

Title:	Wellbeing Policy
Associated Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible Working Policy • Health & Safety Policy • Single Equality Policy
1	Policy Statement
	Northampton School for Girls takes seriously its legal duty to manage risks to the health and safety of its people, including stress and mental health conditions. Supporting the wellbeing of our people is linked to organisational effectiveness through benefits such as reduced sickness absence, increased performance, improved morale and satisfaction, and lower staff turnover.
2	Who does this policy apply to?
	All employees at Northampton School for Girls.
3	Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?
	All employees and governors at Northampton School for Girls.
4	What are the principles behind the policy?
	<p>Northampton School for Girls considers respect to be central to the ethos of the organisation and a key tool in supporting our people's physical and mental wellbeing. It is expected that employees will act at all times in accordance with these values and that the Governing Board and Senior Leadership Team lead by example in this. Our culture aims to create the conditions where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open and honest conversations take place • employees feel comfortable to communicate their needs and concerns • our community of people is mental health-literate and mindful of the language they use around wellbeing • every individual takes responsibility for their own actions • support is available for all
5	Procedures (standards)
	<p>5.1 Northampton School for Girls, as the employer, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the impact of organisational decisions on employee wellbeing and where appropriate will consult with employees and establish supportive measures • Be aware of the key workplace issues that may cause harm to employees and consider the full range of preventative and supportive options • Lead by example by promoting positive wellbeing within the school • Provide access to training, resources and guidance to all employees on wellbeing issues; and to line managers on issues such as managing stress or managing absence <p>5.2 Line Managers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain regular contact and communication with all members of their team to help identify and act on any issues without delay • Be familiar with the Wellbeing Policy and other related policies • Recognise how their management style can affect an employee's wellbeing and adjust accordingly • Act as a role model and encourage employees to make use of the employee support services available and participate in wellbeing initiatives • Be mindful of their responsibilities and the boundaries they should adhere to, see Appendix A

5.3 Employees should:

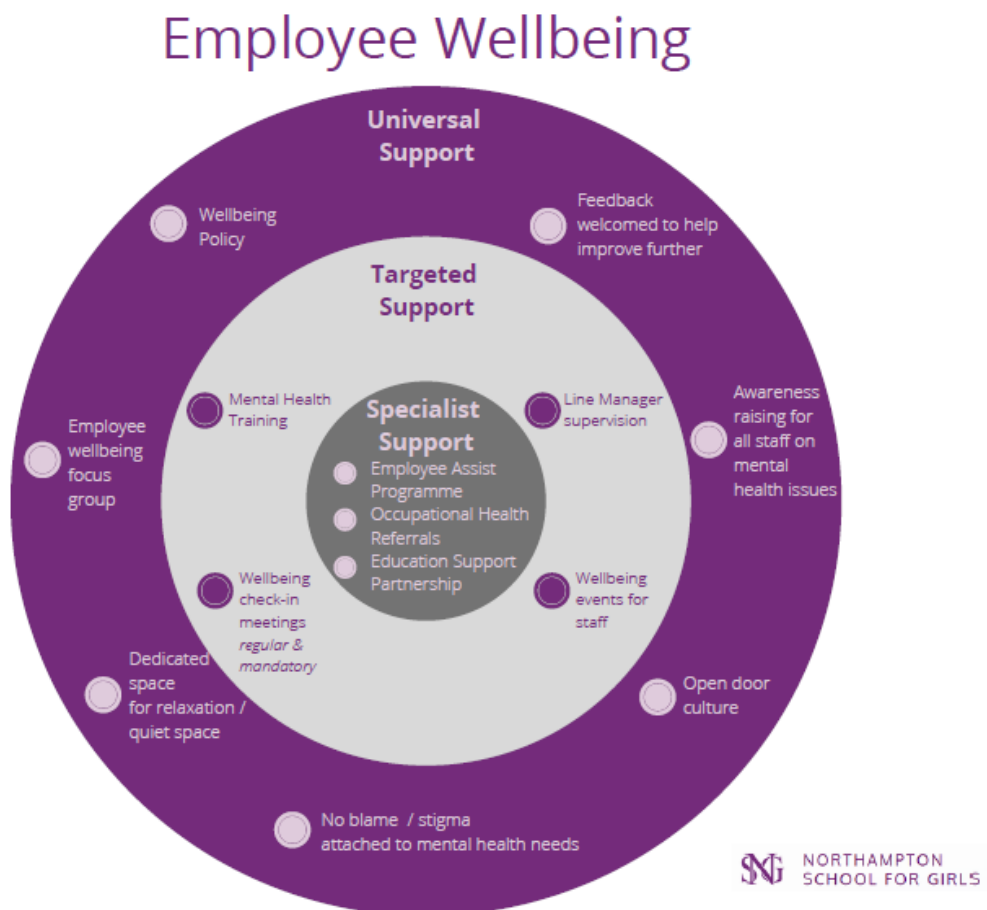
- Take personal responsibility for their own health and wellbeing including seeking advice and support when needed
- Be open and honest about their health and wellbeing with managers, HR and Occupational Health
- Support their own wellbeing by following wellbeing-related policies, engaging with workplace wellbeing initiatives, complying with health and wellbeing processes, taking regular breaks away from their screen and minimising work time beyond their contracted hours.

