

## Guidance for schools on addressing the concerns of individual staff including risk assessment and support plan, where appropriate

### Purpose

To support the process for staff who have concerns in the present COVID-19 period. These may be regarding underlying health condition or have concerns relating to their age, gender, ethnicity, medical condition, or other that may lead to an individual risk assessment and support plan.

### A staged approach

We are proposing that schools continue to adopt a staged approach to addressing the concerns that staff may have.

1. In the first instance schools should make sure that staff are aware that if they have a concern about returning (or continuing to work) to school or working from home, that they should take the opportunity to discuss their concerns with the headteacher or member of the SLT (for some schools with large staff numbers it may not be practical for one person to manage all of the conversations). It is acknowledged that many schools are already doing this.
2. The discussion should be confidential and supportive, and its purpose is to allow the headteacher or manager to understand the concerns that the member of staff has. The more supportive and reassuring the tone of the discussion, the more likely it is that the member of staff will feel comfortable sharing their concerns. The appropriate staffing guidance should be followed for categories of staff.
3. It may be that once the concerns are detailed that the manager is able during the discussion to provide the assurance and support that leads to the member of staff feeling more confident about returning. It may also be necessary, depending on the concerns that are aired, to advise the employee to seek medical advice. If in the opinion of the headteacher/manager or the employee, the concerns have not been addressed then an individual risk assessment and support plan can be undertaken.
4. This risk assessment and support plan should be completed alongside a member of staff who may wish to take advice from their trade union. Staff should then receive a copy of their completed risk assessment.
5. The outcome of the risk assessment and support plan should be that the employee can/will work within the school or that more evidence/adjustment/advice is needed (e.g. medical advice).

Here is the [individual risk assessment and support plan template](#).

### Risk factors for severe COVID-19

#### Age

Age is the strongest risk factor for severe COVID-19 disease. COVID-19 death rates increase exponentially with age.

#### Immunosuppressed

People who are immunosuppressed, or have specific other medical conditions, may have a reduced ability to fight infections and other diseases, including COVID-19. Further information on who is included in these groups of people is included in the sections on [vaccination](#) and new [treatments](#).

#### Gender

Being male is a risk factor for severe COVID-19 disease.

#### BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) staff

People from BAME backgrounds have higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease particularly for Black and Asian backgrounds.

There is currently no risk calculator to enable staff to understand their individual personal risk of severe COVID-19 disease. However, from the current evidence, in general, a combination of risk factors such as being male, from a BAME background and having a long-term medical condition significantly increases the age-related risk (this may be higher for those who are 'extremely clinically vulnerable'). Having multiple risk factors increases risk further.

#### Disability

it is important to consider how disabled staff are likely to manage their disability during this period through the application of reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments will need to be made for any further challenges presented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Was this page useful?

- [Yes](#)
- [Neutral](#)
- [No](#)

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