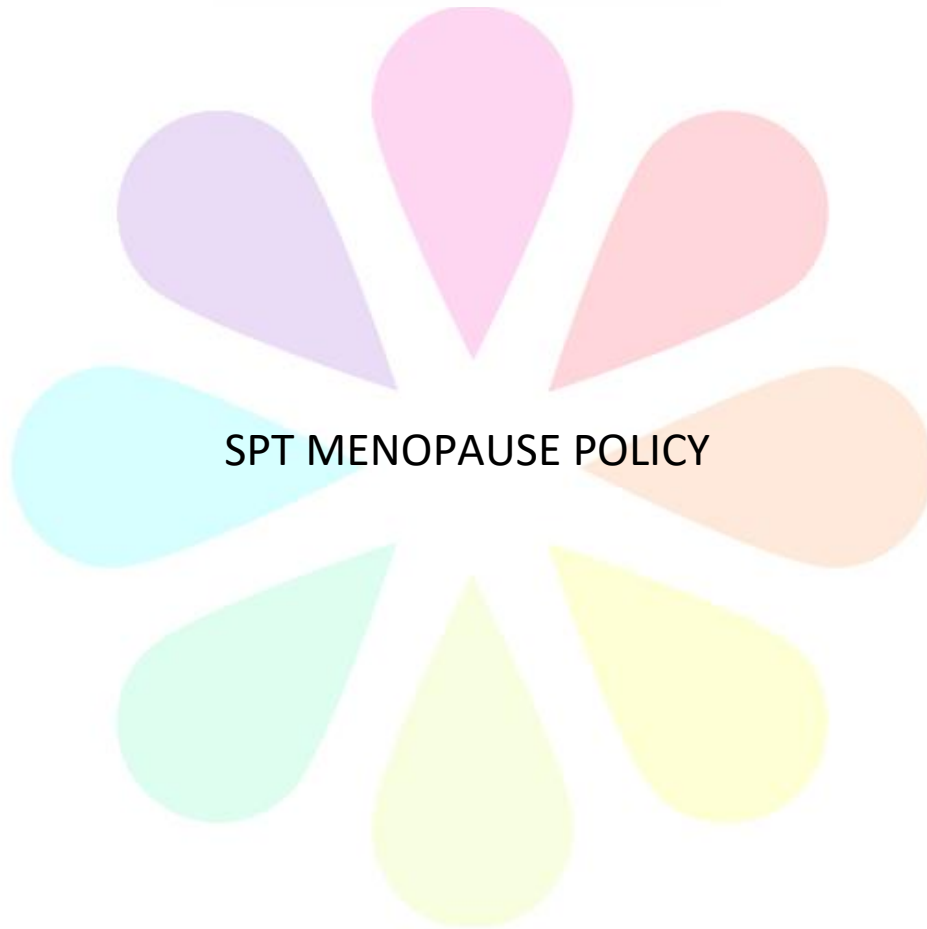




Special Partnership Trust



# SPT MENOPAUSE POLICY

Date Last Reviewed: November 2023

Review Date: November 2026



Special Partnership Trust

## The Aim of this policy

The SPT Schools are committed to supporting staff health and wellbeing. It is recognized that symptoms related to peri menopause and menopause can at times present challenges in the workplace for some people. The context of this policy is that whilst most people can effectively manage symptoms of menopause and continue to engage confidently in their work, there may be some people, at times, who require additional support for specific symptoms.

This policy will support in recognizing and understanding the menopause and will provide guidance in accessing appropriate support to ensure people can effectively manage symptoms.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

### This policy aims to:

- raise awareness of menopause and its impact in the workplace
- Make sure that our schools can support staff affected by the menopause and help them to feel comfortable at work and encourage open conversations, both when experiencing symptoms and when asking for support
- Provide further resources to help staff, particularly line managers and HR teams, to support others through difficulties the menopause may cause them

## Definitions

According to the NHS, the **menopause** is a stage of life when periods stop for over 12 months. It typically affects women 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.

Most women will experience menopause at some point during their life. Menopause can also impact people who may not identify as female, such as trans and non-binary people.

**Perimenopause** is the time of hormonal change leading up to menopause, when a woman may experience symptoms. **Post-menopause** is the time beyond menopause. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to menopause includes both perimenopause and post-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 and early menopause.

## 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. The majority of those going through menopause will experience some symptoms, although everyone is different and symptoms can fluctuate. Symptoms can vary and, in some cases,

may be very severe. Different people may experience symptoms in different combinations which can change with time.

Menopausal symptoms might include:

- Hot flushes, night sweats and palpitations
- Difficulty sleeping, insomnia and fatigue
- Low mood, mood swings anxiety and depression
- Headaches and joint and muscle pain
- Weakened bladder function and urinary tract infections
- Problems with memory, confidence and concentration

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- To support the well-being of staff affected by the menopause – the Headteacher with senior staff in school be ready to open conversations with staff about menopause and what support is available. These conversations will be treated sensitively and all information will be handled confidentially.
- Whilst many who experience menopause are able to carry on their working lives as normal, we recognise that others may benefit from adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopause symptoms on their work.
- If you believe that you would benefit from adjustments or other support, you should speak to your line manager in the first instance. If you feel unable to do so, you should contact the HR Department.
- We will consider making reasonable adjustments in the workplace by;
- Identifying a named wellbeing lead in schools
- Carrying out individual risk assessments to assess working conditions in line with the specific needs of staff affected by the menopause who request specific support, which might involve physical adjustments, such as temperature control, or more frequent rest breaks.
- Monitoring the wellbeing of staff through open conversations
- Signposting to 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
- Signposting to external support services
- 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
- Referring to the menopause in the school's staff wellbeing policy
- Providing a non-judgmental, empathetic and confidential support system to staff

- Considering flexible working requests in order to accommodate acute symptoms, in line with the flexible working policy

Referring members of staff to Occupational Health or a doctor nominated by us or seeking medical advice from your GP to better understand any adjustments and other support that may help alleviate symptoms affecting you at work.

### **Role of staff members affected by the menopause**

Menopause is not just an issue for women. All staff should be aware of menopause so that they can support those experiencing it or otherwise affected by it.

We encourage those staff who are affected by menopause to:

- Share their practical needs to reduce the difficulties the menopause can cause and their preferred coping strategies with their line manager, or with our designated wellbeing lead.
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let their line manager or another trusted member of staff, know if the menopause is having an impact on this
- Access our employee assistance programme (EAP) for further support

### **All staff are expected to:**

- Continue to work professionally within the expectations of the staff code of conduct
- Promote the health and wellbeing of themselves and others at all times
- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Support other members of staff, such as 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

### **Resources**

- SPT EAP Wellbeing Portal, available via our Extra Special Platform
- [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](#)

