

MENOPAUSE POLICY

Learning Academies Trust

Version: 1.0

Approved by: Trust Board

Last review date: 16 March 2023

Ratified date: 16 March 2023

Next review date: 16 March 2025



LEARNING
ACADEMIES TRUST

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CHANGES

Policy date	Summary of change	Author	Version	Review date
16/03/2023	Policy has been created.	Amy Bosworth HR Lead and Business Partner	1.0	16/03/2025

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning Academies Trust is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees. We acknowledge that while the majority of people affected by the menopause will be women, those who are trans or non-binary may also experience the menopause or menopause-type symptoms. The information outlined in this policy is designed to provide support to all affected colleagues.

- This menopause policy sets out the key principles Learning Academies Trust should adhere to, to ensure that individuals affected by the menopause or perimenopause are treated fairly and given the appropriate support.
- This policy is intended to provide clarity and direction on how the Learning Academies Trust should support menopause related issues, either for individuals experiencing the menopause or those affected indirectly for example, partners, colleagues or line managers.

This policy is fully compliant with the following legislation:

- [Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#) introduced by the Equality Act 2010 (England, Scotland and Wales)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)

2. AIMS

The aim of this policy is to support staff members of the Trust who are experiencing menopausal symptoms, and to make managers aware of the Trust's responsibility to understand the menopause and related issues. This policy will highlight how the menopause affects staff, their partners, families and work colleagues, and will help to educate and inform managers about potential symptoms and how they can support individuals in the workplace. It will help to raise awareness and understanding among employees and outline support and reasonable adjustments that are available. Subsequently, the aim is to reduce menopause related sickness by supporting staff to remain in work rather than having to take sick leave (or in some cases resign) meaning that the organisation retains valuable skills and experience.

The policy aims to:

- Be a support guide for all employees.
- Ensure all stakeholders work proactively to make adjustments where necessary to support women experiencing menopausal symptoms and to ensure the workplace does not make their symptoms worse.
- Recognise that staff may need additional consideration, support, and adjustments during this transitional time before, during and after the menopause and ensure that staff are treated according to their circumstances and needs.
- Ensure that individuals feel confident in discussing menopausal symptoms and asking for support and adjustments in order to continue with their role within the organisation.
- Ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity and respect in their working environment. The Trust is also committed to ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of the workforce.

Learning Academies Trust is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees and recognises that women may need additional consideration, support, and adjustments before (perimenopause), during and after the menopause.

3. DEFINITIONS AND BACKGROUND

The Learning Academies Trust recognises that an increasing proportion of its employees will be approaching or working through the menopause. In the UK, it is estimated that around 1 in 3 women are either currently going through or have reached the menopause. The menopause affects all women, and it can often indirectly affect their partners, families, and colleagues as well.

Term	Definitions
Perimenopause	Is the time of hormonal change leading up to this, when a woman may experience symptoms.
Early Menopause	Is when a woman's periods stop before the age of 45. It can happen naturally, or as a side effect of some treatments.
Menopause	Is a stage of life when a woman stops having periods. It typically affects those aged between 45 and 55, when oestrogen (female sex hormones) levels begin to fall. In the UK, the average age to reach menopause is 51.
Post-menopause	Is the time beyond menopause.

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

3.1 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 to be worse.

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. The Trust will adapt their response to staff affected by the menopause on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the individual needs.

4. LEGISLATIVE SETTING

4.1 Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act prohibits discrimination against people on the grounds of 9 ‘protected characteristics’ including sex, age and disability. It is also important to note that conditions linked to the menopause may meet the definition of an ‘impairment’ under the Equality Act and require reasonable adjustments.

[Section 6](#) of the Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if:

- A person has a physical or mental impairment.
- 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.

4.2 Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)

The Health and Safety at Work Act 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 if they are employed.

