Westfield Nursery School
Positive Mental Health Policy

Changes May 2026:
-Removed Covid19 reference
-Updated link to latest children's society report
-Updated Miss Heading's role
-Updated review date
-Added well-being washing line and sensory boxes to available support

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Vision
At Westfield Nursery we aim to deliver against our vision 'Inspired beginnings, outstanding futures'.

Definition
Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development. *World Health Organisation 2025*

Why is positive mental health so important?
In 2021, research by the UK government's Health and Safety Executive found teaching staff and education professionals had the highest rates of work-related stress, depression and anxiety in Britain. Research conducted in 2019 has also found that teacher stress has an impact on children's learning in primary schools. https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/carnegie-school-of-education/research/carnegie-centre-of-excellence-for-mental-health-in-schools/school-mental-health-network/-/media/253bcf64213a4a8582a2a0a2be6b1d49.ashx

The Good Childhood Report 2021 shows that modern life continues to erode the happiness of young people. https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/Good%20Childhood%20Report-Main-Report.pdf

Mental Health Spectrum
Anyone of any age, gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, culture, education, economic status, spirituality, sexual orientation can experience mental illness. How 'mentally well' you are lies on a continuum which can fluctuate day by day. It is directly impacted by our environment. Poor mental health or struggling to cope is different from having a mental illness.

Background
Mental health doesn't exist in isolation. Factors affecting mental health can include
-Lifestyle factors e.g. sleep, body image, social media
-School based factors e.g. bullying, stress
-Home based factors e.g. poverty
-Vulnerability e.g. abuse, additional needs

Westfield is aware that some groups needs e.g. LGBTQI+, people with learning disabilities (e.g. ASD) or being a part of a different ethnic minority group can impact on mental health and support.

Protective Factors
Protective factors are things that encourage people to thrive despite adversity. They can provide a buffer – either protecting against development of a mental health concern or helping them to cope better. For example, practical needs being met, healthy, secure

attachment relationships, based on trust, development of positive coping strategies, access to appropriate and timely support and supportive responses from a strong network.

Principles
Westfield Nursery School places a high value on maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all its employees and pupils. We recognise our duty of care extends to mental health as well as physical health at work. We are committed to providing a supportive working environment that maintains and promotes health and well-being.
5 principles:
-Safe
-Hope
-Calm
-Connectiveness
-Efficacy (the ability to produce a desired or intended result)

Aims
-Establish, promote and maintain a culture of consultation, participation and open communication
-Raise the awareness of staff about mental health conditions
-Provide opportunities for employees to maintain and promote their health and well-being
-Manage workplace pressures
-Undertake annual Performance Management reviews with each member of staff to ensure that the work role and tasks match the relevant job descriptions, and to ensure job descriptions are up to date
-Support well-being for staff, children and families

Benefits of Good Well-Being
-Feel more valued
-Better coping strategies
-Reduced absences
-Better productivity/ learning

Types of Mental Health Conditions
See Appendix 1

Well- Being Charter
See Appendix 2

Strategies for supporting positive mental health
See Appendix 3

Roles and Responsibilities
The Governing Body oversee mental well-being. The Headteacher is the senior mental health lead. The well-being Champions are Mrs Collins Headteacher, Miss Heading teacher and staff governor and Mrs Bridges EYPP Champion.

Recruitment and Selection
-The full range of tasks and demands of the job are set out clearly in the job description and person specification and are discussed in the interview process. Areas of potential pressure should be identified
-All references must seek information about candidates' sickness and absence records for the previous two years and must comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act

-For posts where it is recognised that a higher-than-normal level of pressure and stress exists, candidate's tolerance to stress should become a factor in the selection process

Induction
-All employees receive induction into their jobs. Starting a new job can be a stressful time and a planned induction should help eliminate any concerns
-Within the induction programme, well-being policy, charter and support will be discussed
-Staff have probation meetings at one month, three months and six months and staff can discuss any well-being needs at this point to ensure they are getting the right support

Attendance Management
As part of professional review meetings with staff, absences may be discussed with the staff member, and underlying reasons identified

Training and Development
The identification of appropriate training activities should be agreed at the beginning of a new post and reviewed no less than annually in line with the Performance Management Process. Staff's well-being is a part of supervision.

