



The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust

Learning Communities, Inspired by Faith

Trust Menopause Policy 2022

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*This Policy has been consulted on with local Trade Union representatives and has not been fully agreed upon. The Trust commits to local consultation prior to adopting any future changes.

Mission Statement

All policies are written in line with our Trust Mission statement:

With Jesus Christ at the centre of the life of the Trust, we seek to provide learning communities offering the highest possible standards of education. We are committed to working in partnership and trust for the common good. We strive to encourage and empower children and young people to recognise and realise their God-given potential and to discern their vocation in life. As learning communities inspired by faith, we celebrate achievement, offering each other challenge and support, as together we follow Christ in self-giving love and service.



Change Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.2			<i>To add another row, move the mouse to the left hand side of the thin line above and click the (+)</i>
1.1			
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Introduction

Menopause is a normal part of every woman’s life. This policy recognises that the menopause is an equality and occupational health and safety issue and that women may need appropriate flexibility, support and adjustments during the time of change before, during and after the menopause. The Trust has a positive attitude towards the menopause and will treat all individuals with dignity and respect during this time and ensure that the workplace does not make symptoms worse. The Trust is also committed to ensuring that women feel confident in discussing menopausal symptoms openly, without embarrassment, and are able to ask for support and adjustments in order to continue to work safely in the organisation. For this reason, the menopause at work is an issue for everyone.



1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Make sure that our Trust can support staff affected by the menopause and help them to feel comfortable at work, both when experiencing symptoms and when asking for support and adjustments
- Set out how our Trust will make reasonable adjustments to minimise the risk of the working environment making menopausal symptoms worse for those experiencing them
- Minimise menopause-related stigma in our Trust by educating staff on what it is and the symptoms that staff affected by it might suffer
- Provide further resources to help staff, particularly line managers and HR teams, to support others through difficulties the menopause may cause them

2. Definitions

The **menopause** is a stage of life when a woman* stops having periods. It typically affects those aged between 45 and 55, when oestrogen (female sex hormones) levels begin to fall. In the UK, the average age to reach the menopause is 51.

Perimenopause is the time of hormonal change leading up to this, when a woman may experience symptoms. **Post-menopause** is the time beyond menopause.

Early menopause is when a woman's periods stop before the age of 45. It can happen naturally, or as a side effect of some treatments.

For the purpose of this policy, any reference to the menopause shall include perimenopause, early menopause and post menopause.

*We acknowledge that while the majority of people affected by the menopause will be women, those who are trans or non-binary may also experience the menopause or menopause-type symptoms. The support outlined in this policy is designed to meet the above aims for all affected colleagues. Confidentiality of those affected, will be respected at all times should they be concerned about their gender identity being revealed as a result of seeking support for menopausal symptoms.

2.1 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, anxiety and depression
- Headaches and joint and muscle pain
- Weakened bladder function and urinary tract infections



- Vaginal dryness and reduced sex drive
- Erratic and heavy periods which can lead to anaemia
- Problems with memory, confidence and concentration

This list is not exhaustive.

For some individuals, being at work may make their symptoms worse. For example, if the temperature is too high, this may cause symptoms such as hot flushes, dizziness, discomfort, sweating and heart palpitations.

Symptoms affecting sleep can make it difficult for staff experiencing them to concentrate and stay focused, while low confidence, low mood and anxiety may impact on decision-making and relationships with colleagues.

We acknowledge that the menopause will affect everybody differently – some individuals may experience no symptoms at all, and some may experience a variety. We will adapt our response to staff affected by the menopause on a case-by-case basis.

3. 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.

[Section 6](#) of the Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment, **and**
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

Relating specifically to menopause symptoms:

- Many of the aforementioned symptoms would be likely to be classified as a physical and/or mental impairment
- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'Long-term' means an impairment if it has lasted for at least 12 months, is likely to last for at least 12 months, or is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected
- 'Day to day activities' are those carried out by most people on a regular basis, and includes but is not limited to: walking, driving, carrying or moving things, being able to concentrate, writing, reading, typing, speaking



Ongoing symptoms linked to the menopause may meet the definition of a disability and where they do, employers will be required to consider whether any reasonable adjustments are required to alleviate any disadvantage.

Any such adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis and, where appropriate, staff affected by the menopause will be offered a variety of approaches to support them.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the school, but will delegate day-to-day responsibility to the Headteacher for schools and the CEO for the Trust.

The governing board has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff are not exposed to risks to their health and safety on the school/Trust premises.

