



## **Menopause policy**

**This Policy has been approved and adopted by the Xavier  
Catholic Education Trust  
To be reviewed in April 2029**

**Committee Responsible: HR Committee**

## **Xavier Catholic Education Trust Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all the children in our schools. We will follow the example and teachings of Christ and everything we do will be inspired by gospel values. We will strive for excellence in all areas of our work and cherish every child in our care.

### **1. Introduction and purpose of policy**

This policy is intended to outline the ways in which Xavier Catholic Education Trust (hereafter referred to as “Xavier CET”), senior leaders and employees can work together to enhance staff health and wellbeing, ensuring that the school is a safe, caring and positive place to work. This policy sets out the rights of employees experiencing menopausal symptoms and explains the support available to them.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

These policies, and others which relate to staff, can be accessed via the Xavier CET Website.

### **2. Policy Statement**

The Xavier CET is committed to creating an open and supportive culture. We want you to feel comfortable speaking about how menopause-related symptoms may be affecting you at work and to feel able to ask for the support that you need to help you manage your symptoms.

In this policy, where we refer to the menopause, we also mean the perimenopause.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Xavier CET is responsible for overseeing the general health and wellbeing strategy and monitoring the effectiveness of this menopause policy, ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to upkeep the general health and wellbeing of staff at work.
- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the menopause policy as well as for ensuring that those with line management responsibilities are suitably skilled to support those they manage in an empathetic and constructive way, with due regard to mental, physical and emotional wellbeing issues.
- Line managers are responsible for supporting the Headteacher in implementing the menopause policy, using procedures fairly and consistently, working with their staff to understand and address daily pressures, monitoring workload and supporting staff appropriately to their needs.

### **4. Symptoms of menopause**

The menopause is a natural event during which a person stops having periods and experiences hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels.

The menopause usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. Perimenopause, or menopause transition, begins several years before menopause. An individual may start to experience menopausal symptoms during the final two years of perimenopause.

While menopausal symptoms vary greatly, they commonly include:

- hot flushes.
- night sweats.
- anxiety.
- dizziness.
- fatigue.
- memory loss.
- depression.
- headaches.
- recurrent urinary tract infections.
- joint stiffness, aches and pains.
- reduced concentration; and
- heavy periods.

## **5. Requesting support**

If you find that menopausal symptoms are starting to impact your work, you are encouraged to speak to your line manager. If for any reason you are unable to approach your line manager, you can speak to the Headteacher.

We urge you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing or adjustments that you need to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support.

We provide an example Menopause Support Plan (appendix 1) that you and your line manager can, if you wish, use to record any adjustments agreed to support you at work when you are experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Any health-related information disclosed by you during discussions with your line manager or the Headteacher will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

## **6. Working environment**

- If you feel that your working environment is exacerbating your menopausal symptoms, you should raise this with your line manager/Headteacher. There may be some practical adjustments that we can consider to make your working life easier.
- If you need time out to relax, a short break to manage any symptoms or take medication, or a quiet space to work, you should speak to your line manager/Headteacher who will try their best to accommodate this.

## **7. What to do if you are unwell because of menopausal symptoms**

- There is no expectation for you to work if you are unwell because of menopausal symptoms unless otherwise set out in your contract. If you are sick and unable to work, you should follow the procedure set out in the attendance management policy.
- You do not have to disclose that your absence is related to the menopause if you wish to keep this private. However, we want you to feel that you can be open about the reason for your leave.

## 8. Support Mechanisms

Various support mechanisms are available to employees and these are periodically reviewed. The following are currently available:

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** - access to an EAP which offers practical support, information and resources on stress management, work-life balance, relationship and family issues, financial worries, bereavement and other life changes. More information on the EAP is available to all employees from Welcome to Edenred (UK Group) Limited (number 0800 058 1970)
- **Occupational Health (OH)** - access to occupational health support through our provider, offering independent, impartial advice on the effects of work on an employee's health and vice versa. In some cases, we may refer you to occupational health so that they can advise on how your symptoms are impacted at work and make recommendations on the types of adjustments that may be appropriate. Occupational health may also signpost to external sources of help and advice.
- **Sanitary products** - sanitary products are available in toilet facilities.
- The schools have also appointed Mental Health Leads. These individuals are responsible for:
  - The promotion of wellbeing, including distribution of information.
  - Signposting relevant health and wellbeing services to line managers and employees.
  - Reporting to the Headteacher on wellbeing issues and initiatives.