Implementation, Monitoring, Audit and Review
The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring adherence and effectiveness of this policy and for reporting to the Governing Body

Conclusion
This policy will support the understanding of mental health and ways to support this.

Reviewed May 2026

Westfield Nursery School
Appendix 1- Types of Mental Health Conditions

Addictive Behaviours
Reference https://addictionsuk.com/addictive-behaviour/
An addictive behaviour is a behaviour, or a stimulus related to a behaviour, that is both rewarding and reinforcing and is associated with the development of an addiction. People can spend the majority of time engaging in the behaviour, thinking about or arranging to engage in the behaviour, or recovering from the effects, becoming dependent on the behaviour as a way to cope with emotions and to "feel normal". People may continue despite physical and/or mental harm; neglecting work, school, or family to engage in the behaviour more often. People may also minimise or hide the extent of the problem.

Anticipatory Anxiousness
Reference https://www.healthline.com/health/anticipatory-anxiety
Anticipatory anxiety describes fear and worry around bad things that *could* happen. It can happen in a lot of different contexts, but it commonly focuses on things you can't predict or control.

Anxiety Disorders
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder/
Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe.
Everyone has feelings of anxiety at some point in their life. E.g. in relation to a medical test or job interview. During times like these, feeling anxious can be perfectly normal.
But some people find it hard to control their worries. Their feelings of anxiety are more constant and can often affect their daily lives.
Anxiety is the main symptom of several conditions, including:
-panic disorder
-phobias
-post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
-social anxiety disorder (social phobia)
-generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)

Identifying the signs:
There can be physical and emotional symptoms which could include headaches, stomach aches or just feeling unwell, dizziness, faintness, breathlessness, sweating, not sleeping or eating properly, being tearful, having difficulty concentrating and lashing out at others.

Bi-polar
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Bipolar-disorder/
People with bipolar disorder have episodes of:
-depression – feeling very low and lethargic
-mania – feeling very high and overactive

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/body-dysmorphia/
Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), or body dysmorphia, where a person spends a lot of time worrying about flaws in their appearance, these flaws are often unnoticeable to others.

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/borderline-personality-disorder/
Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is a disorder of mood and how a person interacts with others**.** A sufferer will differ significantly from an average person in terms of how he or she thinks, perceives, feels or relates to others.

Challenging Behaviour
Persistently behaving in a challenging way is often how people communicate that something is wrong - or is a sign that they may be in distress. Some people get stuck in patterns of challenging behaviour and struggle to develop strategies they can use to feel calmer.

Depression
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/clinical-depression/
Most people go through periods of feeling down, but when you're depressed you feel persistently sad for weeks or months, rather than just a few days. Symptoms vary widely for example lasting feelings of unhappiness and hopelessness, to losing interest in the things you used to enjoy and feeling very tearful.

Identifying the Signs: being moody and irritable, not being interested in things they used to enjoy, not wanting to go out, feeling tired or exhausted, becoming withdrawn and isolating self from others, feeling unhappy and miserable or becoming tearful, sleep problems or sleeping a lot, changes in appetite, being self-critical, feeling hopeless and/or worthless.

Eating Disorders
Reference https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/eating-disorders/
An eating disorder is when you have an unhealthy attitude to food, which can take over your life and make you ill. It can involve eating too much or too little or becoming obsessed with your weight and body shape.

There are three main types of eating disorder: Anorexia nervosa (known as anorexia), bulimia nervosa (known as bulimia) and binge eating disorder.

Identifying the signs:
Often skips meals or says they have eaten earlier or eaten later when asked, avoids eating around other people, eats very slowly, regularly goes to the bathroom soon after eating, becomes socially withdrawn and isolated, physical signs including thinning hair, dry skin, wearing baggy clothing, of often complaining of being cold.

Prolonged Grief Disorder
A persistent and pervasive longing for, or preoccupation with, the deceased that lasts at least six months after loss.