4.3 Public Sector Equality Duty (England)

Public Sector Equality Duty (England) was created by the Equality Act. The duty places a legal obligation on the Trust to consider how it can positively contribute to a fairer society through paying due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between people who share a ‘protected characteristic’ and those who do not.

This includes:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES AND ROLES

The Learning Academies Trust aims to create an environment where individuals feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for support and adjustments at work. The Trust is committed to ensuring that conditions in the workplace do not make menopausal symptoms worse and that appropriate adjustments and support are put in place.

5.1 The governing body

The governing body has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the school but will delegate day-to-day responsibility to the headteacher of each school.

The governing body 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 Learning Academies Trust, 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.

5.2 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. (Request a Menopause risk assessment template from hr@learningat.uk).
- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations.
- Providing resources and training opportunities to make sure that all line managers and HR staff are aware of the menopause, its potential impact on work, and what adjustments may be necessary.
- Promoting information about and access to external support services
- Ensuring good ventilation and air quality throughout the, 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.

Senior staff will work to create a culture in the school where staff can talk openly about the menopause by:

- Providing information on the menopause in the staff room, e.g., posters and leaflets.
- Providing training for staff and managers to achieve consistent practice.

5.3 Role of line managers

Line managers who work with staff who may be affected by the menopause will:

- Provide a non-judgmental, empathetic, and confidential support system to staff.
- Appreciate the personal nature of any conversations about the menopause and treat them confidentially and sensitively.
- Make reasonable adjustments and consider individual needs when monitoring sickness absence, and adjust attendance targets accordingly. Hold support meetings with staff if any patterns emerge.
- Record menopause-related absences as an 'ongoing health issue' instead of as an individual short-term absence to avoid triggering sickness absence procedures.
- 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.
- Be sensitive to health issues such as the menopause during the performance management/appraisal process.
- If necessary, possible referral to occupational health for further support (seek advice from HR)

5.4 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.
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let their line manager or another trusted member of staff, know if the menopause is having an impact on their work.
- Make time in their schedule to visit their GP or to access other support services.

5.5 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.

In some circumstances it may be more appropriate for such issues to be discussed and addressed with a female line manager.

6. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

Learning Academies Trust will review the practical application of this policy annually or when the need arises due to exceptional circumstances, organisational change or relevant changes in legislation or guidance.

This policy is reviewed as required by the HR Lead in consultation with the Trust Board and recognised Trade Unions.

Learning Academies Trust will monitor the policy's effectiveness, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Trust Board for further discussion and endorsement.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

If you would like further information about the menopause, you may wish to look at the following websites, using the links provided below.

[NHS Menopause Guidance](#)

Provides an overview, together with information about menopausal symptoms and treatment options.

[TUC](#)

The TUC has produced a toolkit for trade unionists looking at the issue of The Menopause in the Workplace.

[Menopause Matters](#)

An independent website which gives up-to-date information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options.

[The Menopause Matters Forum](#)

Provides the opportunity to chat to other women experiencing the same problems and concerns.

[British Menopause Society](#)

The BMS provides education, information and guidance to healthcare professionals specialising in all aspects of reproductive health.

[Women's Health Concern \(WHC\)](#)

WHC is the patient arm of the British Menopause Society and provides factsheets about the menopause, linked articles (e.g., about experiencing a healthy menopause), FAQs and recommended further reading.

[Manage My Menopause](#)

A not-for-profit organisation providing tailored menopausal advice about post reproductive health.

[Women's Experience of Working Through the Menopause, December 2010](#)

British Occupational Health Research Foundation. A report of research commissioned by the British Occupational Health Research Foundation, to explore women's experience of working through the menopause.

[UNISON guidance on the menopause](#)

Unison has created a menopause guide in order to enable meaningful workplace support for anyone experiencing the menopause.

[Government Report 2017](#)

A government commissioned research report detailing 'The effects of menopause transition on women's economic participation in the UK'.

[NICE Guidelines](#)

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence provides governance information, up-to-date policies, procedures and publications on the Menopause.

