

Eastwood Park Academy Trust (EPAT)

EPAT

Believe Succeed Together

Menopause Policy

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Definitions

Term	Description
Menopause	When a woman stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. This usually occurs when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, however, it can be earlier or later due to surgery, illness or other reasons.
Perimenopause	A time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before the menopause.
Early menopause	When a woman stops menstruating before the age of 45. It can happen naturally or as a side effect of some treatments.
Post menopause	The time beyond menopause.

For the purpose of this policy, any reference to the menopause will encompass perimenopause and early menopause.

1.2 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, loss of confidence, anxiety, panic attacks and depression.
- Headaches and joint and muscle pain.
- Weakened bladder function and urinary tract infections.
- Problems with memory and concentration.

2.0 Legislation and Guidance

Under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#), employers have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#) require that employers make an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees. This requires undertaking general risk assessments, which should include specific risks to the health of staff affected by the menopause.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include age, sex and disability. Employers are under a statutory duty to consider whether any 'reasonable adjustments' are required to alleviate any disadvantages staff encounter based on these characteristics.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters but delegates day-to-day responsibility to the Principal of the constituent academy.

3.2 Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for health and safety matters in respect to their academy but delegates day-to-day responsibility to a Senior Leader.

3.3 Senior Leader

The role of the Senior Leader is to oversee the support provided to individuals affected by the menopause and advise the Principal and Trust on strategic and operational policy.

3.4 Support Coordinator

The role of the Support Coordinator is to:

- Help individuals feel comfortable by being non-judgmental, sensitive and empathetic.
- Have regular, informal conversations with individuals who are affected by the menopause to discuss what support they need and implement any reasonable adjustments that are agreed.
- Liaise with the Senior Leader regarding reasonable adjustments; flexible working requests (in order to accommodate acute symptoms); attendance to medical appointments; access to external support services; and, where appropriate, provide information relevant to the annual performance management appraisal process.

4.0 Managing Menopausal Symptoms and Support

Individuals who feel they may be experiencing menopause symptoms, should, in the first instance, consult with their GP. [The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence \(NICE\)](#) guidance provides a helpful guide on managing the menopause and seeking advice and support from a medical professional.

Individuals are encouraged to speak to the Support Coordinator to discuss their symptoms, any issues or just to talk about how they are feeling. Working in a school setting may present challenges in adapting working practice, however, the Support Coordinator may implement a range of adjustments for the individual, for example, (although this is not an exhaustive list): temperature control for their work area; easy access to drinking water; adapted dress code; adjusted work patterns; and access to the [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

Where adjustments are unsuccessful or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the Support Coordinator may, following a discussion with the Senior Leader, refer the individual to Occupational Health.

5.0 Links to other policies

Equality Policy
Flexible Working Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Performance Management Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Sickness Absence Policy
Staff Wellbeing Policy

6.0 Further Information

[Menopause \(NHS\)](#)
[Menopause Matters](#)
[Menopause: Diagnosis and Management](#)
[The Daisy Network Charity](#)
[Menopause in the Workplace](#)