



Education Trust

‘Inspiring the individuals of today, for a better society tomorrow,

“Aspire, Belong, Collaborate”

MENOPAUSE POLICY

Review Frequency	Annually
Reviewed	August 2026
Next Review	August 2027
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INTRODUCTION

Riviera Education Trust is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here. Menopause is a natural stage of life which can affect people in different ways and, for some, can have a significant impact on their working life. Not everyone will experience symptoms during the perimenopause but offering support to those who do should help improve their experience at work.

This policy is aimed at helping all those who are perimenopausal or menopausal, but the term 'menopause' will be used throughout this document.

This policy sets out the guidelines for members of staff and managers on providing the right support to manage menopausal symptoms at work. It is not contractual and does not form part of the terms and conditions of employment.

While menopause typically affects women, the Trust recognises that trans men and non-binary people may also experience menopause or menopausal symptoms. This policy is intended to support all employees experiencing menopause, regardless of gender identity.

The Trust recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Depending on the individual circumstances, issues relating to menopause may engage protections relating to sex, age and disability. Where an employee is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act, the Trust will consider and make reasonable adjustments where required.

Aims

- Ensure that employees experiencing menopausal symptoms feel confident to discuss them and ask for support and any reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their roles.
- Foster an environment in which colleagues feel comfortable having open and supportive conversations about menopause.
- Set out how the Trust will make reasonable adjustments to minimise the risk of the working environment making menopausal symptoms worse for those experiencing them.
- Provide resources to help staff, particularly line managers and HR, support employees who may be experiencing difficulties related to menopause.
- Educate and inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause and how they can support employees experiencing menopausal symptoms at work.
- Support employees to remain well and effective at work wherever reasonably possible.



Scope:

This policy applies to all Riviera Education Trust staff; however, its primary purpose is to support employees experiencing menopause or menopausal symptoms.

Definitions

Menopause is a biological stage that occurs when a person stops having periods and reaches the end of their natural reproductive life. It is usually defined as having occurred when a person has not had a period for 12 consecutive months, where menopause has occurred naturally. The average age for menopause in the UK is 51, although it can occur earlier or later, including as a result of surgery, illness or other factors.

Perimenopause is the period of time leading up to menopause, during which a person may experience changes such as irregular periods and other menopausal symptoms. Perimenopause can begin several years before menopause.

Post-menopause refers to the period after menopause has occurred.

Symptoms of Menopause

Experiences of menopause vary significantly. Some people experience few or no symptoms, while others may experience symptoms which have a significant impact on their daily life and work.

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically and can include but are not limited to:

- Difficulty sleeping, insomnia and fatigue.
- Hot flushes.
- Low mood.
- Anxiety.
- Reduced concentration or focus.
- Problems with memory recall.
- Migraines or headaches.
- Aches and pains.
- Irregular or heavy periods.

It is also important to note that symptoms can occur without warning and can vary in severity and frequency.



Roles and Responsibilities

Members of staff:

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable steps to support their health and wellbeing and seeking appropriate advice or support where needed.
- Where they feel able to do so, raising any workplace support or adjustments they may require with their line manager or HR.
- Contributing to a respectful and productive working environment;
- Being willing to help and support their colleagues;
- Respecting any agreed adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

If a member of staff is unable to speak to their line manager, or if their line manager is not supporting them, they can speak directly to HR or another member of the SLT.

Line Managers should:

- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy and Guidance;
- Be ready and willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally;
- Use the guidance in Appendix 1 and signpost employees to appropriate sources of support, before agreeing with the individual how best they can be supported and any adjustments that may be required;
- Record adjustments agreed and actions to be implemented;
- Ensure ongoing dialogue and review dates;
- Ensure that all agreed adjustments are adhered to;
- Ensure that all notes and records relating to menopause support are treated as sensitive personal data and handled in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy and UK GDPR requirements.

Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the line manager may:

- Discuss a referral to Occupational Health for further advice;
- Refer the employee to Occupational Health with the assistance and guidance from HR;
- Review Occupational Health advice and implement any recommendations where reasonably practicable;
- Update the action plan and continue to review.



The HR team should:

- Signpost to avenues of support where needed;
- Support with Occupational Health referrals;
- Support safe and open dialogue.

The role of **Occupational Health** is to:

- Carry out a holistic assessment and consider whether menopause may be contributing to the employee's symptoms or affecting their wellbeing, providing appropriate advice and guidance;
- Signpost to appropriate sources of help and advice (refer to Appendix 2 for more information);
- Provide support and advice to SLT and line managers in identifying reasonable adjustments, if required.

The **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** provides access to 24/7 telephone counselling and face-to-face counselling for all members of staff.

Sickness Absence

Where an employee is absent from work due to menopausal symptoms, this should be managed sensitively and in accordance with the Trust's Managing Stress and Absence Policy. Managers should consider whether workplace adjustments, Occupational Health advice or other support may assist the employee in remaining at or returning to work. Where appropriate, the impact of menopause and any potential obligations under the Equality Act 2010 should be taken into account when managing absence.

