experienced their last period.
2. **Menopause** - defined as the last menstrual period. Menopause is reached when there has not been a period for 12 consecutive months.
3. **Post-menopause** - when the individual has not experienced a period for over a year.

While menopausal symptoms can vary, they commonly include:

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Anxiety
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Memory loss
- Depression
- Headaches
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Joint stiffness, aches and pains
- Reduced concentration
- Heavy periods

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The trust is responsible for overseeing the general health and wellbeing strategy and for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to support the general health and wellbeing of staff at work.

Senior leaders are responsible for the implementation of this policy as well as for ensuring that those with line management responsibilities are suitably skilled to support those they manage in an empathetic and constructive way, with due regard to mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues.

Line managers are responsible for supporting senior leaders in implementing this policy, using procedures fairly and consistently, working with their staff to understand and address daily pressures, monitoring workload and supporting staff appropriately to their needs.

Additional individual support includes:

Trade Union representatives who can have a role in helping employees to have supportive conversations with managers and senior leaders.

Mental Health First Aiders who can support individuals experiencing mental health challenges, provide initial support, guidance, and signpost professional help.

Menstruation and Menopause Champions who can support raise awareness, educate colleagues, provide a safe space to facilitate inclusive conversations, and signpost supportive resources and external support.

5. Workplace Adjustments

If you are finding it difficult to cope at work because of menstrual or menopause related symptoms, you are encouraged to raise this as early as possible to ensure adjustments can be made, where required, to support you in the workplace. We would encourage you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing or with any adjustments that you feel you need to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support.

Any health-related information disclosed by you during discussions will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

A personalised support plan will be agreed with you; where operationally possible, adjustments could potentially include:

- Leaving doors open
- Ensuring that windows can be safely opened
- Being able to regulate the temperature in work areas
- Providing a free-standing or desk fan
- Fitting blinds to windows
- Accommodating additional breaks
- Ensuring quiet rest spaces are accessible
- Establishing a system that allows cover for those who need to access toilet/washing facilities at short notice (to deal with heavy and recurring bleeding)
- Special leave to attend medical appointments that cannot be arranged outside your normal working day
- Referral to the trust's EAP where individuals can access support from a trained healthcare advisor and/or specialist menopause professional
- Providing lockers or areas to store personal items, such as sanitary products or fresh clothing
- Adjusting workplace procedures and processes to avoid any detriment
- Carrying out individual stress risk assessments to identify specific job role stressors and appropriate adjustments (if applicable)

We also recognise that the option to work flexibly on a temporary basis could also be considered. If you feel that you would benefit from a temporary change to your working arrangement on an ad hoc basis because of sleep deprivation or other symptoms that may be impacting on your performance, you should discuss and agree these with your line manager or appropriate senior leader. We will try to facilitate temporary flexible working arrangements wherever this is possible and will continue to review these to ensure that they meet your needs. Where we are unable to accommodate a flexible or temporary change to your working pattern, we will work with you to explore alternative potential adjustments or support measures.

6. Additional Support Available

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - access to an EAP which offers practical support, information and resources on stress management, work-life balance, relationship and family issues, financial worries, bereavement and other life changes. You can also access 24 hour GP support alongside free physiotherapy and counselling.

Occupational Health - access to occupational health support offering independent, impartial advice on the effects of work on an employee's health and vice versa. In some cases, we may refer you to occupational health so that they can advise on how your symptoms are impacted at work and make recommendations on the types of adjustments that may be appropriate. Occupational health may also signpost to external sources of help and advice.

Sanitary products – free sanitary products are available in toilet facilities.

Wellbeing Advisors, including Menstruation and Menopause Champions, and Mental Health First Aiders - the promotion of wellbeing and workplace support, including:

- Signposting relevant health and wellbeing services to line managers and employees
- Reporting to senior leaders on wellbeing issues and initiatives
- Providing Mental Health First Aid to someone experiencing a mental health issue or crisis

7. Status of Policy and Review

The content and operation of this policy is reviewed as and when deemed necessary by the trust. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.

