

Menopause Policy

Trinity St Mary's CE Primary

2026-2027



'Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you'

Ephesians 4:32



Originally adapted from the NEU Model Policy (October 2022).

Reviewed and updated August 2026.

1. Introduction

1.1 Menopause is a natural stage of life. Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause, when symptoms may begin, and post menopause is the period after menopause. Experiences vary considerably: symptoms may be physical and/or psychological, may be mild or severe, and may change over time.

1.2 Trinity St Mary's CE Primary is committed to a supportive, inclusive and respectful working environment in which employees affected by menopause can discuss the impact of symptoms without embarrassment or stigma and can seek appropriate support.

1.3 Although menopause is experienced by most women, it can also affect some trans men, non-binary people and people with variations in sex characteristics. This policy therefore applies to any employee experiencing menopause-related symptoms. Colleagues and managers of all genders have a role in creating an informed and supportive workplace.

2. Legal and national guidance framework

2.1 Health and safety. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the employer must protect employees' health, safety and welfare and assess workplace risks. Where menopause symptoms are affecting an employee, risk assessment should consider the person's role, working environment and individual needs, including temperature and ventilation, access to drinking water and toilets, rest breaks, uniform or clothing requirements, workload and working arrangements.

2.2 Equality. Menopause is not itself a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, unfavourable treatment connected with menopause symptoms may amount to discrimination, harassment or victimisation where it relates to a protected characteristic, particularly sex, age or disability. Where the effects of menopause symptoms meet the legal definition of disability, the employer has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

2.3 Flexible working. Employees may make a statutory request for flexible working from the first day of employment. Requests connected with menopause will be considered fairly and in accordance with the school's flexible working arrangements and applicable employment law.

2.4 2026 government guidance. The Office for Equality and Opportunity published evidence-informed menopause workplace actions in March 2026. These include reviewing policies, carrying out menopause risk assessments, providing workplace adjustments and access to occupational health advice. Employers with 250 or more employees can publish a voluntary gender pay gap and menopause action plan for the 2026–27 reporting year; subject to legislation, action plans are expected to become mandatory from spring 2027. The school or its employing body will comply with any requirements that apply to it.

3. Status and scope

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of Trinity St Mary's CE Primary. It should be read alongside the school's health and safety, equality, sickness absence, wellbeing, flexible working and dignity at work/anti-harassment arrangements.

3.2 The policy provides a framework for supportive conversations and individual adjustments. It does not replace medical advice, occupational health advice or the employer's legal duties.

3.3 Any substantive changes to this policy will be consulted on in accordance with the school's governance arrangements and, where applicable, with recognised trade unions.

4. Aims

-  To create a culture in which employees feel able to raise menopause-related concerns and seek support.
-  To recognise that perimenopause, menopause and post menopause are individual experiences and that there is no one-size-fits-all response.
-  To prevent workplace conditions or practices from unnecessarily worsening symptoms and to identify appropriate adjustments promptly.
-  To support attendance, wellbeing, dignity, performance and retention while avoiding discrimination or disadvantage.
-  To ensure managers understand their responsibilities and know when to seek HR, occupational health or other specialist advice.

5. Support and responsibilities

5.1 Managers will be expected to approach menopause sensitively, listen without assumptions, maintain appropriate confidentiality, understand the support available and arrange follow-up conversations where adjustments have been agreed.

5.2 An employee may speak to their line manager or, if they would prefer not to do so, to an appropriate alternative contact identified by the school, such as the Headteacher, another senior leader or the school's HR contact. Employees may also seek support from their trade union representative.

5.3 Information about an employee's health will be handled sensitively and only shared where there is a legitimate need to do so, normally with the employee's knowledge, subject to the school's data-protection obligations and any overriding legal or safeguarding requirement.

5.4 Managers should not make assumptions about the cause, severity or likely duration of symptoms. Employees are encouraged to explain how work is being affected and what support might help. A medical diagnosis is not required before a supportive conversation can take place.

6. Risk assessment and workplace adjustments

6.1 Where appropriate, the school will carry out or review a risk assessment with the employee. The assessment will focus on workplace factors that may exacerbate symptoms and practical measures that may reduce those effects. Adjustments will be tailored to the individual and reviewed as needs change.

6.2 Depending on the employee's role and needs, measures may include:

-  improving access to ventilation, fans, cooler work areas or other reasonable temperature controls;
-  ensuring ready access to drinking water, toilets and washing facilities, including arrangements for classroom cover where necessary;
-  allowing additional or flexible rest breaks where practicable;

- + providing access to a private rest area where practicable;
- + considering temporary changes to duties, workload, location, start/finish times or other working arrangements;
- + considering flexible working requests in line with the school's policy and statutory requirements;
- + considering clothing or uniform adjustments where relevant;
- + providing ergonomic equipment or other appropriate workplace equipment;
- + facilitating access to occupational health or other specialist workplace advice where available;
- + allowing reasonable arrangements for menopause-related medical appointments in accordance with the school's applicable leave arrangements.

6.3 This list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. An adjustment that is appropriate for one person may not be appropriate for another. Where symptoms may amount to a disability, the school will consider its statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments.

6.4 Agreed adjustments should normally be recorded in writing, with the employee's agreement, and reviewed at suitable intervals because symptoms and needs can change through different stages of menopause.

7. Sickness absence, attendance and performance

7.1 Menopause-related absence will be handled sensitively. Managers should consider whether menopause symptoms are contributing to absence, attendance concerns or changes in performance before formal action is considered and should explore appropriate support and adjustments.

7.2 Where the school's systems permit, menopause-related sickness absence should be identifiable so that managers can consider it appropriately and avoid discriminatory treatment. Any recording will comply with data-protection requirements and the school's sickness absence procedures.

7.3 The school will not subject an employee to detriment because they have raised menopause-related concerns, requested support or exercised rights under equality, health and safety or employment law.

8. Awareness and training

8.1 The school will promote appropriate awareness of menopause as a workplace health, wellbeing and equality matter. Managers should receive sufficient information or training to hold sensitive conversations, recognise potential workplace impacts, understand relevant legal duties and know how to access further support.

8.2 Menopause awareness should be inclusive. It should recognise that symptoms and experiences differ between individuals and that age, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic circumstances and other factors may affect a person's experience and the support that is effective.

9. Sources of advice and support

- + UK Government, Office for Equality and Opportunity (2026): workplace menopause actions, including policy review, risk assessment, workplace adjustments and occupational health advice.
- + Equality and Human Rights Commission: Menopause in the workplace – guidance for employers (updated June 2026).
- + ACAS: Menopause at work guidance (updated April 2026).
- + NHS: Menopause information and health advice.
- + NEU: Menopause resources and workplace support materials.

10. Review

This policy was reviewed in August 2026 and will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner where there is a significant change in legislation, national guidance or the school's employment arrangements.

Reference links

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-policies-and-procedures-to-meet-the-needs-of-employees-experiencing-menopause>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conduct-a-menopause-risk-assessment-for-your-workplace>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offer-workplace-adjustments-for-employees-experiencing-menopause>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offer-occupational-health-advice-for-employees-experiencing-menopause>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/menopause-workplace-guidance-employers>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work>

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