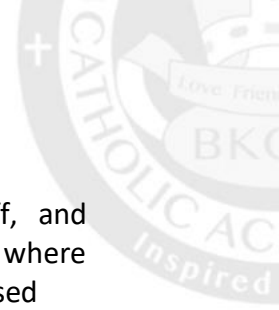
The Trust, as the employer, also has a duty to:

- Assess the risks to staff and others affected by daily activities in order to identify and introduce the health and safety measures necessary to manage those risks
- Inform employees about risks and the measures in place to manage them
- Make sure that adequate health and safety training is provided

4.2 Role of senior staff

Senior staff will make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to support staff experiencing the menopause, and to make sure the workplace doesn't make their symptoms worse, by:

- Carrying out individual risk assessments to assess working conditions in line with the specific needs of staff affected by the menopause
- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff through regular surveys and structured conversations
- Providing resources and training opportunities to make sure that all line managers and HR staff are aware of the menopause, its potential impact on work, and what adjustments may be necessary
- Promoting information about and access to external support services
- Ensuring good ventilation and air quality throughout the premises, leaving doors open where appropriate and ensuring windows can be safely opened
- Ensuring regular access to cold drinking water for all staff
- Regulating and monitoring the temperature of the premises and collecting feedback from staff, as well as ensuring the temperature can be regulated per room by turning down radiators for example



- Ensuring toilet, washing and sanitary facilities are accessible for staff, and establishing a system that allows for cover for staff to access these facilities where necessary, with secure storage in a private area where supplies can be accessed
- Providing small desk fans to help staff cool down
- Fitting blinds to windows
- Designating a member of staff such as a wellbeing champion that staff affected by the menopause can speak to about their symptoms in confidence, if they do not feel comfortable doing so with their line manager
- After discussion with the individual, allowing affected employees to adapt their work attire to suit the situation, whilst maintaining acceptable standards of dress

Senior staff will work to create a culture where staff can talk openly about the menopause by:

- Providing information on the menopause in the staff room/staff kitchen/washrooms, e.g. posters and leaflets
- Creating a support group so that those who want to can seek support from each other
- Providing training for staff and managers to achieve consistent practice
- Referring to the menopause in the Trust's Wellbeing Policy (WIP) which can be found on Sharepoint
- Considering the use of an occupational health appointment, by referral through the line manager with consent from the employee or other support service such as Catholic Care which can be accessed by calling 0113 2885400 or at info@catholic-care.org. (Further information regarding an Occupational Health referral can be found in the Trust Sickness Absence Policy on Sharepoint.)

4.3 Role of line managers

Line managers who work with staff who may be affected by the menopause will:

- Provide a non-judgemental, empathetic and confidential support system to staff
- Appreciate the personal nature of any conversations about the menopause and treat them confidentially and sensitively as per the Trust's GDPR Policy and legislation which can be found on Sharepoint.
- Monitor sickness absence, and have support meetings with staff if any patterns emerge
- Have regular, informal conversations with staff that they line manage who are affected by the menopause to discuss what support they need, and record any reasonable adjustments that are agreed
- Consider flexible working requests in order to accommodate acute symptoms. (Please refer to the Trust's Flexible Working Policy on Sharepoint.)



- Allow staff affected by the menopause to take regular breaks from their work if necessary to help manage symptoms
- Give swift permission for absence to attend medical appointments (see the Wakefield Scheme of Absence, 3.4 Medical/Dental Appointments)
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Record menopause-related absences as an 'ongoing health issue' instead of as an individual short-term absence to avoid triggering sickness absence procedures
- Be sensitive to health issues such as the menopause during the performance management/appraisal process
- If necessary, seek advice from HR, or discuss a referral with the staff member to occupational health for further support

4.4 Role of staff members affected by the menopause

We encourage staff who are experiencing menopausal symptoms that are impacting their health and wellbeing at work to:

- Share their practical needs to reduce the difficulties the menopause can cause and their preferred coping strategies with their line manager and/or HR
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let their line manager or another trusted member of staff, such as a member of the senior leadership team in charge of wellbeing, know if the menopause is having an impact on them
- Make time in their schedule to visit their GP and other support services (see the Wakefield Scheme of Absence, 3.4 Medical/Dental Appointments)
- Access any further support offered

4.5 Role of all staff

All staff are expected and supported to:

- Promote health and wellbeing for themselves and others at all times
- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Support other members of staff, for example, by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Accept and support any adjustments that staff affected by the menopause may be receiving as a result of their symptoms
- Report honestly about their wellbeing to their line manager or to another trusted member of staff, such as a member of the senior leadership team in charge of wellbeing

5. Further resources

Here are some further resources to help staff and line managers understand and provide support for staff affected by the menopause in the Trust.



- [Menopause](#) (NHS)
- [Menopause Matters](#)
- [Menopause: diagnosis and management](#) (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)
- The [Daisy Network](#) charity
- [Menopause in the Workplace](#)
- [Menopause resources](#) from the CIPD, particularly for:
 - [Line managers](#)
 - [HR staff](#)
- <https://www.pausitivity.co.uk/>

6. Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

The Trust shall be responsible for reviewing this policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

7. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Equality Policy
- The Academy's Dress Code
- Wellbeing Policy (WIP)

All the above policies can be found on Sharepoint except the Academy's Dress Code which is available at the Academy.

The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust is an exempt charity regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. It is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, company number 08253770, whose registered office is at St Wilfrid's Catholic Secondary School & 6th Form College, Cutsyke Road, Featherstone, Wakefield, WF7 6BD.