



PATCHAM
HIGH SCHOOL

One Team, One Dream

Menopause Policy

Last Review: October 2022

Next Review date: September 2025

At Patcham High School we are committed to being a school for all and consider ourselves a proactive community who promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity. We are an Anti-Racist School who endeavour to create an environment which allows all our pupils and staff to thrive and learn from each other's differences; experiences, cultures, backgrounds, identities and abilities. It is our intention to ensure that all students are supported to be proud of themselves, respect each other and ultimately succeed as young adults. We are particularly conscious of the need to ensure the identities of those from minority groups are acknowledged and celebrated – in every field, at all times, every day - whether students of colour or LGBTQ+ we have an overall aim of providing equal opportunities for all by having One Team and One Dream.

1. Introduction

Patcham High School has a positive attitude towards the menopause and will treat all individuals with dignity and respect during this time and ensure that the workplace promotes an open and honest culture in which menopause can be discussed. We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works within the school. We are committed to the health and wellbeing of all our workforce, and it recognise that staff may need additional consideration, support and adjustments during this transitional time before, during and after the menopause. The school is committed to ensuring that individuals feel confident in discussing menopausal symptoms and asking for support and adjustments in order to continue with their role within the organisation. The school recognises that the menopause is an equality and occupational health and safety issue and that women and transgender people may need appropriate flexibility, support and adjustments during the time of change before, during and after the menopause.

2. Aims

- To make sure that our school can support staff affected by the menopause and help them to feel comfortable at work, both when experiencing symptoms and when asking for support and adjustments.
- Set out how our school will make reasonable adjustments to minimise the risk of the working environment making menopausal symptoms worse for those experiencing them
- Minimise menopause-related stigma in our school by educating staff on what it is and the symptoms that staff affected by it might suffer
- Provide further resources to help staff, particularly line managers and HR teams, to support others through difficulties the menopause may cause them

3. Legislation

The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) requires employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers. Under the Act, employers are required to do risk assessments under the Management Regulations which should include specific risks to menopausal women and transgender people if they are employed. 4.2. The Equality Act (2010) prohibits discrimination against people on the grounds of certain 5 | Page 'protected characteristics' including sex, age and disability. Note that conditions linked to the menopause may meet the definition of an 'impairment' under the Equality Act and require reasonable adjustments.

4. Definitions

The **menopause** is a stage of life when a woman, trans or non-binary person stops having periods. It typically affects those aged between 45 and 55, when oestrogen levels begin to fall. In the UK, the average age to reach the menopause is 51.

Perimenopause is the time of hormonal change leading up to this, when a person may experience symptoms. **Post-menopause** is the time beyond menopause.

Early menopause is when periods stop before the age of 45. It can happen naturally, or as a side effect of some treatments.

For the purpose of this policy, any reference to the menopause shall include perimenopause and early menopause.

5. Symptoms

Individuals suffering from the menopause may experience symptoms that cause changes to their emotions and other aspects of their health, some of which may impact them at work.

Menopausal symptoms might include:

- Hot flushes, night sweats and palpitations
- Difficulty sleeping, insomnia and fatigue
- Low mood, anxiety and depression
- Headaches and joint and muscle pain
- Weakened bladder function and urinary tract infections
- Vaginal dryness and reduced sex drive
- Problems with memory, confidence and concentration

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.

6. Roles and responsibilities

SLT

SLT 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 regular surveys and 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
- Providing information on the menopause in the staff room, e.g. posters and leaflets
- Creating a support group so that those who want to can seek support from each other
- Providing training for staff and managers to achieve consistent practice

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
- 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
- If necessary, seek advice from HR or occupational health colleagues, or discuss a referral with the staff member to occupational health for further support

All Staff

- Take responsibility for looking after their health
- Are open and honest in conversations with HR and Occupational Health
- Contribute to a respectful; and healthy working environment
- Are willing to help and support their colleagues
- Accept and support any necessary adjustments their colleagues request or are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Staff wellbeing policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equalities policy