[Menopause - Sources of information \(plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk\)](#)

Menopause support page provides information, advice, tools, and resources to support you throughout your menopause journey, and to help you make informed choices and get the right help.

[Home | Menopause Hub - Expert information, useful resources, top tips and women's stories \(henpicked.net\)](#)

Henpicked Menopause Hub provides a wide range of menopause advice and information to help woman make informed decisions.

[Plymouth Menopause Network – Mayflower Medical Group](#)

Provides woman the opportunity to connect to other women experiencing menopausal symptoms.

[#KnowYourMenopause Poster Campaign \(pausitivity.co.uk\)](#)

National campaign empowering woman in menopause

8. APPENDIX

Menopause Risk Assessment Template

Please note that this is a template of a person-centred risk assessment. This risk assessment should be completed by the line manager in collaboration with the individual.

Employee Name:	Date assessed:	Review date:
Department:	Assessed by:	

What are the hazards?	Considerations	Yes/no	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom	Action by when	Date achieved
Information on menopause	Does the employee have access to information such as a menopause policy, attendance management, Occupational Health (OH), etc.?					
Sickness reporting	Is there the facility for those who are not able to attend work due to menopausal symptoms to report these to a female manager or other point of contact?					
Stress	Are there appropriate mechanisms in place to deal with other related issues					

	such as stress management (e.g. counselling services, HSE Stress Management Standards)?					
OH arrangements	Has the employee been made aware of what facilities are in place for OH referral and support to remain in the workplace? Do they need a referral?					
Physical						
Work stations	Do work stations provide easy access to toilet and rest facilities?					
Facilities	Are there private washing and changing facilities available?					
	Is there access to sanitary products?					

	Do schedules ensure that workers have easy access to sanitary and washing facilities?					
Temperature	Is ventilation available and is it regularly maintained?					
	Has additional ventilation (e.g. desk fan, ability to open / sit by a window) been provided if necessary?					
Environment/ duties	Have workstation risk assessments been reviewed to take menopause into account?					
	Are there flexible arrangements in place in relation to breaks?					
	Can start and finish times be adjusted as part of a flexible working agreement?					
	Is the role suitable for agile working?					

	If not, why not?					
	Is there access to natural light?					
	Have work processes been assessed to see if any adjustments are needed?					
	Are air conditioning units / humidifiers functioning efficiently?					
	Is the environment too noisy?					
The following questions should be asked to the employee:						
	Does the role impact on fatigue (mental and physical)?					
	Are you able to assess, monitor and respond to frequent changes in job demands?					
	Are you able to concentrate to undertake complex pieces of					

	work?					
	Do you have sufficient workspace?					
	Are you able to move freely, adjust posture, etc.?					
	Do you undertake remote working?					
	Could remote working support you to perform effectively in your role (e.g. ad-hoc homeworking policy)?					
	Do you work ad-hoc / regular overtime / on call?					
	How do you travel to work? Do you drive for business purposes?					
Other risks/issues Please identify						

What are the hazards?	Considerations	Who might be harmed and how, including level of risk?	What is already being done?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom	Action by when	Date achieved

PLEASE NOTE: The list above is not exhaustive. There may be other issues that are highlighted which should be considered when agreeing reasonable adjustments.

This document is **a living document** and should be retained by the individual for as long as is necessary. During meetings between the individual and line manager, this document should be updated to reflect the current situation. Once it is no longer required, please send to HR, who will add it to the employee's personnel file.

CONFIRMATION OF COMPLETION OF REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS IDENTIFIED

<p>Details of adjustments agreed:</p>

Details of adjustments not approved (including reasons for the decision):

Date of annual review meeting:

(Note: This review can be cancelled if the employee decides the meeting is not required)

I confirm that the meeting was undertaken with on and that any agreed adjustments listed above will be carried out.

Signed: _____ (Line Manager) Print name: _____

Signed: _____ (Employee) Print name: _____