## 9. Working flexibly on a temporary basis

- For employees eligible to request flexible working, who require a **permanent** change to working arrangements, we have a policy on requesting flexible working.
- However, we recognise that for individuals affected by menopausal symptoms, the option to work flexibly on a **temporary** (rather than permanent) basis may be appropriate. For example, this could include, changing your start and finish times, changes to your work allocation or taking more frequent breaks. This is not a definitive list. If you feel that you would benefit from a temporary change to your working arrangement on an ad hoc basis because of sleep deprivation or other symptoms that may be impacting on your performance, you should discuss and agree these with your line manager/Headteacher. We will try to facilitate temporary flexible working arrangements wherever this is possible and will continue to review these to ensure that they meet your needs.

## 10. Status of Policy and Review

The content and operation of this policy is reviewed as and when deemed necessary by the Xavier CET. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.

## 11. External Sources of Support

There are various external organisations that provide help and support on the menopause, including:

<u>Menopause matters</u>	<u>Menopause matters</u> , provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options.
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<a href="https://www.daisynetwork.org">https://www.daisynetwork.org</a>	The <u>Daisy Network</u> charity which provides support for people experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency.
<u>Menopause Café</u>	The <u>Menopause Café</u> , provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.
<u>Menopause - NHS</u> ( <a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a> )	NHS provides guidance, help and support to every individual experiencing menopause symptom.
<u>The menopause - Women's Health Concern</u> ( <a href="http://womens-health-concern.org">womens-health-concern.org</a> )	This is the patient arm of the British Menopause Society. The guidance and support are available in various languages.
<u>Advice on the menopause</u> ( <a href="http://fom.ac.uk">fom.ac.uk</a> )	The FOM provides guidance on menopause at work.
<u>Menopause Exchange for unbiased, independent information and advice</u> ( <a href="http://menopause-exchange.co.uk">menopause-exchange.co.uk</a> )	Provides webinars, talks and workshops on menopause.
<u>Talking Menopause</u>	Work with organisations to provide professional training and solutions to create a workplace culture of menopause openness and understanding for all, to increase productivity and employee satisfaction by better supporting those employees affected by menopause, their colleagues, and managers.
<u>About this information   Information for the public   Menopause: diagnosis and management   Guidance   NICE</u>	NICE guidelines provide advice on the care and support that should be offered to people who use health and care services.

#### Appendix 1

<b>Support plan for menopausal symptoms</b>	
<b>Employee's name:</b>	
<b>Job title:</b>	
<b>Department:</b>	

**Line manager's name:**

This plan records the support and adjustments agreed between you and your line manager to support you at work when you are experiencing menopausal symptoms.

The purpose of this plan is to:

- ensure that both you and your manager have a record of what we have agreed so that you feel supported.
- act as a starting point for discussion if you change job or your line manager changes; and
- provide you and your manager with a structure to use when regularly reviewing and updating adjustments.

This plan is a live record and you and your manager can agree when it needs to be reviewed and updated. This may be:

- at any regular one-to-one meeting.
- at a return-to-work meeting following a period of sickness absence.
- at six-monthly and/or annual appraisals.
- before a change of job, responsibilities or work location, or a change to working practices; or
- before or after any change in circumstances for either you or the organisation.

**Employee**

**How my menopausal symptoms impact my working life**

Symptoms:

The effect these symptoms have on my working life:

**Adjustments that help me manage my menopausal symptoms at work**

Suggested adjustments:

How these will help me at work:

**Line manager**

**Support and adjustments agreed**

We have agreed to put in place the following adjustments. If the adjustments are no longer effective or suitable (for example, your symptoms change), you will let me know so that we can discuss alternatives:

[add/delete adjustments as appropriate]

### **Other support and advice**

We have discussed other sources of support, information and advice that may help you during your menopause transition. These are [add/delete as appropriate]:

- the organisation's "menopause policy", a copy of which [has been provided to you/is available on the intranet/is included in our staff handbook].
- details of other relevant policies and programmes provided by the organisation, for example - employee assistance programme
- details of any other internal initiatives, for example menopause mentors and a workplace menopause support group; and
- external sources of help, e.g., Menopause matters

An up-to-date copy of this form will be retained by you, your manager and HR.

With your consent, we may also give a copy of this form to a new or prospective line manager. If you change jobs or are assigned a new manager, the new manager should accept the adjustments that we have agreed in this plan, so long as they remain reasonable and ensure that they continue to be implemented. We may need to review and amend this plan at a later date but, unless there is any change in circumstances that might affect the reasonableness of the adjustments, this should not happen until both you and your new manager have worked together for a reasonable period of time.

We will ensure that your personal data, including data relating to your health, is handled in accordance with our data protection policy / policy on processing special categories of personal data. Any breach of confidentiality will be treated very seriously and dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

**Employee's signature**

**Date**

**Line manager's signature**

**Date**