

## New and Expectant Mothers' Risk Assessment (incorporating COVID-19 factors)

**PLEASE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE NOTES PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING THE RISK ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETING THE DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING**

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH COVID 19

#### Guidance on protecting people who are clinically **extremely** vulnerable and clinically vulnerable from COVID-19:

In relation to going to work, Government restrictions state: "To help contain the virus, everyone who can work effectively from home must do so'... but...'Public sector employees working in essential services, including education settings, should continue to go into work. The risk of transmission can be substantially reduced if COVID-secure guidelines are followed closely. Extra consideration should be given to those people at higher risk."

Aligned with this, at WeST, in all but exceptional cases, staff are required to be in their settings to undertake activities and tasks directly in support of day-to-day teaching and site-based operations. Exceptionally, where a role may be conducive to home working e.g. a limited number of administrative/professional roles, leaders will consider what is feasible and appropriate within the context of their local school-based Risk Assessment measures.

In addition:

**Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) must work from home** – if they cannot work from home, they should not attend work.

**Those who are clinically vulnerable (CV) are expected to attend work** unless, exceptionally, their role can be performed satisfactorily from home (as above) or it is not possible for the setting to implement the adjustments required by the risk assessments. Primarily this is a decision for the employer to make in consultation with the staff member.

Whilst pregnancy is categorised as a clinical vulnerability, it is possible that there may be other health-related factors which increase a pregnant woman's category to clinically extremely vulnerable.

Where schools/business units apply the full measures in their local Risk Assessments the risks to all staff will be mitigated significantly, including those who are clinically vulnerable.

Advice on [new national restrictions from 5 November for clinically vulnerable people](#)

Advice on [new guidance on protecting the clinically extremely vulnerable](#).

School leaders should conduct an individual risk assessment with the CV to confirm the ability to adhere to the measures outlined in the wider Risk Assessment and to consider any additional specific measures in

response to individual cases. Staff may be deployed into reasonable alternative duties or roles in school where measures can be maintained.

People who live with those who are clinically extremely vulnerable should attend the workplace.

### **Demographic considerations for the Risk Assessment:**

In addition, there are other demographic considerations related to COVID-19. Emerging evidence suggests that people from Black and Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities seem to be at greater risk from Covid-19. The causes of these increased risk factors are not yet fully understood, and further research is taking place.

Therefore, where a pregnant woman also falls into these categories, line managers should closely consider the combined factors as part of her risk assessment.

The risk assessment should be a meaningful conversation and exploration for the risk factors and perception of the woman. Where there is agreement that the risk factors can be mitigated to everyone's satisfaction no change is needed. Where however it is clear there are increased risks for the woman the line manager must provide support and make necessary adjustments to mitigate those risks.

WeST HR and our OH provider can provide advice and support to the line manager and member of staff in putting measures in place to support the pregnant employee, and, should any adjustment to staff working arrangement place a strain on delivery, these issues can be escalated to ensure support is provided to resolve the issues as quickly as possible.

### Demographic factors associated with an elevated Covid-19 risk:

#### **Ethnicity:**

Emerging data and research suggest that BAME people are at greater risk from COVID-19, compared to their white counterparts. A recent UK study by the Intensive Care National Audit and Research Centre found that 35% of 2,000 COVID-19 patients were non-white, which is nearly triple the 13% proportion in the wider UK population. From this, Asian patients were twice as likely to be most seriously ill, and black patients 3.4-times more likely, compared to white patients. Similar findings have emerged from studies in the US, as well. We are taking these findings very seriously and on this basis, we must take colleagues' ethnicity into account when assessing their risk from COVID-19

#### **Religion or Beliefs:**

The current situation may coincide with religious events that could impact on the ability of individual members of staff to perform their role fully. Line managers should have a thorough and comprehensive conversation with individual staff who may be affected and consider what adjustments could be made.

