

EDSTART SCHOOLS

Menopause Policy

PEOPLE, GOVERNANCE & EMPLOYMENT

Policy owner	EdStart Specialist Education Ltd
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Category	People, governance & employment
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Menopause policy

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Difficulty sleeping, insomnia and fatigue. Headaches and joint and muscle pain. Weakened bladder function and urinary tract infections. Vaginal dryness and reduced sex drive For some individuals, being at work may make their symptoms worse. For example, if the temperature is too high, this may cause symptoms such as hot flushes, dizziness, discomfort, sweating and heart palpitations. Symptoms affecting sleep can make it difficult for staff experiencing them to concentrate and stay focused, while low confidence, low mood and anxiety may impact on decision-making and relationships with colleagues. We acknowledge that the menopause will affect everybody differently – some individuals may experience no symptoms at all, and some may experience a variety. We will adapt our response to staff affected by the menopause on a case-by-case basis.

3. Legislation and guidance Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, so far as is reasonably practicable. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that employers make an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees. This requires undertaking general risk assessments, which should include specific risks to the health of staff affected by the menopause. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits

discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include age, sex and disability. Employers are under a statutory duty to consider whether any 'reasonable adjustments' are required to alleviate any disadvantages staff encounter based on these characteristics. Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if: They have a physical or mental impairment, and The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities Relating specifically to menopause symptoms: Many of the aforementioned symptoms would be likely to be classified as a physical and/or mental impairment 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial 'Long-term' means an impairment if it has lasted for at least 12 months, is likely to last for at least 12 months, or is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected 'Day to day activities' are those carried out by most people on a regular basis, and includes but is not limited to: walking, driving, carrying or moving things, being able to concentrate, writing, reading, typing, speaking Ongoing symptoms linked to the menopause may meet the definition of a disability and where they do, employers will be required to consider whether any reasonable adjustments are required to alleviate any disadvantage. Any such adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis and, where appropriate, staff affected by the menopause will be offered a variety of approaches to support them.

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4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing body The governing board has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the school but will delegate day-to-day responsibility to the Executive Headteachers. The governing board has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff are not exposed to risks to their health and safety on the school premises. The Governing Board, as the employer, also has a duty to: Assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify and introduce the health and safety measures necessary to manage those risks Inform employees about risks and the measures in place to manage them Make sure that adequate health and safety training is provided

4.2 Role of senior staff Senior staff will make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to support staff experiencing the menopause, and to make sure the workplace doesn't make their symptoms worse, by: Carrying out individual risk assessments to assess working conditions in line with the specific needs of staff affected by the menopause Monitoring the wellbeing of staff through structured conversations Promoting information about and access to external support services Ensuring good ventilation and air quality throughout the school, leaving doors open where appropriate and ensuring windows can be safely opened Ensuring regular access to cold drinking water for all staff Regulating and monitoring the temperature of the school and collecting feedback from staff, as well as ensuring the temperature can be regulated per room by turning down radiators for example Ensuring toilet, washing and sanitary facilities are accessible for staff, and establishing a system that allows for cover for staff to access these facilities where necessary while they are teaching Providing small desk fans to help staff cool down Fitting blinds to windows Designating a member of staff such as a wellbeing champion that staff affected by the menopause can speak to about their symptoms in confidence, if they do not feel comfortable doing so with their line manager speak to HR or a Senior Leader of choice.

4.3 Role of line managers Line managers who work with staff who may be affected by the menopause will: Provide a non-judgemental, empathetic and confidential support system to staff Appreciate the personal nature of any conversations about the menopause and treat them confidentially and sensitively Monitor sickness absence, and have support meetings with staff if any patterns emerge Have regular, informal conversations with staff that they line manage who are affected by the menopause to discuss what support they need, and record any reasonable adjustments that are agreed Consider flexible working requests in order to accommodate acute symptoms Allow staff affected by the menopause to take regular breaks from their work if necessary to help manage symptoms

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Give swift permission for absence to attend medical appointments Promote information about and access to external support services Record menopause-related absences as an 'ongoing health issue' instead of as an individual short-term absence to avoid triggering sickness absence procedures Be sensitive to health issues such as the menopause during the performance management/appraisal process If necessary, seek advice from HR or occupational health colleagues, or discuss a referral with the staff member to occupational health for further support

4.4 Role of staff members affected by the menopause We encourage staff who are experiencing menopausal symptoms that are impacting their health and wellbeing at work to: Share their practical needs to reduce the difficulties the menopause can cause and their preferred coping strategies with their line manager, Lee Jewitt – Staff Welfare and Wellbeing Coach or Samantha Jordison – HR Manager Report honestly about their wellbeing and let their line manager or another trusted member of staff, such as Lee Jewitt – Staff Welfare and Wellbeing Coach, know if the menopause is having an impact on this Make time in their schedule to visit their GP and other support services Access our employee assistance programme “My Sante” for further support

4.5 Role of all staff All staff are expected to: Promote health and wellbeing for themselves and others at all times Treat each other with empathy and respect Support other members of staff, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance Accept and support any adjustments that staff affected by the menopause may be receiving as a result of their symptoms Report honestly about their wellbeing to their line manager or to another trusted member of staff, such as Lee Jewitt – Staff Welfare and Wellbeing Coach

5. Further resources Menopause (NHS) Menopause Matters Menopause: diagnosis and management (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) The Daisy Network charity Menopause in the Workplace Menopause resources from the CIPD, particularly for:

- Line managers
- HR staff

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6. Monitoring arrangements This policy will be reviewed annually by our Executive Team. At every review, it will be approved by the Chair of Governors.

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