Secondary Trauma
The stress caused by helping or wanting to help a traumatised or suffering person. Secondary trauma symptoms are similar to those experienced by the helped person. (Figley, 1995)

Identifying the signs:
Feeling… overwhelmed, useless and unskilled, jumpy or on edge, like the world is no longer safe, numb or disconnected, helplessness, anger or despair
Experiencing… mental pictures or intrusive thoughts relating to the event(s), disturbed sleep or niggling physical complaints, changes to working, eating or drinking habits, having no energy for self or for others.

Self-Harm
Self-harm is when a person intentionally damages or hurts their body. It can become addictive because of the natural pain-relieving endorphins that are released when people hurt themselves, which can give a temporary sense of relief. Each person's relationship

with self-harm is complex and different. It often happens during times of anger, distress, fear, anxiety, loss or depression.

Stress

Reference https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-stress/
The Health and Safety Executive has defined stress as 'the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. It arises when they worry, they can no longer cope'. (1999) *(Annual Report HSE 1999)*

In its positive manifestation stress can act as a motivational and enabling force, in its negative format however stress becomes harmful and disabling and therefore a potential cause of physical and mental illness.

Pressures can arise from an individual's personal life as well as from work and people vary in their capacity and ability to cope with different types of pressure. Some individuals will recognise that their health is affected and will seek help; others will not recognise or acknowledge that they are stressed although it may be apparent to their Headteacher and/ or work colleagues. Although stress is not an illness, there is evidence that stress can lead to mental and physical ill health.

Identifying the signs:
-Persistent or recurrent moods .... anger, irritability, detachment, worry, depression, guilt, and sadness.
-Physical sensations/effects .... aches and pains, raised heart rate, increased sweating, dizziness, blurred vision, skin or sleep disorders.
-Changed behaviours .... difficulty concentrating or remembering things, unable to switch off, loss of creativity, making more errors, double checking everything, increasing use of substances.
-When stress is experienced over long periods other signs can develop, for example, high blood pressure, heart disease, ulcers, anxiety, long-term depression.
-Poor work performance .... less output, lower quality, poor decision making.
-Relationships at work .... conflict between colleagues, poor relationships with children/parents.
-Staff attitude and behaviour .... loss of motivation or commitment, poor timekeeping.

Westfield Nursery School
Appendix 2- Well-Being Charter

What is the 'Well-being Charter'?
The Westfield Nursery 'Well-being Charter' is a statement of intent, showing the commitment of governors and senior leaders to the health of the people who work here, the children who attend and their families.

We believe that our staff are our most precious resource and provide valuable, high impact learning experiences for all learners.

'Westfield Nursery School is a happy place to be.'
'Children are kind to each other.'
'Staff teach children about the importance of healthy lifestyles.'
'Staff feel valued and appreciate support for their workload.' Ofsted October 2023

The following charter has been developed to promote and foster well-being across the school.

"Those who are nurtured best, survive best"
Louis Cozolino, The Neuroscience of Human Relationships: Attachment and the Developing Social Brain, 2014

Well-being Framework for Staff:

Principles:

Trust

We trust you in what you do

Happiness

We want you to be happy in work

Care

We care about you

Support

We will support you when/if you need it

Guidance

We will offer guidance when/if you need it

Interest

We take an interest in you beyond the school

Balance

We want you to get the balance of work and personal life right; Make time for yourself and family.

We are aware of:

Spiritual well-being

-Promoting self-worth; feeling valued, as effort and contributions are recognised building on achievements and ongoing improvement and development (e.g. Performance management/ end of term review)

-Encouraging staff voice, increasing opportunities for staff to share feels, thoughts and opinions (e.g. staff meetings)

Building community connections (e.g. Bedfordshire well-being service)

Cognitive well-being

-Teaching and learning-promote good physical, social, emotional and mental health and helps equip children, staff and families with the skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their health (e.g. CPD)

-Supporting competence (e.g. Supervision/ Performance management)

-Activating prior knowledge/ revisiting previous learning (e.g. SEF/ SDP/ staff meetings/ CPD)

-Supporting autonomy (e.g. staff roles + responsibilities)

Social well-being

-Valuing each adult (e.g. staff meetings)

-Team-building exercises (e.g. social events)

Emotional well-being

-Support (e.g. Supervision)

-Well-being checklist (e.g. poster in staff toilets)