Employee Details			
Employee Name		Date	
Job Title		Date of Birth	
School/Business Unit		Department	
Reason for New and Expectant Mother's Risk Assessment (circle which one applies)	Initial assessment / review / following an incident		
COVID-19 factors to be considered (in addition to pregnancy and being clinically vulnerable)	demographic factors / other		
Details of COVID-19 - related concerns to be discussed and considered			
Measures			
Comment on the ability to implement measures as described by the wider school/business unit-based COVID-19 risk assessment and any difficulties in this regard			
Comment on any additional and specific measures to be implemented in this case to lower risk associated with COVID-19			

**Significant Hazard and possible Outcomes / injuries to consider in respect of New and Expectant Mothers:**

- **Access / Egress** - mobility may be impaired during different stages of pregnancy
- **Lifting and carrying loads** - musculoskeletal injury / weakening of the skeletal structure
- **Fatigue** - from prolonged standing or physical activity
- **Lifting and carrying loads** - musculoskeletal injury / weakening of the skeletal structure

- **Slips, Trips and Falls** - increased risk of injury due to physical change or hormonal changes
- **Working at Height** - loss of agility and or balance
- **Chemical/Biological Exposure** - Ionising radiation\* (\*applicable to science teachers and technicians only) exposure to unborn child
- **Display Screen Equipment** - increased susceptibility to musculoskeletal disorders and deep vein thrombosis (DVT)
- **Out of hours working** - long working hours/shift work can affect the health of pregnant women
- **Personal Safety/Lone Working** - violence or fear of violence can increase risk of miscarriage or premature birth
- **Work related stress** - individual vulnerable to stress due to hormonal, psychological and physiological changes during pregnancy
- **General Welfare** –
  - access to toilets to protect against risk of infection and kidney disease
  - Temperature / humidity
  - lower tolerance to heat and humidity resulting in discomfort/fainting
  - Travel Health - increased medical risk from business travel / poor posture or prolonged sitting increases risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

Hazards and Control Measures		
Potential Job Demands	Y/N	Specific concerns, adjustments and comments
Does the role involve lifting, pushing or carrying heavy objects?		
Does the role involve standing or sitting for long periods of time?		
Does the role involve a lot of walking?		
Are you required to use stairs frequently?		
Are you required to be in busy areas at peak times?		
Does the role involve driving a vehicle for work?		
Are you required to work at height?		
Does the role involve accessing areas with limited space?		
Does the role involve significant exposure to loud noise?		
Is your role predominantly working outdoors?		
Do you anticipate any tasks become more hazardous as the body changes?		

Are you able to leave the building within the required timescales of a fire evacuation? Do you need any support? Do you usually have a role in fire drills?		
Does your role involve the use of chemicals / hazardous substances?		
If so, do these substances pose any risks to you whilst pregnant or breastfeeding? <i>See COSHH assessments / material safety data sheets or seek advice from the health and safety manager if you are unsure</i>		
Do you wear protective clothing in your role?		
If so, is this likely to present a problem as pregnancy develops?		
Are you a DSE user (use a computer for an hour or more daily)?		
If yes, has your DSE workstation assessment been completed or reviewed?		
Is there adequate room for you to get into and out of the workstation?		
Will there be enough room as the pregnancy develops?		
Do you have an adjustable seat with a backrest?		
Do you require a footrest?		
Does the role involve shift work?		
Does the role generally involve working long hours?		
Are you able to adapt your hours of work if required?		
Does the role involve unpredictable working hours?		
Do you consider the work to be significantly stressful?		
Does any part of the job involve dealing with the public?		
Does the role involve dealing with emergencies?		
Does the work involve lone working?		

Are there are risks of violence generally in the workplace?		
Is there a perceived risk of violence or threat of violence/abuse within your role?		
If yes to be the above, can your role be modified?		
Do you have the appropriate means to contact colleagues in an emergency?		
Are you able to access toilet facilities easily and when needed?		
Are rest facilities adequate?		
Can you take rest breaks when needed?		
Do you have access to a quiet area where you can rest as necessary?		
Is dust or of air pollution / contamination an issue?		
Do you have the means to control the temperature within your usual work setting?		
<b>Summary of additional control measures or actions to address the hazards identified above for new and expectant mothers</b>		
Action/control measure	Date to be carried out	Person responsible
<b>Outcome</b>		

Select as appropriate:

- Employee able to continue at work in current role under site-based risk assessment and any other control measures/actions outlined above
- Employee able to continue at work but in alternative role/duties under site-based risk assessment and any other control measures/actions as outlined above
- In exceptional circumstances, agreement for the employee to work remotely/from home
- Other – please specify here:

#### Declaration of Understanding

I can confirm that any information contained in this risk assessment is reflective of the conversation held and agreement reached:

Line Manager's Name (Print Name)	
Signed	
Date	
Employees Name (Print Name)	
Signed	
Date	

**This risk assessment should be kept under review and revisited in the event of changing government guidance or the employee's personal circumstances.**