



## **Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT)**

**FACT Schools are Fairchildes Primary School**

**Rowdown and Monks Orchard Primary School**

# **Menopause and Perimenopause Policy**

**January 2026**

<b>Date</b>	January 2026
<b>Edited by:</b>	
<b>Sections edited:</b>	
<b>Review date:</b>	

# Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT)

## Menopause and Perimenopause Policy

**Date:** October 2025

**Review Date:** October 2026

**Approved by:** Trust Board

### **Applies to:**

All employees of Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT), including teaching and support staff across:

- Fairchildes Primary School
  - Rowdown Primary School
  - Monks Orchard Primary School
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## Introduction

Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT) is committed to promoting the wellbeing, dignity and equality of all staff. We recognise that the menopause and perimenopause are natural life stages that can affect individuals in different ways and, for some, may have a significant impact on physical and emotional wellbeing at work.

This policy sets out the Trust's approach to supporting staff experiencing symptoms associated with menopause and perimenopause. It aims to create an open, supportive and inclusive working environment where staff feel able to seek support without stigma or disadvantage.

This policy aligns with FACT's commitment to staff wellbeing and should be read alongside the Trust's Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Sickness Absence Policy and Staff Wellbeing Strategy.

## Legislative and Statutory Context

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- **Equality Act 2010** – menopause symptoms may be considered under the protected characteristics of sex, age and disability where symptoms are substantial and long-term
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** – duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees
- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** – requirement to assess workplace risks and take appropriate action
- **Employment Rights Act 1996**
- ACAS guidance on menopause at work

FACT recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments where required and to ensure that staff experiencing menopause-related symptoms are not treated less favourably.

## Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Support staff experiencing menopause or perimenopause symptoms
- Promote understanding and awareness across the Trust
- Reduce stigma and encourage open conversations
- Ensure fair, consistent and compassionate management practices
- Retain skilled and experienced staff by supporting wellbeing at work

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT), including teaching and support staff across all Trust schools.

While menopause most commonly affects women, the Trust recognises that trans men, non-binary people and intersex people may also experience menopause or perimenopause. This policy is therefore inclusive and applies to any employee who is affected by menopause-related symptoms.

## What This Policy Does and Does Not Do

### What this policy does do

This policy:

- ✓ Recognises menopause and perimenopause as natural life stages that can affect staff wellbeing
- ✓ Confirms the Trust's commitment to dignity, respect and non-discrimination
- ✓ Encourages open, supportive and confidential conversations where staff choose to seek support
- ✓ Sets out a consistent Trust-wide approach to managing menopause-related issues fairly
- ✓ Commits to considering practical, proportionate and realistic support within the operational context of a small Trust
- ✓ Supports managers to respond sensitively and appropriately
- ✓ Aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and health and safety responsibilities

### What this policy does not do

This policy does **not**:

- ✗ Create an automatic entitlement to reduced hours, shorter days or additional time off
- ✗ Override existing absence, performance or contractual policies
- ✗ Guarantee flexible working arrangements where these are not operationally feasible
- ✗ Require staff to disclose personal or medical information

- ✗ Treat menopause-related absence differently from other health-related absence in a way that is unfair to other staff
- ✗ Replace the need for professional medical advice or occupational health support where required

## Key Principle

Support under this policy is **individual, proportionate and balanced**, taking into account:

- the needs of the employee
- the requirements of the role
- the operational realities of the school and Trust

FACT is committed to supporting staff to remain well and effective at work, while ensuring that provision for pupils and fairness for all staff are maintained.

## Understanding Menopause and Perimenopause

- **Perimenopause** is the period leading up to menopause, during which hormonal changes begin and symptoms may occur.
- **Menopause** is defined as the point when a person has not had a menstrual period for 12 consecutive months.

Symptoms vary widely but may include:

- Hot flushes and night sweats
- Fatigue and sleep disturbance
- Anxiety, low mood or mood changes
- Difficulty concentrating or memory issues
- Headaches, joint pain or muscle aches
- Increased stress sensitivity

## Creating a Supportive Workplace

FACT is committed to creating a working environment where staff feel supported and respected. This includes:

- Fostering a culture of openness and understanding
- Ensuring conversations are handled sensitively and confidentially
- Making reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- Providing access to support and guidance

Staff are encouraged, but not required, to speak to their line manager, a member of SLT or HR if they feel menopause symptoms are affecting them at work.

## Supportive Adjustments

FACT recognises that, as a small Trust, there are operational constraints which can limit the extent to which working patterns and staffing arrangements can be altered. The Trust is nevertheless committed to providing reasonable, proportionate and practical support to staff experiencing menopause or perimenopause symptoms.

Supportive adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the needs of the employee, the requirements of the role and the operational needs of the school. These may include:

- Temporary flexibility within existing working arrangements where feasible
- Adjustments to workload expectations or prioritisation of tasks
- Consideration of temperature, ventilation or seating arrangements
- Flexibility around dress code where appropriate
- Supportive management conversations and regular check-ins

Any adjustments agreed will be realistic, time-limited where appropriate, and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and sustainable within the school context.

## **Managing Attendance and Performance**

FACT recognises that menopause-related symptoms may impact wellbeing at work. However, due to the size and structure of the Trust, sustained alterations to working hours or significant reductions in attendance may not always be operationally possible.

Managers will approach attendance and performance matters with sensitivity and understanding, considering menopause as a potential contributing factor where relevant. The emphasis will be on early discussion, supportive strategies and practical solutions that enable staff to continue working effectively wherever possible.

Absence and performance will continue to be managed in line with the Trust's Sickness Absence and Performance Management policies, ensuring fairness and consistency for all staff. Staff will not be treated less favourably or disadvantaged as a result of menopause-related symptoms.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Employees**

- Seek support where symptoms are impacting work
- Engage in discussions about reasonable adjustments
- Treat colleagues with respect and understanding

### **Line Managers and Senior Leaders**

- Foster an open and supportive culture
- Handle conversations sensitively and confidentially
- Consider reasonable adjustments and risk assessments

- Signpost staff to appropriate support

## **Trust Leadership**

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently across schools
- Provide training and guidance where appropriate
- Monitor the effectiveness of support arrangements

## **Training and Awareness**

FACT is committed to raising awareness of menopause and perimenopause in the workplace. This may include:

- Information and guidance for staff
- Training or briefings for managers
- Inclusion of menopause awareness within wellbeing initiatives

## **Confidentiality**

Any information shared regarding menopause or perimenopause will be treated sensitively and confidentially, in line with data protection requirements.

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by Trust leadership and reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation or guidance.

Feedback from staff will be used to inform future developments and ensure the policy remains effective and supportive.