

# The Mary Bassett Lower School

## Menopause Policy



Approved by: The Governing Body

November 2023

Last reviewed on:

To be reviewed on: December 2024

## 1. About this policy

- 1.1. We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone, and that includes supporting staff affected by menopause. We recognise that many members of staff will experience menopause and that, for some, menopause will have an adverse impact on their working lives.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to:
  - 1.2.1. raise awareness of menopause and its impact in the workplace;
  - 1.2.2. encourage open conversations between line managers and staff; and
  - 1.2.3. direct staff to relevant advice and assistance.
- 1.3. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or another contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.
- 1.4. Any information you provide to us about your health will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. We recognise that this data is sensitive and will handle it in a confidential manner.

## 2. Who does this policy apply to?

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and interns.

## 3. Who is responsible for this policy?

- 3.1. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 3.2. You should refer any questions you may have about the day-to-day application of this policy to the headteacher in the first instance.
- 3.3. This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher.

## 4. What is menopause?

- 4.1. Menopause is a natural stage of life when a woman's oestrogen levels decline. All women will experience menopause at some point during their life. Menopause can also impact trans and non-binary people who may not identify as female.
- 4.2. Most of those who experience menopause will do so between the ages of 45 and 55. However, some start experiencing symptoms much earlier. This is known as premature ovarian insufficiency or 'premature menopause'. Often there is no clear cause for the early onset of menopause, but it can be a result of surgery (e.g. hysterectomy), illness or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy). Typically, symptoms last between four to eight years, but they can continue for longer.
- 4.3. Symptoms can include but are not limited to sleeplessness, hot flushes, memory loss or poor concentration, loss of confidence, headaches, muscle and joint pains,

depression and anxiety, recurrent urinary tract infections, heavy periods and skin changes. Each of these symptoms can affect comfort and performance at work.

- 4.4. The majority of those going through menopause will experience some symptoms, although everyone is different, and symptoms vary significantly and can also fluctuate.
- 4.5. Menopause is preceded by perimenopause, during which the body prepares itself for menopause. Perimenopause can also last several years and can involve similar symptoms to menopause itself. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to menopause includes perimenopause.

## 5. Open conversations

- 5.1. Menopause is not just an issue for women. All staff should be aware of menopause so that they can support those experiencing it or otherwise affected by it.
- 5.2. We encourage an environment in which colleagues can have open conversations about menopause. We expect all staff to be supportive of colleagues who may be affected by menopause in the workplace.
- 5.3. Anyone affected by menopause should feel confident to talk to their line manager **OR** the headteacher about their symptoms and the support they may need to reduce the difficulties menopause can cause them at work.
- 5.4. Line managers and the headteacher should be ready to have open conversations with staff about menopause and what support is available. These conversations should be treated sensitively, and any information provided should be handled confidentially and in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

## 6. Risk assessments

- 6.1. We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all our staff and will consider any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopausal symptoms. This may include identifying and addressing specific risks to the health and well-being of those experiencing menopause.

## 7. Support and adjustments

- 7.1. While many who experience menopause are able to carry on their working lives as normal, we recognise that others may benefit from adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopause symptoms on their work.
- 7.2. If you believe that you would benefit from adjustments or other support, you should speak to your line manager in the first instance. If you feel unable to do so, you should contact the headteacher.
- 7.3. Physical adjustments could include temperature control, provision of electric fans or access to rest facilities. Depending on individual and business needs, adjustments

such as flexible working may be considered. We may also consider more frequent rest breaks or changes to work allocation. These are examples only and not an exhaustive list.

7.4. We may refer you to Occupational Health or seek medical advice from your GP to better understand any adjustments and other support that may help alleviate symptoms affecting you at work. Any request for a medical report or examination will be dealt with as set out in our Sickness Absence Policy.

7.5. If you need additional support, you can access it here <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk> You also have access to our confidential employee support helpline SAS all details are available in the staffroom on the notice board, they offer specific for support for the menopause.