



Children of the World Montessori School

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Menopause Policy

Purpose

Children of the World Montessori School is committed to providing a supportive, inclusive and respectful working environment. We recognise that perimenopause and menopause can affect individuals in different ways and that symptoms may sometimes have an impact on wellbeing and work.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff feel able to discuss menopause-related concerns without embarrassment or fear of less favourable treatment and can access appropriate support where needed.

Understanding menopause

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause, when hormonal changes may cause symptoms and changes to periods. Menopause is reached when an individual has not had a period for 12 months.

Symptoms vary considerably between individuals and may include:

- hot flushes and night sweats;
- sleep difficulties and fatigue;
- headaches or migraines;
- low mood, anxiety or changes in mood;
- difficulty with memory or concentration ("brain fog");
- joint or muscle pain;
- changes to periods, including heavier or irregular bleeding; and
- urinary symptoms.

Symptoms may begin before periods stop and can continue for a number of years.

Our approach

Staff experiencing symptoms that affect them at work are encouraged to speak to the Manager. Any conversation will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

If an employee would feel more comfortable speaking initially to another senior member of staff, they may do so.

No assumptions will be made about an individual's experience or the support they require. Where support or adjustments are agreed, these will be reviewed as necessary because symptoms and needs may change over time.

All staff are expected to contribute to a respectful working environment and to treat colleagues experiencing menopause-related symptoms with dignity and sensitivity.

Workplace support and adjustments

Where appropriate, we will discuss reasonable and practical adjustments with the individual. Depending on their needs and the requirements of the setting, these could include:

- access to drinking water and toilet facilities;
- additional short breaks where staffing and ratios allow;

- measures to help manage workplace temperature, such as ventilation, access to a fan or reasonable flexibility in clothing;
- reasonable flexibility around start and finish times where practicable;
- temporary adjustments to duties where appropriate; and
- consideration of time needed for relevant medical appointments.

Any adjustments must be compatible with the safe operation of the setting, safeguarding requirements and statutory staff-to-child ratios.

Where menopause symptoms may meet the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010, the School will comply with its duty to consider reasonable adjustments.

Sickness absence

Menopause-related absence will be handled sensitively. Staff are encouraged to explain when an absence is related to menopause or perimenopause so that appropriate support can be considered.

Where appropriate, menopause-related absence may be recorded separately from general sickness absence to ensure that staff are not unfairly disadvantaged because of their symptoms.

Equality, health and safety

Menopause is not itself a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, unfair treatment related to menopause may amount to discrimination where it relates to a protected characteristic such as age, sex, disability or gender reassignment.

The School will also consider menopause as part of its responsibility to protect employees' health, safety and wellbeing at work. Where an individual's symptoms indicate that workplace conditions may be affecting their health or wellbeing, relevant risks and possible adjustments will be considered.

Further information and support

- NHS - Menopause and perimenopause
- ACAS - Menopause at work

Reviewed and updated: September 2026

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