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# New and Expectant Mothers Policy

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RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR  
Chief Executive Officer

RATIFIED BY TRUST  
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REVIEW DATE  
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# 1 Introduction

We are committed to the health and well-being of new and expectant mothers. Every organisation wishes to ensure women are able to work as effectively and comfortably as possible by referring women as soon as a pregnancy is announced, to assess the need for any adjustments to their work. This support is available for both pregnant women and new mothers (i.e. pregnant or have given birth within the previous six months or are breastfeeding).

Pregnancy should be regarded as part of everyday life and therefore is not equated with ill-health. However, on occasion the workplace conditions and/or process may pose a hazard to the expectant, new or nursing mother and this may be compounded by pregnancy related health issues.

When you have confirmed that you are pregnant, tell your employer immediately, in writing. The company will want to undertake a risk assessment and introduce any practicable measures that need to be taken for your protection. During the first three months of your pregnancy, you may be vulnerable to spontaneous miscarriage, so it is important that the Company is aware of your condition as soon as possible.

Knowledge Schools Trust will assess the risks to all new and expectant mothers in its employment and do what is reasonably practicable to control risks identified. Where staff are working in environments that are controlled by other organisations or work away from a fixed environment or from home, the Trust will strive to maintain these principles as far as is practicable.

In some workplaces, there are risks that may affect the health and safety of new and expectant mothers and that of their child and there are specific laws that require employers to protect the health and safety of new and expectant mothers.

## Definitions:

"New or expectant mother" means an employee who:

- is pregnant, or
- has given birth within the previous six months, and/or
- still breastfeeding.

'Given Birth' is defined as 'delivered a living child, or after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a stillborn child'.

## 2 Responsibilities

KST are responsible for:

- Assessing the risks created by work to new and expectant mothers
- Making appropriate arrangements to eliminate or control risks identified
- Recording the significant findings of risk assessments and reviewing that control measures are effective
- Providing facilities for employee rest purposes

### Employees

It is important for employees to inform their manager and HR department that they are pregnant as soon as possible, so that a risk assessment can be carried out. Without this information the employer is unable to take any further action. We ask that employees keep us updated regarding their pregnancy and any issues they have at work.

## 3 Duties of employers

### General

Employers need to consider within their general risk assessment that new or expectant mothers are not exposed to significant risks. These include risks to the unborn child or the child of a woman who is still breastfeeding.

Once we are notified of a pregnancy, our central HR team will carry out a risk assessment with you. **Appendix 1- Expectant Mother Risk Assessment.**

An outline of the risk assessment process is detailed in [HSE Pregnant Worker Risk Assessment Flow chart](#). There could be different risks depending on whether an employee is pregnant, has given birth recently, or is breastfeeding.

The main hazards which may affect the health and safety of new or expectant mothers employed by the KST are listed in **Appendix 2.**

Once a significant risk has been identified, a decision must be made on what action to take:

- in all cases, consideration should be given to the removal of the hazard

- where it is not feasible to remove the hazard, the risk should be controlled

If there is still a significant risk which goes beyond the level of risk arising from routine activities, the following action should be taken:

- temporarily adjust working conditions and/or hours of work; or if it is not reasonable to do so or would not avoid the risk;
- offer suitable alternative work if any is available;
- if neither of these options is feasible, suspend the employee from work (on pay) for as long as necessary to protect the employee's health or that of her unborn child.

The above-mentioned actions are only necessary where the risk assessment has resulted in genuine concern. Employers must also take into account any medical advice from the employee's GP or midwife about their health, and adjust their working conditions accordingly.

There is a need for the employer/line manager to regularly monitor and review the original risk assessment, taking into account possible risks that may occur at different stages of the pregnancy. This review can be achieved during supervision with the line manager or discussed sooner if there is any change in circumstances reported by the employee. A record should be kept that this review has taken place.

### **Breastfeeding Employees**

There are different risks to consider for employees who are breastfeeding. Managers must ensure that these do not affect the health and/or safety of the employee or baby as long as breastfeeding continues.