-Well-being toolkit (given to staff members)

Physical well-being

-Promoting active lifestyles (benefits of exercise & healthy eating)

-Regular hygiene (e.g. handwashing)

Westfield Nursery School
Well-Being Tool Kit for Staff

✓	Ideas:
	Talk about your worries and concerns
	Be kind to yourself- do not set unrealistic expectations
	Think about your stress triggers and relievers; be mindful of your self
	Be mindful of others; everyone's experience will have been different
	Eat a healthy diet, limiting any substance consumption such as alcohol
	Drink enough water
	Do some exercise each day
	Have a relaxation period
	Get some fresh air
	Do things you enjoy e.g. a hobby
	Follow good bedtime habits
	Use news/ social media content wisely

Emotion Coaching

1.Be aware of the emotion
2. Empathise with the emotion
3. Label and validate the emotion
4. Set limits
5. Solve the problem

Resilience

Resilience is about 'Emotional regulation and the ability to recognise, understand and act on internal prompts and signals.' Oshio et al (2003)

Think of a scale of 1 to 10 where 0 is breaking point and 10 is perfect calm and happiness.

0 ——————————————————— 10

Where would you rate your score at the moment?

Everyday think how can I be 'one more' on the scale?

Building Resilience:
• Have a secure base
• Feeling connected
• Having secure relationships
• A sense of belonging
• Good self esteem
• Equipped to manage emotions

Further advice:
From the nhs at https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/

From Bedfordshire Well-Being Service at
https://bedfordshirewellbeingservice.nhs.uk/
Telephone 01234 800400 (Monday-Friday)

Well-being Checklist

Take a moment to think about today.

Acknowledge one thing that was difficult. Let it go.

Consider two things that went well.

Consider one person who contributed positively to your day.

Choose an action that signals the end of your day.

Now switch your attention to home.

How will you rest and recharge?

Enjoy your evening.

Well-being Framework for Children:

Principles:

Spiritual well-being
-Promoting self-worth; feeling valued, as effort and contributions are recognised building on achievements and ongoing improvement and development (e.g. special helpers/ stickers/ learning journeys)
-Encouraging pupil voice, increasing opportunities for pupils to share feelings, thoughts and opinions (e.g. planning/ review/ after special events)
Building community connections (e.g. home-school links, working with local schools + agencies/ community projects e.g. Dunstable in Bloom)
Celebrating and supporting diversity (e.g. using translation cards + apps/ dual language resources/ faith celebrations)

Cognitive well-being
-Teaching and learning-promote good physical, social, emotional and mental health and helps equip children, staff and families with the skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their health (e.g. Personal, Social and Emotional Development/ 'My Smile'- oral hygiene).
-Supporting competence (e.g. scaffolding new learning/ sequenced curriculum/ self-access resources)
-Activating prior knowledge/ revisiting previous learning (e.g. review time/ looking at learning journeys)
-Supporting autonomy (e.g. planning time/ conflict resolution/ key messages such as kind hands, kind feet, kind mouths/ words & choose it, use it, put it away)

Social well-being
-Valuing each child (e.g. greeting each child by name/ message board)
-Providing choices (e.g. following possible lines of development/ planning time)
-Modelling positive behaviours & interactions (e.g. conflict resolution)

Emotional well-being
-Clear expectations (e.g. Timetable)
-Teaching names of emotions/ self-regulation strategies (e.g. 'My time')
-Modelling interactions (e.g. friendship week & bench)

Physical well-being
-Promoting active lifestyles (e.g. Activ8, yoga)
-Regular hygiene (e.g. handwashing)

(School Readiness)
-Being able to sit and listen (e.g. message board/ story time)
-Being aware of other children (e.g. child-initiated play)
-Understanding the word 'no' and other boundaries set for behaviour
-Understanding the word 'stop' and that this may be used to prevent danger
-Being toilet trained
-Recognising their own name (e.g. name card)
-Talk to an adult and explain their needs (e.g. snack time)
-Dress themselves
-Talk in sentences
-Open and enjoy looking at a book

Well-Being

Ferre Laevers (1997) spent many years studying how experiences affect young children's behaviour. He writes, "For development to occur, children need to be high on emotional well- being and high on involvement"

Laevers identified the following signs of well- being:

- Openness and receptivity
- Flexibility
- Self-confidence and self-esteem
- Assertiveness
- Vitality
- Relaxation and inner peace
- Enjoyment without restraints
- Being in touch with one's self

Thinking about children's well- being, helps us to identify which of the children might need extra help to cope with change or access the curriculum. We monitor this termly to target support where it is needed.

