

Originally issue : Monday 1 June 2020

Most recent update:

Friday 19 March 2021 – updated to reflect the confirmed pausing of shielding from the 1 April 21 and the updated LA position of those over 28 weeks pregnant.

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.

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 shield, they were advised to work from home during periods of national lockdown.

These employees should not attend work and be supported to work from home where possible during these periods.

If they cannot work effectively from home they should be placed on a period of paid special leave.

For those of you using the MyView system this special leave should be recorded as (Paid Leave) COVID -19 – Self –Extremely Vulnerable. This should be recorded from the 5 January 2021 up to and including the 31 March 2021.

It has now been confirmed that the current period of shielding for this group will pause on the 31 March 2021 and therefore staff in this group would be permitted to attend work from the 1 April 2021, where working from home is not possible. However, an individual risk assessment should be updated/undertaken prior to their return to on site working.

See further details here [guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19](#)

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 work on site, subject to whole school risk assessment and a review of their previously undertaken individual risk assessment.

The individual risk assessment should continue to be kept under review.

See further details here [staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing clinically-vulnerable-people](#)

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 on site, subject to whole school risk assessment and a review of their previously undertaken individual risk assessments, unless they also fall into the CEV category or they are in their 3rd Trimester (28 weeks plus).

As with CV staff they should have an individual risk assessments and these 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

This is the position of Telford & Wrekin Council and should apply to all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools as we are the employer. Other schools are able to take their own position on this taking into account the national advice (see link above).

Staff in this group are treated in the same way as those in the CEV category above, therefore they should continue to remain working from home or be on paid special leave up to and including the 31 March 2021, with them being able to return to work on site if they wish from the 1 April 2021 (as now confirmed by the Government), subject to a review/completion of an individual risk assessment and maternity risk assessment.

Should they be unable to work from home or on site they should be placed on a period of paid special leave.

For those of you using the MyView system this special leave should be recorded as (Paid Leave) COVID -19 – Self – Vulnerable (pregnant). This should be recorded from the 5 January 2021 up to and including the 31 March 2021 or up to the start of maternity leave (whichever is the sooner).

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 are able to remain working on site subject to the school having a whole school risk assessment in place.

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 it is operating effectively and adjust accordingly. Individuals should be encouraged to raise any concerns with their Headteacher as soon as possible.