5.4 Governors

Governors have a responsibility to ensure practices in school contribute to staff wellbeing. This includes monitoring staff absence and regularly requesting feedback from staff governors about wellbeing.

6 Wellbeing Strategy

The following are some of the key ways that Northampton School for Girls offers support for staff wellbeing and these are under regular review:



6.1 The support available is categorised into three areas, as per the diagram above. The following provides examples of the support available under each category but is not a definitive list.

6.2 Specialist Support

- The **Employee Assist Programme** is free for all staff to access and offers a range of support for employee wellbeing including a dedicated telephone line and wellbeing website. Employees are regularly reminded of the service, at an individual and group level. Contact details are available from HR.
- Northampton School for Girls works with a specialist Occupational Health Advisor and refers individual cases through as appropriate, via HR.
- The Education Support Partnership is the only UK charity dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the education workforce. Their details are shared with Northampton School for Girls people as part of the wellbeing offer.

6.3 Targeted Support

- Northampton School for Girls offers support to line managers to develop their skills in respect of supporting their team and recognises that this is an ongoing programme of work with the aim of building the managerial skills and experience needed to support all employees.
- The school aims to build in wellbeing check-ins with all employees which is a practice which started while most employees were working remotely in lockdown (2020). The aim remains to continue these check-ins once the workforce is back on site in person.
- Any member of staff who would benefit from some kind of supervision to help them feel confident that they are taking the right decisions when supporting students experiencing complex issues, including safeguarding and mental health, should speak to their line manager or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.

6.4 Universal Support

- Northampton School for Girls has a strategic **Workload and Wellbeing Charter**, one strand of which is dedicated to the school's wellbeing strategy.
- Employees should feel able to raise concerns with their line manager but for anyone who does not feel comfortable approaching their manager about concerns regarding their mental wellbeing, there are other sources of support. Employees can contact the HR Manager or a member of the SLT in safety and confidence as part of the open-door culture. Appendix A provides a framework to guide managers in responding to employee wellbeing issues, making clear the boundaries of their responsibilities and the expectations of them as line managers.
- The school has a wellbeing forum within school which has previously offered events such as yoga, swimming and fitness sessions on site and mindfulness sessions.
- As well as having a team base within their own building, staff may use the Clare staff room or either of the Clare meeting rooms (if free) to take some time out. Staff may also benefit from taking a walk outside, either within or outside of the school grounds. Staff must remember to seek permission and to sign out & back in at reception if they leave school site during the working day.
- All Northampton School for Girls staff are asked to abide by the published protocols for sending emails, i.e. that **emails should only be sent between the hours of 7.00am to 7.00pm** on a working day. If emails are sent at non-standard hours, there is no obligation on any employee to read it, reply, or take action from it until they are at work. That said, the heaviest times of each employee's workload may differ and each employee will have different preferences for when to do their work. If an employee chooses to reply or act on an email at a non-standard time, then they should schedule their email(s) to be sent within the timeframe set out above.

7.1 Introduction

Northampton School for Girls is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees. Menopause is a natural part of every woman's life; it is not always an easy transition but with the right support it can be much better. Whilst every woman does not suffer with symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their wellbeing at work. Given the demographic of NSG's workforce (55% over the age of 40 and female), we want to ensure that employees and managers have the right guidance and support to manage menopausal symptoms at work.

7.2 Aims

Northampton School for Girls aims to:

- Foster an environment in which employees can openly and comfortably instigate conversations or engage in discussions about menopause, in which employees suffering with menopause symptoms feel confident to discuss it and ask for support to enable them to continue to be successful in their work.
- Ensure all employees and line managers understand what menopause is, can confidently have good conversations, and are clear on the school's policy and practices, supported by HR and Occupational Health where appropriate.

7.3 Responsibilities

- As with any medical issue, employees are expected to take a personal responsibility to look after their health and should be advised to seek advice from their GP in the first instance.
- All employees are responsible for contributing to a respectful and productive working environment and for understanding any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of menopausal symptoms.
- Line managers should familiarise themselves with the policy and guidance available and be ready to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, treating it sensitively and professionally.
- If, through this discussion, line managers identify adjustments which may help the employee, they should contact their senior manager or HR.
- The senior manager, supported by HR, should agree with the employee how best they can be supported and the adjustments which will be put in place. Adjustments and actions should be recorded. An ongoing dialogue and review dates will also be arranged.