Well-Being Scales

Well-being scale	Appearance and behaviour
1	Extremely low well- being. These children usually feel and look "low"
2	About half of the time, these children display signs of emotional discomfort. They seldom enjoy themselves and may enjoy hurting others
3	These children seem quite happy. Occasionally they show signs of discomfort or leave a neutral impression with regard to well-being
4	These children seem generally happy. Moments of well-being clearly outnumber the moments of discomfort
5	Extremely high level of well-being. These children feel like fish in water. They radiate vitality, relaxation, relaxation and inner peace

Westfield Nursery School
Appendix 3 Strategies Supporting Positive Mental Health

	Universal (all)	Targeted (some)	Specialist
Adults	-Staff to use the policy, well-being charter and toolkit as a point of reference -Talk to trusted colleague -Act with sensitivity -Well-being time incorporated into staff development e.g. staff meeting -Staff/ team events e.g. meal -Staff training -Use well-being strategies such as well-done/ thank you messages/ well-being washing line -Individuals recognise the importance of training and development (as a means of developing competence and well-being in the job) -Supervision meetings -Peer-peer support -Governors annual well-being questionnaire/ interviews -Utilise resources e.g. well-being file	-Signpost to support services e.g. Bedfordshire's well-being service https://bedfordshirewellbeingservice.nhs.uk/ -Leaders provide an ear and information to help individuals to overcome their problems (before job performance is affected) -Talk to a senior staff member -Individuals should take an active part in determining their own needs	-Individuals should seek support/ diagnosis from their GP and/ or a professional body e.g. self-refer to the well-being service
Children	-Passionate, well qualified, caring staff (key adults) -Policies (well-being/ behaviour) -Meet & greet at the start and end of the day -Practical needs met e.g. food/ comfort -Structured timetable -Organised/ calm classroom environment -Nursery curriculum 'Communicates Their Feelings, Wants and Needs' / 'Looks After Their Health, Safety and Self Care Needs' & 'Develops a Friendship' (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) -Ferre Laevers well-being and involvement scores -Strong relationships with families -Transition programme (into Nursery/ between classes/ out of Nursery and into Reception) -Utilise resources -Safe space -Conflict resolution	-Behaviour logs/ SEND plans -Intervention Groups (MyTime, Forest School, Games Group, Lift Off to Language, Curiosity Programme, Bucket Time, Tap Tap Box, Sensory Bag, Sensory Stories, Sensory boxes) -Staff who understand attachment, trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACE's)	- Families seek support from specialist services e.g. Health

Supporting employees through the menopause

Guidance for employees, managers and headteachers

September 2024 (CBC Policy)

Policy written using CBC model policy: May 2026

Signed by:

	Headteacher	**Date:**
	Chair of governors	**Date:**

New May 2026

Contents

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What is this document for and how will it help me?
What is the menopause?
What symptoms are there?
How can we support employees through the menopause?
What can the employee do to support themselves?
Other useful information
Conclusion, monitoring and review

Introduction

Westfield Nursery School is committed to supporting employees through the menopause and wishes to create a positive and inclusive culture/environment where:

• Any stigma attached to the menopause is removed by ensuring everyone is educated and informed about the menopause and how they can support colleagues at work
• The menopause is treated seriously, and so employees feel empowered to have open and honest discussions with their colleagues, managers and headteachers about their experiences
• Employees are encouraged to come forward and seek support and any reasonable adjustments they require

What is this document for and how will it help me?

This guidance document has been created to provide employees with a better understanding of the menopause and the steps to take to support employees with menopausal symptoms.

What is the menopause?