The regulations do not put a time limit on breastfeeding; it is for the individual to decide for themselves, depending on their own circumstances.

Although there is no requirement to do so, consideration should be given to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees who are breastfeeding to express and store milk. (NB toilets are not considered suitable for this.)

Where an employee continues to breastfeed for many months, the risk assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure the control measures remain effective. The Department of Health has produced information for new mothers wishing to continue to breastfeed when they return to work see: [NHS Breastfeeding and Work](#).

### **Information for Employees**

If assessment reveals any significant risks, employees of child-bearing capacity should be given information about these. Information on the main areas relating

to our Schools is contained in the employee guidance **Appendix 2**. This should be made available, both to pregnant employees and to other employees, on request.

In general, employees should be:

- told about significant risks if they are or could in the future be pregnant or breastfeeding;
- given information about the actions that will be taken to make sure that they are not exposed to the risks that could cause harm.

For example, female employees whose work brings them into contact with children must be advised of the risk of exposure to certain infections and the actions that must be taken to avoid this risk (see **Appendix 2**).

## 4 Advice and Support

The Trust's HR Advisor will be able to assist you with maternity leave and employment issues.

## 5 Legislation

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSAWA)

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (WHSWR)

The Equality Act 2010

The Employment Rights Act 1996

These regulations cover female employees of childbearing age and expectant or new mothers, including those who are breastfeeding.

## 6 Further information and guidance

More detailed information on supporting New and Expectant Mothers is available see the links listed below:

### **Health & Safety Executive**

[HSE New and Expectant Mothers](#)

[HSE FAQs New and Expectant Mothers](#)

[HSE Infection Risks to New and Expectant Mothers in the workplace](#)

[New and Expectant Mothers who Work indg373 \(rev2\)](#)

Health Protection Agency

HPA Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and Child Care Settings

# Risk Assessment – Expectant Mothers



**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of risk assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Employees name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Department:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Line Managers name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Expected date of delivery:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hospital:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Assessment completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Hazard	What are the hazards?	What hazard is there in School?	Plan to avoid any risk	Notes taken at assessment	Level of Risk, tick as appropriate		
					Low	Medium	High
Physical	Shock, vibration or movement	Pupils pushing in the corridors and on the stairs	Make pupils and teachers aware. Wait until after the rush.				
Physical	Slips and trips	All staff to report spillages asap to the site team.	Site team to attend urgently.				
Physical	Noise	No loud machinery. Pupil noise.					
Physical	Manual handling of loads	Department or stationery orders.	Site team to help with deliveries. No lifting to be undertaken by any staff member which could cause harm				
Physical	Mental or physical fatigue		Make sure breaks are taken				
Biological Agents	Viruses – HBV, HCV, HIV, TB, chickenpox, Rubella, toxoplasma, CMV, Covid 19	Pupils being sick	Sicknesses which can harm expectant mothers to be stated at morning briefings and the plan of action agreed				
Chemical Agents	Pesticides, lead, carbon monoxide	Some departments may use chemical agents in experiments	Expectant mothers should take necessary precautions to avoid using chemicals and to wear the correct protective clothing				

Working conditions	Work and Display Screen equipment	Posture and positioning for computer work and classroom teaching	Assessment to be carried out and any equipment needed, purchased.			
Working conditions	Evening Work	After school clubs and parents evenings	Planning for any after school events to be discussed in advance, i.e. parents evenings			
Working conditions	Violence	Pupil fights	Employee to remove themselves from any hazardous situation			
Working conditions	Fatigue		Discuss an area where the employee can sit down to rest.			
Working conditions	Medical	Working alone	Make other staff aware of the pregnancy and the location of the pregnant staff member. Discuss with pupils that if a teacher needs help to go to the next door classroom for help urgently			
Identify the steps that can remove or reduce the risk:						
Specify and list remedial action to be taken as agreed with employer:						



## Appendix 2 – Health Guidance for new and expectant mothers at work

### Introduction

Employers have a duty to protect the health and safety of women of childbearing age who are pregnant, have given birth within the previous six months or who are breastfeeding. This includes reviewing existing risk assessments which may include specific risks to new and expectant mothers.