7.4 Occupational Health

Where adjustments are unsuccessful, the employee's case may be referred to the external Occupational Health (OH) Advisor for further advice. The OH advice will be reviewed by the senior manager and any recommendations implemented where reasonably practical. OH support will include:

- A holistic assessment of the employee's situation as to whether or not menopause may be contributing to symptoms/wellbeing, providing advice and guidance in line with current research
- Signposting to appropriate sources of help and advice
- Providing advice to HR in determining reasonable adjustments

7.5 Human Resources

Our HR Officer provides immediate guidance on day to day HR issues, however we also commission the external expertise of HR specialists to provide legal and technical support, ensuring that we have the most up to date guidance and advice on all aspects of HR.

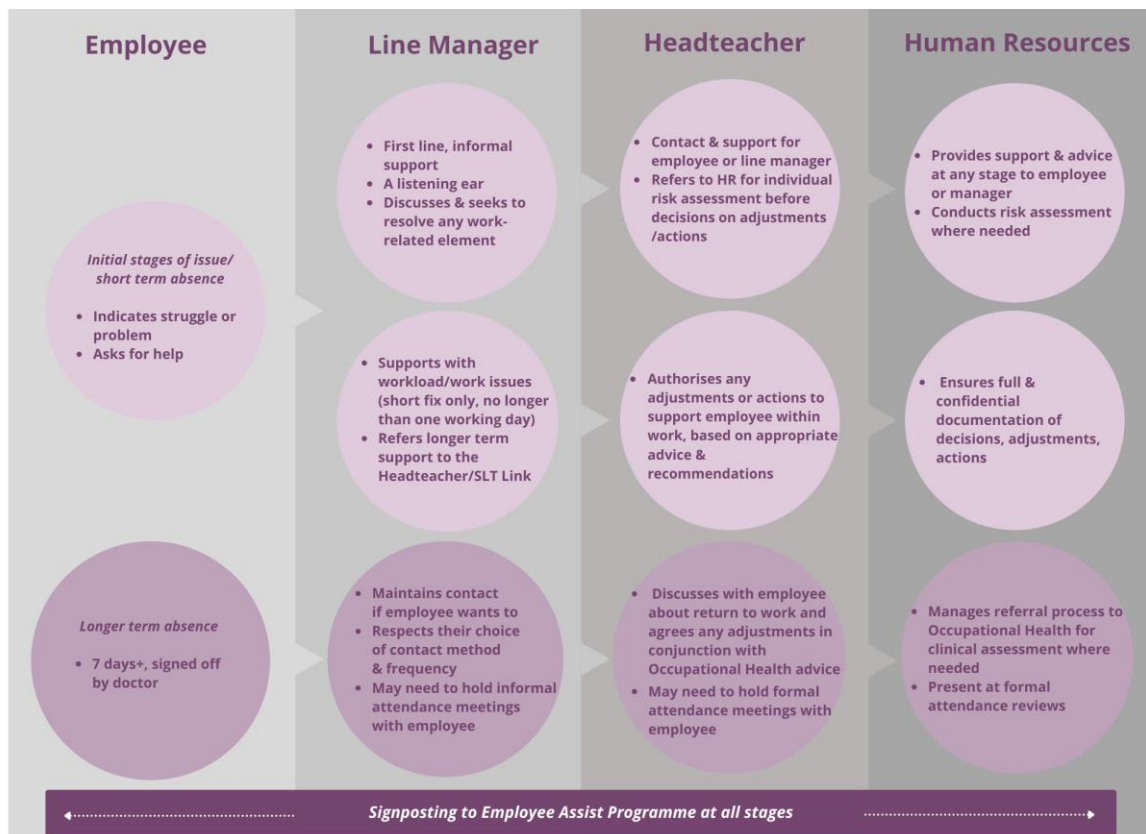
7.6 Appendices

Appendix A – Wellbeing Response Framework

Appendix B – A brief guide to menopause
Appendix C – Line managers’ guidance for sensitive discussion with colleague

8 Appendix A – Wellbeing Response Framework

8.1 The diagram below is intended as a framework for handling employee wellbeing issues. It seeks to clarify a best practice approach, outlining each party’s responsibilities and the steps that should be taken. No two circumstances are the same and so there is flexibility within this process, as an individual situation dictates and authorised by the Headteacher.



9 Appendix B – A brief guide to menopause*

9.1 This guide will help you to:

- be confident about your role in managing and supporting colleagues with menopausal symptoms
- understand and reduce the barriers that could potentially prevent a colleague going through the menopause transition from performing and/or developing to their full potential
- identify appropriate workplace changes or adjustments to support team members and help them thrive at work
- foster an inclusive working environment in which everyone is treated fairly.