According to NHS guidance:

• Menopause is a natural stage of life when the periods stop due to lower hormone levels. It's important you are aware the menopause can happen to women and other people who have or have had a menstrual cycle (e.g. trans people, intersex, and non-binary individuals) and you support all individuals equally
• It usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 but for some individuals it can happen sooner
• It can happen naturally or for reasons such as surgery to remove the ovaries (oophorectomy) or the uterus (hysterectomy), cancer treatments like chemotherapy, or a genetic reason. Sometimes the reason is unknown

Perimenopause is when an individual has symptoms of the menopause, but their periods have not stopped. Perimenopause ends and an individual reaches menopause when they have not had a period for 12 months.

What symptoms are there?

Symptoms can last for just a few months or years and can change with time. Some people may experience few symptoms whilst others can experience multiple and severe symptoms that impact negatively on both their home and working lives.
Symptoms can be wide ranging, and could include (list not exhaustive):

Physical:

- Changed body shape and weight gain
- Dizziness
- Hot flushes, night sweats
- Headaches and migraines
- Irregular periods (changes in frequency, duration and flow including excessive bleeding or "flooding")
- Joint stiffness, muscular aches and pains
- Palpitations

- Skin irritation
- Sleep disturbance, tiredness and a lack of energy
- Thinning hair and brittle nails
- Urinary tract infections and loss of bladder control

Psychological/Emotional:
- Anxiety, depression
- Loss of motivation and/or sense of identity
- Low self-esteem
- Mood changes such as, irritability, low mood, rage, short temper
- Panic attacks
- Self-doubt
- Tearfulness

Cognitive:
- Fatigue
- Memory loss/ poor word recall
- Reduced concentration/ Cloudy thinking (Brain fog)

Further detailed information in relation to the menopause and the symptoms can be found on the menopause pages of the NHS website. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/

What treatments are there?
- Medical treatment can help treat some symptoms but as the symptoms ease, others can appear and new treatments may be necessary. Treatment can involve an operation or medical procedure, requiring the employee to take time off for the procedure and to recover
- According to NHS guidance, the most common treatment for menopause and perimenopause symptoms is hormone replacement therapy (HRT) which replaces the hormones that are at low levels. If individuals cannot or choose not to have HRT then other treatments are also available.

How can we support employees through the menopause?
Menopause affects everyone differently and there is no 'one size fits all' approach to offer support. Symptoms can be quite severe and can affect people both physically and mentally. For those experiencing symptoms it can be a difficult and stressful time and so providing them with the necessary support they need through every stage of the menopause is extremely important. The right support can help to improve morale, maintain productivity, retain valuable skills and talent and reduce sickness absence in both individuals and teams.
We are all responsible for:
- Contributing to a productive working environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect
- Being willing to help and support those individuals impacted by menopause

The role of the headteacher
Conversations about the menopause should be approached sensitively, with empathy and with no assumptions, respecting it will be up to the individual whether they wish to share information about issues or symptoms experienced.

Headteachers, are not expected to offer advice on how someone should manage their menopause as it is their individual choice. If they have experienced menopause personally or know someone who has been through the menopause, it's unlikely the experience will be the same, so they should remain open-minded during conversations. Through these conversations, the Headteacher can ascertain what impact the symptoms are having on the employee, how it is

affecting them, how it is affecting their ability to do their role, and any help, signposting, or reasonable adjustments they may need.
Headteachers can offer support by:
- Maintaining regular 1:1 meetings, as this helps build trust and improve understanding.
- Encouraging employees to discuss the impact of their menopausal symptoms on their mental health, wellbeing and work life balance but also respecting the employee's right not to discuss personal issues. The employee may be more comfortable talking to a colleague or another manager.
- Listening carefully to what your employee is saying, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation and treating the discussion with sensitivity and professionalism.
- Completing a risk assessment and regularly reviewing it, with the aim of trying to reduce the impact the employee's workplace and role might have on their menopausal symptoms and performance at work. (Guidance on completing risk assessments can be found on the Health and Safety pages of the Schools Portal.)

