

Parkside Playgroup

61. Menopause Support policy

This policy sets out the rights of employees experiencing menopausal symptoms and explains the support available to them.

What is the menopause

The menopause is a natural event in most women's lives during which they stop having periods and experience hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels. It usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. However, each woman's experience will differ, and menopausal symptoms can occasionally begin before the age of 40. Perimenopause, or menopause transition, begins several years before menopause. Women may start to experience menopausal symptoms during the final two years of perimenopause.

While 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
- heavy periods.

Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work. Parkside Playgroup understands that it has a duty to provide a safe working environment for all employees and therefore commits to ensuring that adjustments and additional support are available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Available support

Parkside Playgroup aims to facilitate an open and understanding working environment.

Employees are encouraged to inform their manager that they are experiencing menopausal symptoms at an early stage to ensure that symptoms are treated as an ongoing health issue rather than as individual instances of ill health.

Early notification will also help managers to determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs.

Employees who do not wish to discuss the issue with their manager may find it helpful to have an initial discussion with a trusted colleague or another member of the senior management team.

There is support information below:

- Menopause Matters (<https://www.menopausematters.co.uk>), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options
- the Daisy Network Charity (<https://www.daisynetwork.org>), which provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency; and
- the Menopause Café (<https://www.menopausecafe.net>), which provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.

Reasonable adjustments

Temperature control

Parkside Playgroup strives to achieve a comfortable working temperature for employees. The dress code has been designed to be flexible so that you can wear what is comfortable for you under your apron.

Flexible working

Parkside Playgroup recognises that difficulty sleeping is a common symptom of the menopause.

To reflect this, as well as the impact of other common symptoms, the company aims to facilitate flexible working wherever possible.

Requests for flexible working could include asking for:

- a change to the pattern of hours worked
- a reduction in working hours
- more frequent breaks.

Applications should be made in writing to the manager of the playgroup. Depending on the circumstances, requests may be approved on a permanent or temporary basis.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Parkside Playgroup
Held on	<hr/> Sept 2024
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> Sept 2025
Signed on behalf of the provider	<hr/>
Name of signatory	<hr/> Brenda Henrick
Role of signatory	<hr/> Chairperson