Although most employees will be able to carry out their normal duties when they are pregnant or have recently given birth, special arrangements will have to be made for some expectant mothers and breast-feeding mothers. This is to ensure that they are not exposed to any significant risk.

Although you do not have to tell your manager that you are pregnant or breastfeeding, it is important (for your and your child's health, safety and protection) that you inform him/her (in writing) as early as possible. Until you have given notification, no action can be taken other than that arising from the risk assessment for all employees. You will be asked to provide a certificate from your GP or midwife.

If you have any concerns about your health and safety at work during your pregnancy, whether or not they are mentioned in this document, please contact your line manager or the Trust HR Team.

This document is intended to be a general explanatory document. Consequently, it cannot give detailed medical information about a particular situation at any time. It is important, therefore, that if you have any particular queries relating to your own health or medical circumstances, you should seek medical advice from your own doctor or midwife or the appropriate specialist.

### **Risk Assessment following notification of pregnancy, having given birth in the last six months or whilst breast feeding**

If additional risks are not initially identified the situation will be regularly monitored and reviewed. If a risk is identified, the first step is to remove it if possible. If this is not possible, consideration will be given as to whether your working conditions or hours can be adjusted. If this is not possible, the possibility of offering suitable alternative work will be considered. This will be on the same terms and conditions of employment.

If suitable alternative work is not available, you will be suspended from work on paid leave, for as long as is necessary to protect your health and safety or that of your child. All of these actions will be monitored on a regular basis. You will be involved in this process, and it is important that you pass on any advice you have received from your doctor or midwife.

## Possible Risks

There may be risks from different physical, biological and chemical agents, working conditions and processes. These risks will vary depending on your health and at different stages of your pregnancy or on your return to work.

Some of the more common risks might be:

- lifting/carrying heavy loads
- standing or sitting for long lengths of time
- exposure to infectious diseases, e.g. rubella, chicken pox, Parvo Virus (slapped cheek), Covid 19
- exposure to chemicals (substances hazardous to health)
- exposure to bodily products such as blood and urine
- exposure to lead
- work related stress
- threat of violence in the workplace
- long working hours
- excessively noisy workplaces
- use of Display Screen Equipment

Apart from hazards already mentioned above, there are other aspects of pregnancy that may affect the pregnant employee. The impact will vary during the course of pregnancy and effects should be kept under review.

Examples include:

- Morning sickness
- Backache
- Varicose veins
- Haemorrhoids
- Frequent visits to the toilet
- Increasing size
- Tiredness
- Balance
- Comfort
- Dexterity, agility, co-ordination, speed of movement and reach may be impaired due to
- Mental wellbeing.

The above list is not exhaustive; line managers should seek advice if the employee is experiencing significant problems associated with their pregnancy or return to work.

Employers must also take into account any medical advice from the employee's GP or midwife about their health, and adjust their working conditions accordingly.

Your Headteacher or HR team will discuss with you the risk assessment that is already in place for all employees and discuss whether any additional controls are necessary for you.

For more information please see <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/infections-that-may-affect-your-baby/>

## Rest Facilities

It is a requirement for pregnant and breastfeeding employees to have access to rest facilities. This may be the first aid room or a comfortable chair in a quiet place. It is good practice to have a private, healthy and safe environment for nursing mothers to express and store milk, but this is not a legal requirement. It is not suitable to use toilets for this purpose.

## Breastfeeding

It is for you to decide how long you wish to breastfeed and returning to work does not mean you have to stop. Your manager will carry out a risk assessment and make arrangements with you prior to your return to work if you choose to continue to breastfeed.

Further guidance is detailed in the Department of Health leaflet:

## NHS Breastfeeding and Work

### General

Please speak to your line manager if you have any concerns about your risk assessment or control measures. Alternatively, you may wish to speak to your doctor/midwife.

### Further Information

Further information is available in the links below:

[KST Family Policy](#)

<https://www.nct.org.uk/pregnancy>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/>

[VDU Risk Assessment](#)



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