For the menopause, a risk assessment should consider the symptoms and circumstances being experienced, alongside the workplace used and tasks performed. This will then enable precautions to be identified that try and reduce impacts and risks. The risk assessment should be created with the employee's full involvement. In most cases, the potential options will be simple and straightforward, so it's important not to be intimidated by the prospect of creating a risk assessment. For example,
• If the employee is experiencing hot flushes, precautions might consider (list not exhaustive):
-The temperature and ventilation of the workplace
-How dress code might be adjusted to improve comfort (e.g. if the material and fit of a uniform (if applicable) is likely to make the employee feel too hot or cause discomfort)
-Opportunities for breaks and if there is somewhere suitable for the employee to rest if needed (e.g. staff room)
-Whether toilet and washing facilities are easily accessible
-Whether cold drinking water is available
• You feel that the employee's performance could be being impacted by the menopause
• There is ongoing sickness absence
• The employee themselves has not identified they are experiencing menopausal symptoms, but you may have noticed a change in their behaviour which you feel could be consistent with the menopausal symptoms
• Assisting and encouraging individuals to access appropriate healthcare support (e.g. occupational health)
• Implementing reasonable adjustments
• Seeking advice from the schools HR Provider in the below instances as it is recognised these situations should be handled sensitively and with the necessary support and understanding

Reasonable Adjustments
Under the Equality Act 2010, workers are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics including disability, age and sex. Whilst someone experiencing menopause may not consider themselves to have a disability, some menopausal symptoms may meet the statutory definition of a disability if they have a long term and substantial impact on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
You should therefore consider reasonable adjustments (which would be tailored to an individual's specific needs) to help make working conditions easier for employees experiencing symptoms of menopause. It's very important to involve the employee when making such considerations as only the employee themselves will know what changes could have the biggest impact. It is important to also remember that adjustments may have to change over time as symptoms can change.

Reasonable adjustments will depend entirely on each individual as disabilities can affect people in differing ways and so this should be discussed and agreed with the headteacher as part of a reasonable adjustment assessment.
Some examples of reasonable adjustments could be (list not exhaustive):

- The ability to control local temperature perhaps by providing a fan
- More breaks when needed
- Specialist support through occupational health
- Adjustments to work responsibilities/workload

Further examples of reasonable adjustments that you might want to consider can be found on the Menopause at work: Guide for people managers page of the CIPD website.
It is usually beneficial to consult with the Schools Occupational Health Provider for further guidance. The Headteacher or nominated person will contact their HR Provider to seek advice on making a referral to the Occupational Health Provider prior to the referral being made.

What can the employee do to support themselves?
If an employee is finding it difficult to cope at work because of menopausal symptoms, they are encouraged to speak with their headteacher. They should be as open as possible about any issues they are experiencing or adjustments they may need, so their headteacher can explore ways they may be able to support them. If they do not feel comfortable discussing this with their own headteacher, they could request a discussion with a trusted colleague.

Other useful information
We all have a responsibility to contribute to a respectful working environment, be willing to help and support our colleagues, and understand colleagues may need adjustments to manage their menopausal symptoms.

Further information and support for the menopause can be found at:

- ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service): Managing the menopause
- Access to work mental health support service delivered by Maximus which provides confidential mental health support for stress, anxiety, depression, low mood and much more, in the workplace at no cost. With dedicated support for nine months Maximus cover all the key things like coping strategies, reasonable adjustments, practical advice and guidance, as well as a plan to return to work https://atw.maximusuk.co.uk
- Balance Menopause: which has a library of information on the menopause, symptoms, support, along with and podcasts and a downloadable app) https://www.balance-menopause.com/
- Equality & Human Rights Commission: Menopause in the workplace: guidance for employers
- Menopause Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) accessed via Health Assured https://www.healthassured.org/menopause-cognitive-behavioural-therapy/
- Menopause Matters: providing advice and information on the menopause, symptoms and treatment options https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/
- National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidance https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information
- NHS guidance https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/
- Rock My Menopause: which is a campaign of the Primary Care Women's Health Forum providing information and support and raising awareness of the menopause and symptoms https://rockmymenopause.com/
- The Daisy Network: for those experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency https://www.daisynetwork.org/
- Women's Health Concern (patient arm of the British Menopause Society): https://www.womens-health-concern.org

Conclusion, monitoring and review

The implementation of this policy will support colleagues going through the menopause and will be reviewed bi-annually