

Guidance on Risk Assessment requirements for clinically extremely vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and employees of Black Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) Origin

Originally issue : Monday 1 June 2020

Updated:

Friday 12 June 2020

Thursday 2 July 2020

Thursday 16 July 2020

Tuesday 3 November 2020 Updated to Reflect Lockdown/tighter national restrictions from 5 November 2020

Thursday 26 November 2020 – updated to reflect moving out of lockdown/tighter national restrictions from the 2 December 2020 (Any updates are highlighted in Yellow)

Wednesday 2 December 2020 – updated re those over 28 weeks pregnant from the 2 December 2020.(Any updates are highlighted in Yellow)

This document sets out the specific arrangements for those staff who are at a potentially higher risk should they contract Covid-19, along with the requirement to undertake an individual risk assessments where a return to working in school is being considered.

These higher risk groups are set out below along with the Local Authority advice on working arrangements and pay for these staff.

Please note that for our Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools where the LA is the employer we would expect this advice to be followed.

Academies, Trust/Foundation and VA schools can take their own decisions but this should be line with the DfE/national guidance as a minimum.

1. Employees in the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) category

Staff in this category are those that received a letter advising them to be more careful and were advised to work from home during the period of national restrictions from the 5 November to the 2 December 2020.

From the 2 December 2020 these staff are now permitted to return to working in school as long as the DfE guidance is followed, whole school and individual risk assessments are undertaken, meaning your school is Covid-Secure.

Individual risk assessments should be kept under regular review, particularly where infection rates increase locally, there is an outbreak in your setting or we move into a higher tier.

2. Employees in the clinically vulnerable (CV) category

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or over (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
 - chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
 - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
 - chronic kidney disease
 - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
 - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS) or cerebral palsy
 - diabetes
 - a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions or medicines they are taking (such as steroid tablets)
 - being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant (see 3 below for further details)

Staff in this category are able to remain working in school, subject to Covid-Secure measures being in place.

You should have previously undertaken an individual risk assessment, and this should be reviewed particularly where infection rates increase locally, there is an outbreak in your setting or we move into a higher tier.

3. Pregnant employees

An individual Covid risk assessment as well as a pregnancy risk assessment is required if the employee is working, whether at home or outside of their home. The Individual Covid risk assessment should be reviewed particularly where infection rates increase locally, there is an outbreak in your setting or we move into a higher tier.

Useful information re pregnancy during coronavirus is available here

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy#occupational>

a) Pregnant employees who are under 28 weeks pregnant

These employees can continue to work in school unless they fall into the CEV category.

As with CV staff they should have an individual risk assessment and this should be kept under regular review, particularly where infection rates increase locally, there is an outbreak in your setting or we move into a higher tier.

Please be mindful of those who may have a number of risk factors when undertaking this risk assessment.

b) Pregnant employees who are over 28 weeks pregnant

From the 2 December 2020 these staff are permitted to return to work in school if they cannot perform their role effectively from home/or it is their preference to attend school. This is subject to the DfE guidance being followed, whole school and individual risk assessments (including pregnancy risk assessments) are undertaken, meaning your school is Covid-Secure.

4. Employees who are over the age of 60

The guidance was amended for the period of tighter national restrictions from the 5 November to the 2 December 2020 to reflect that those over 60 or also at a higher risk, although they do not fall into the CV or CEV category by virtue of their age.

However, they were able to remain working in school as long as this remains Covid-Secure.

We would continue to advise that you have conversations with those over 60 to discuss highlight the higher risk factors and ensure they are aware of the government advice to be especially careful in following the full range of Covid measures within and outside of work.

There is no requirement to undertake an individual risk assessment but this should be supported if these staff make this request.

5. Employees from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority (BAME) origin

National data indicates that there is increased risk amongst BAME communities, in particular Black and Asian (African, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Filipino, Chinese and Japanese). NHS guidance indicates that BAME employees over 55 may be at more risk than those of non BAME origin especially if combined with other risk factors, including being male. NHS Research also highlights that BAME employees are less likely to raise concerns they may have for example around FIT testing for PPE due to beards, veils, turbans etc. Managers should carry out an Individual Risk Assessment for **Potentially Vulnerable Workers** with BAME employees, to open up a conversation about what could be done to help them stay safe if they are working outside of their own home.

Risk Assessment for Potentially Vulnerable Workers

This will include

- Ascertaining whether social distancing measures can be maintained
- Considering any adjustments to the role e.g. limiting exposure to the public, working in alternative locations.
- Ensuring that adequate training regarding infection control has been received and understood and PPE required for the role is in place.
- Considering travel to work. Can the individual have different start times to accommodate use of public transport or use other means of travel?
- Considering different job roles or redeployment to a lower risk activity as a temporary measure.

Headteachers must regularly monitor and review the risk assessment with the individual to ensure that that it is operating effectively and adjust accordingly. Individuals should raise any concerns with their Headteacher as soon as possible.