9.2 What is menopause?

It’s a natural stage of life when a woman’s oestrogen levels decline and she stops having periods. As menopausal symptoms are typically experienced for several years, it is best described as a ‘transition’ rather than a one-off event.

9.3 When does it happen?

The menopause typically happens between age 45 and 55. The 'perimenopause' is the phase leading up to the menopause, when a woman's hormone balance starts to change. For some women this can start as early as their twenties or as late as their late forties. The average age for a woman to undergo the menopause in the UK is 51, but around 1 in 100 experience it before the age of 40. This is known as premature ovarian insufficiency (POI), or 'premature menopause'. Often, there is no clear cause for the early onset of menopause, but it can also be as a result of surgery (for example hysterectomy, oophorectomy), illness or treatment (such as chemotherapy).

9.4 What are the symptoms?

The menopause can cause a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms that can last for several years. The majority of menopausal women experience symptoms, but everyone is different. Symptoms can fluctuate and be felt to varying degrees. Experiencing any of the typical symptoms can pose a challenge for women as they go about their daily lives, including at work. Some of the most typical symptoms of the menopause include:

- psychological issues such as mood disturbances, anxiety and/or depression, memory loss, panic attacks, loss of confidence and reduced concentration
- hot flushes (brief and sudden surges of heat usually felt in the face, neck and chest)
- sleep disturbance that can make people feel tired and irritable
- night sweats (hot flushes that happen during the night)
- muscle and joint stiffness, aches and pains
- recurrent urinary tract infections (UTIs) including cystitis
- headaches
- palpitations (heartbeats that become more noticeable)

9.5 Your role as a people manager

You have an important role to play in ensuring that anyone experiencing menopausal symptoms gets the same support and understanding as if they had any other health issue.

The role of line managers in supporting women experiencing menopause transition is crucial. Effective management of team members with menopausal symptoms that are impacting on their work will help you to improve your team's morale, retain valuable skills and talent, and reduce sickness absence.

Good people management is fundamental to supporting employee health and well-being, spotting early signs of ill health or distress, and initiating early intervention. Line managers are typically the first point of contact if someone needs to discuss their health concerns or needs a change or adjustment to their work or working hours, to enable them to perform to their full potential. Line managers are also responsible for implementing the people management policies and practices that can help someone experiencing the menopause to feel supported, and to be effective in their role.

9.6 Building Trust

The level of trust you build with employees will determine the extent to which female colleagues are able to discuss menopausal symptoms and any support or adjustments they need at work. If there are regular and informal one-to-ones between a manager and employee, this can provide the forum for a conversation about any changes to someone's health situation, including the menopause.

9.7 Management Style

The easier you make it for someone to open up to you, the easier it will be to identify the support they need. Menopause can affect people's confidence and it can be very daunting talking to someone who has no knowledge/awareness of the menopause. The more supportive and knowledgeable you are about

	<p>the range of menopausal symptoms, the less likely that women will feel embarrassed to approach you and discuss how the menopause is affecting their health and their work. Awareness about the symptoms and range of support available in the organisation will also increase your own confidence in discussing the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships based on trust, empathy and respect will make it easier for an employee to feel comfortable about raising a health issue like the menopause. • Hold regular and informal one-to-ones with members of your team can provide the forum for a conversation about any changes to someone’s health situation, including the menopause. • Ask people how they are on a regular basis will help to create an open and inclusive culture, and encourage someone to raise any concerns. • Do not make assumptions – everyone is different, so take your lead from the individual.
10	Appendix C – Line managers’ guidance for discussion*
	<p>10.1 Confidentiality If someone tells you about their health condition, including menopausal symptoms, this should be treated as confidential. If they want information about their condition to be shared, consent must be explicit. You should discuss with them who will be told and by whom, as well as the information they do or don’t want shared with colleagues.</p> <p>10.2 How to approach a sensitive conversation It’s important to set the right tone when opening a conversation about any sensitive issue. The following checklist provides some useful guidance to approaching a sensitive conversation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid interruptions – switch off phones, ensure you will not be interrupted by colleagues walking in and interrupting. • Ask simple, open, non-judgmental questions. • Avoid judgmental or patronising responses. • Speak calmly. • Maintain good eye contact. • Listen actively and carefully. • Encourage the employee to talk. • Give the employee ample opportunity to explain the situation in their own words. • Show empathy and understanding. • Be prepared for some silences and be patient. • Focus on the person, not the problem. • Avoid making assumptions or being prescriptive. <p>* All content in Appendices B & C is taken from CIPD’s The Menopause At Work: A Practical Guide For People Managers</p>
11	Policy Review
	<p>11.1 This policy will be monitored as part of Northampton School for Girls’ annual internal review and reviewed on a three year cycle or as required by legislative changes.</p>