Appendix 1.

External Sources of Support

There are various external organisations that provide help and support on gynaecological conditions and the menopause, including:

https://www.verity-pcos.org.uk/	<u>Verity - The UK PCOS Charity - Verity PCOS UK</u> can provide further support and guidance on Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).
https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/	<u>Ending endometriosis starts by saying it Endometriosis UK</u> provides information and resources for people suffering from endometriosis.
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pre-menstrual-syndrome/	<u>PMS (premenstrual syndrome) - NHS</u> support and additional resources.
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd/what-is-pmdd/	<u>What is PMDD? Types of mental health problems Mind</u> provides support and further information on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder.
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fibroids/	<u>Fibroids - NHS</u> provides additional guidance, help and support for those suffering with fibroids.
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/adenomyosis/	<u>Adenomyosis - NHS</u> provides information for those with adenomyosis, a condition where the lining of the womb (uterus) starts growing into the muscle in the wall of the womb.
<u>Menopause matters</u>	<u>Menopause matters</u> , provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options.
https://www.daisynetwork.org/	The <u>Daisy Network</u> charity which provides support for people experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency.
<u>Menopause Café</u>	The <u>Menopause Café</u> , provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.
<u>Menopause - NHS (www.nhs.uk)</u>	NHS provides guidance, help and support to every individual experiencing menopause symptoms.
<u>The menopause - Women's Health Concern (womens-health-concern.org)</u>	This is the patient arm of the British Menopause Society. The guidance and support are available in various languages.
<u>Advice on the menopause (fom.ac.uk)</u>	The FOM provides guidance on menopause at work.
<u>Menopause Exchange for unbiased, independent</u>	Provides webinars, talks and workshops on menopause.

information and advice (menopause-exchange.co.uk)	
Talking Menopause	<p>Work with organisations to provide professional training and solutions to create a workplace culture of menopause openness and understanding for all, to increase productivity and employee satisfaction by better supporting those employees affected by menopause, their colleagues, and managers.</p>
About this information Information for the public Menopause: diagnosis and management Guidance NICE	<p>NICE guidelines provide advice on the care and support that should be offered to people who use health and care services.</p>

Appendix 2.

Menopause Risk Assessment Checklist

Employee Name		Employee Job Title	
Assessor Name		Assessor Job Title	
Date of Initial Risk Assessment		Date of Review Meeting(s)	

Potential Risks	Considerations	Precautions in Place to Reduce Risk	Residual Level of Risk (Low, Medium, High)	Any Further Action Necessary (Include action or review Dates/Owner)
Information and Guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to EAP • Menstruation and Menopause Policy • Attendance Management Procedure • Workplace Menstruation and Menopause champion 				
Sickness Reporting Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main contact point 	Preference to speak to nominated (female) member of staff about specific menopausal symptoms?			
Stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress risk assessment • Wellbeing and Stress Awareness Policy • Counselling and stress management support via EAP 				
Referral to Occupational Health	Would a referral be a supportive/beneficial measure?			

Potential Risks	Considerations	Precautions in Place to Reduce Risk	Residual Level of Risk (Low, Medium, High)	Any Further Action Necessary (Include action or review Dates/Owner)
Workplace Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to toilet, washing and changing facilities • Availability of lockers or personal storage facilities • Provision of sanitary products • Cover arrangements, including when required at short notice 				
Work Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventilation • Workstation assessment • Breaks • Quiet areas • Temporary/workplace adjustments as required • Natural light 	Air conditioning, desk fan, floor fan, thermostat controls, windows to control room temperature and air flow?			
Job Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on fatigue (mental and physical) • Frequent changes in job demands • Ability to move freely, adjust posture etc • Ad-hoc agile/flexible working • Loan worker 				

Has the employee been given any specific advice by her GP / OH? If yes, provide details.	
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Any further notes:			
Employee's Signature		Assessor's Signature	
Date		Date	