The Trust will review the implementation of this policy and its impact on staff wellbeing through regular feedback, and incorporate any necessary improvements. Staff are encouraged to share their experiences to help inform future practice.

Appendix 1: Managers' Guidance for Colleague Discussions



We recognise that everyone's experience of menopause is different and that individual circumstances and support needs will vary.

If an employee wishes to discuss their symptoms, how they are feeling, or how menopause is affecting someone they support, managers should ensure that they:

- Allow adequate time to have the conversation;
- Find an appropriate room to preserve confidentiality;
- Encourage them to speak openly and honestly;
- Suggest ways in which they may be supported and signpost them to appropriate sources of support and up-to-date NHS and NICE guidance;
- Agree actions and how they will be implemented. Ensure that any record is treated as confidential and stored securely;
- Agree whether other members of the team should be informed and, if so, by whom;
- Ensure that designated time is allowed for a follow-up meeting. Avoid discussing these matters informally or in passing; ensure conversations take place in a confidential, private setting.

Examples of Workplace Support and Adjustments:

The impact of menopause will vary from person to person, and the support required will depend on the individual's symptoms, role and working environment. Managers should discuss with the employee what aspects of their work, if any, are being affected and consider what reasonable and practical support may help.

Adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis and, where appropriate, may include:

- adjustments to the working environment, such as access to drinking water, suitable ventilation, temperature control or a quiet space;
- reasonable flexibility around breaks and access to washroom facilities;
- adaptations to uniform or dress requirements where appropriate;
- temporary adjustments to working arrangements, duties, workload or work patterns;
- measures to reduce interruptions or provide a quieter working environment where this would assist with concentration;
- access to appropriate rest or wellbeing spaces;
- regular opportunities to meet with a line manager to discuss how the employee is managing and whether existing support remains effective;
- signposting to the Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health, GP or other appropriate sources of support; and
- consideration of other reasonable adjustments appropriate to the employee's individual circumstances.



Any agreed adjustments should be recorded and reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective. Where an adjustment cannot reasonably be accommodated, the manager should discuss this with the employee and HR and consider whether an alternative form of support may be appropriate.

Where appropriate, managers may signpost employees to their GP or another appropriate healthcare professional for advice. An Occupational Health referral may also be considered where specific workplace advice would be beneficial.



Appendix 2: Sources of Support and Further Information

Employees experiencing menopausal symptoms may wish to seek advice from their GP or another appropriate healthcare professional. Keeping a record of symptoms and how they are affecting day-to-day life and work may be helpful when discussing treatment and support.

Up-to-date information about menopause, symptoms and treatment options is available from the NHS and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

All colleagues can access counselling by contacting the Employee Assistance helpline on 0800 028 0199, online at <https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login>. There is also lots of useful information on the [wisdom](#) app.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines.

NICE provides up-to-date guidance and information on the diagnosis and management of menopause. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23>.

The National Health Service provides an overview of menopause. You can find more at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause-and-perimenopause/what-are-menopause-and-perimenopause/>

Menopause information. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists offer further information in a dedicated area of their website at:

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/>.

Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI) information and support on very early menopause. You can find out more at:

<https://www.daisynetwork.org/>.

Information on hysterectomy. This provides an insight into surgically induced menopause as a result of having a hysterectomy. Further details can be found at:

<https://www.hysterectomy-association.org.uk>.

Henpicked is a site that provides information on managing menopause and an insight into women's stories

<https://henpicked.net/menopause/>



DETAILS OF AMENDMENTS

July 2021

- Policy adopted.

March 2024

- Review frequency amended
- Further information was added to reflect the format of existing policies
- Links updated

June 2025

- Introduction updated to improve clarity around gender-inclusive language.
- Reference to the Equality Act 2010 added to the introduction to reinforce legal compliance.
- Appendix 2 revised to ensure a more professional and consistent tone throughout.
- A new section added outlining the approach to monitoring and review of the policy.

August 2026

- Updated wording, terminology and definitions throughout to improve clarity, consistency and inclusivity.
- Updated the aims of the policy to promote open and supportive conversations and appropriate workplace support for employees experiencing menopausal symptoms.
- Clarified the responsibilities of employees, line managers, HR and Occupational Health, including confidentiality, signposting and the recording and review of agreed adjustments.
- Added specific guidance on managing menopause-related sickness absence, including consideration of workplace adjustments, Occupational Health advice and Equality Act obligations.
- Replaced the previous symptom-specific list of adjustments with a more flexible, case-by-case approach based on individual circumstances, role and working environment.
- Removed detailed medical guidance previously contained in Appendix 2 and replaced it with signposting to healthcare professionals and up-to-date external sources of information and support, including NHS and NICE guidance.
- Updated grammar and sentence structure throughout to improve readability and consistency.

