

Menopause at Work Policy



Policy Statement

Grass Roots Private Day Nursery Ltd is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all staff. We recognise that menopause is a natural stage of life, but for many, symptoms can be long-term and impact work performance or personal wellbeing.

Given our workforce demographic and the physical nature of Early Years care, this policy aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and provide a framework for supporting staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees. While menopause usually affects women, it can also affect trans and non-binary people. This policy is inclusive of all individuals experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Setting: To ensure that the physical environment is assessed and that managers are trained to handle conversations sensitively.
- Managers: To listen with empathy, maintain confidentiality, and implement "reasonable adjustments" where possible.
- Employees: To look after their own health and speak to their line manager if they believe their symptoms are impacting their ability to fulfill their role or if they require adjustments.

Symptom Support & Adjustments

We recognise that the "Ratio" requirements in Early Years make flexibility challenging. However, we will explore all viable options, including:

- Temperature Control: Provision of fans, seating away from heat sources (e.g., radiators/ovens), and the ability to move to outdoor duties if required.
- Hydration: Unrestricted access to cold drinking water throughout the day.
- Facilities: Access to toilets and sanitary products as needed, beyond scheduled break times.
- Physical Demands: Temporary adjustments to tasks involving heavy lifting or prolonged floor-based play if staff are experiencing joint pain or fatigue.
- Cognitive Support: Use of written instructions or "checklists" for staff experiencing "brain fog" to ensure nursery standards and safety protocols are maintained.

Absence and Flexible Working

- Sick Leave: Menopause-related absence will be treated sympathetically. Where possible, it should be recorded as "Menopause Related" to distinguish it from general sickness.
- Flexibility: We will consider requests for temporary changes to start/finish times or shift patterns to help manage symptoms such as insomnia or fatigue.

Confidentiality

All discussions regarding menopause will be treated as strictly confidential. Information will only be shared with those necessary to implement adjustments (e.g., HR or a Room Leader) with the employee's prior consent.

Health and Safety

We will include menopause in our general risk assessments. If a staff member's symptoms are so severe that they may impact the safety of the children (e.g., extreme fatigue), a specific individual risk assessment will be conducted to find a safe way forward.