



Menopause Policy

Adopted by Trustees: October 2022

Next Review Date: October 2024

Person responsible for overseeing the implementation: TBC

Chair of Trustees signature: *C. L. Chevassut*

Introduction:

It is estimated that 75 – 80% of women are in the workplace, meaning that the menopause (and perimenopause) is something that will affect large numbers of women at work. It is therefore imperative that workplaces have a robust policy regarding the issues that women experiencing the menopause face, in order to provide appropriate support. Experiences of the menopause may well differ greatly for different people, dependent on a number of factors (e.g. sexual orientation, race, religion, age, disability). Workplaces must be aware of the general impact of the menopause, and also the range / scale of potential experiences. There is no 'one size fits all' approach, but individuals should be able to discuss their situation and experiences in a supportive environment, with the expectation of receiving proactive and respectful support.

Within the broad aim of providing a supportive and inclusive workplace, Southam College recognises that women may need additional support and adjustments before (perimenopause), during and after the menopause.

Aims:

- To create an environment where women staff members feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for support and adjustments at work.
- To ensure that conditions in the workplace do not make menopausal symptoms worse and that appropriate adjustments and support are put in place, recognising that the menopause and perimenopause is an individual experience and therefore there is no 'one size fits all' solution.
- To reduce sickness absence due to menopausal symptoms and retain valued staff in the workplace.

Legal context:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to undertake general risk assessments which should include specific risks to menopausal women.
- The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people on the grounds of certain 'protected characteristics' including sex, age and disability. Conditions linked to the menopause may meet the definition of an 'impairment' under the Equality Act and require reasonable adjustments.

Responsibilities:

Senior / Middle leaders (as line managers)	All staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there are people available to discuss the impact of the menopause, recognising that an individual may not feel comfortable speaking with their direct line manager for a range of reasons. • Work to develop positive relationships with staff to allow for open and honest conversations regarding the impact of the menopause. • Be educated on the symptoms of the menopause and the impact these could have on work life / capacity. • Listen and respond sympathetically to requests for adjustments / considerations. • Agree any appropriate adjustments, ensure these are implemented and follow up the impact of these. • Review any action plan and amend as needed. • Should any action plan not be effective, or a staff member's experience is particularly severe, refer as appropriate to Occupational Health (who would consider a holistic approach to work environment & overall condition, and signpost relevant support as necessary e.g. GP or Schools Advisory Service). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of own health and seek support regarding the menopause as appropriate. • Be open and honest about symptoms and the impact of menopause. (e.g. with line managers / HR / Occupational Health) • Contribute to a positive and supportive working environment, inclusive of the (often changing) needs of different people experiencing the menopause. • Be educated on the symptoms of the menopause and the impact these could have on work life / capacity. • Be accepting and supportive of any adjustments that may be in place for colleagues experiencing menopause symptoms.

Possible actions / adjustments:

- Ensure an appropriate contact is available should a staff member not feel comfortable talking with their line manager (e.g. they are male / younger).
- Relevant risk assessments will take into account the potential impact on women experiencing the menopause, e.g. temperature and ventilation, or welfare issues.
- Ensure that working environments do not contribute to making symptoms worse, e.g.
 - Providing fans
 - Ensuring windows can be opened safely and rooms well ventilated to allow for regulation of temperature
 - Establish a system to allow for use of the toilet / washing facilities as needed, especially to deal with heavy and / or recurring bleeding
- Consider requests for changes to working patterns, e.g. temporary part-time working

- Education of staff, especially line managers, e.g. a specialist nurse visit / circulation of training materials
- Support training for line managers regarding supporting staff through highly personal, and possibly complex, circumstances

Sources of information:

neu.org.uk/menopause

NASUWT menopause policy example