ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

MANAGING MENOPAUSE IN THE WORKPLACE – INFORMATION FOR MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES (SCHOOLS)

Covers:

* Description of symptoms
* Support available
* Sources of further information

1. Introduction

1.1 The school is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here. Our workforce consists of ??% women, ??% of whom are age 40 or over and with an average age of ??. We recognise that women experiencing the menopause, whether before, during or after this time of hormonal change and associated symptoms, may need support in the workplace. We also recognise that that the menopausal symptoms can also affect transgender people including non-binary people.

1.2 We are committed to developing a workplace culture that supports those experiencing the menopause in order for them to feel confident to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for support.

1.3 We recognise that the menopause is a highly sensitive issue and that many will feel uncomfortable talking about it within the workplace, with their manager and with colleagues. However, we want to break down those barriers and create an environment where individuals feel they are able to talk freely about this issue and ask for support and understanding from their manager and colleagues.

1. Aims
   1. The aim of this document is to:

* Raise managers’ awareness and understanding of the impact that the menopause can have, and how they can support those experiencing the menopause.
* Foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably instigate conversations or engage in discussions about the menopause in a respectful and supportive manner.
* Raise wider awareness and understanding among all employees about the menopause.
* Enable employees experiencing the menopause to continue to be effective in their jobs.
* Outline the support available.

1. Symptoms
   1. The menopause is a natural event in all women's lives during which they stop having periods and experience hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels. It usually occurs between the ages of 45

and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. However, each woman's experience will differ, and menopausal symptoms can occasionally begin before the age of 40. Perimenopause, or menopause transition begins several years before menopause.

* 1. Menopausal symptoms may include:
  + Headaches including migraines
  + Struggling to remember things, concentrate and focus
  + Feeling tired and lacking energy
  + Feeling anxious and panic attacks
  + Mood swings
  + Hot flushes
  + Difficulty sleeping and night sweats
  + Sudden flooding episodes
  + [More symptoms of the Menopause](https://www.theramex.com/signs-and-symptoms-of-the-menopause/)

# Support for employees experiencing the menopause

* 1. The aim of this document is to provide managers and employees with appropriate information so that they are better able to understand the effects of the menopause and be comfortable about discussing and addressing the impact that it can have on employees in carrying out their roles.
  2. It is recognised that some employees experiencing the menopause may find that related symptoms impact on their health and wellbeing, and we aim to provide as much support as is reasonably practicable for individuals. The menopause is a very personal experience and therefore different levels and types of support and adjustments may be needed.
  3. Employees experiencing the menopause are encouraged to let their line manager know if they are struggling with symptoms that may impact on their work, so that support can be identified. Such information will be treated confidentially and sensitively and in accordance with the data protection policy.

4.4 Some individuals may not feel comfortable discussing menopause symptoms with their line manager. Confidential support is available from the Employee Assistance Programme, Lifestyle Support, supplied by Care First, on 0808 1682143.

* + 1. Managers can support employees in the following ways:
* Ensuring that all employees are aware of this document.
* Be ready and willing to have open discussions about the

menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treat the discussion sensitively, confidentially and professionally.

* Encourage them to access the support available to them via their GP, support groups and Care First.
* Consider all requests for support sympathetically, confidentially and in accordance with the data protection policy and not discriminate against those employees who are experiencing the menopause.
* Undertake a risk assessment and consider if any reasonable adjustments to working arrangements can be accommodated to assist the employee with managing their menopause related issues.
* Treat all employees fairly and consistently. Employees need to be confident that they will not be treated less favourably if they take up any support available to employees experiencing the menopause.
* Take seriously and investigate any complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation, using the agreed procedures and respecting confidentiality.
* Support employees in informing their colleagues about the situation if appropriate.

## 5. What can employees do?

5.1 We all have a personal responsibility to look after our own health and welfare. We recognise that menopause can be a taboo issue, however we want to change attitudes, so that those experiencing the negative impacts of the menopause feel able to talk about it and get the support they need to manage their symptoms.

* Employees are encouraged to discuss their situation with their manager if they are struggling with menopausal symptoms and need any support, so that they can continue to be effective in their jobs.
* Employees experiencing the menopause are encouraged to seek support through their GP, the employee assistance programme (Care First 0808 1682143) or other external organisations (see further information section).

## 6. Further information

6.1 The following are some sources of further information:

## <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>

## <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/menopause_at_work.php>

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

## <https://megsmenopause.com/>

* <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/world-menopause-day/>
* [Women's Health Concern | Confidential Advice, Reassurance and Education (womens-health-concern.org)](https://www.womens-health-concern.org/)
* [Balance - Balance app (balance-menopause.com)](https://www.balance-menopause.com/balance-app/)
  + [Health & Her | The Leading Perimenopause & Menopause Expert Website (healthandher.com)](https://healthandher.com/)
  + [The Menopause Charity - Menopause Facts, Advice and Support](https://www.themenopausecharity.org/)
  + [Menopause Support](https://www.overthebloodymoon.com/)