

Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston SWB Academy New and Expectant Mothers Policy

Policy version control

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1. Introduction and context

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is aware of the susceptibility of new and expectant mothers to certain risks that may arise as a consequence of their employment and will assess and document those additional risks and ensure measures are provided to protect their health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable.

OAT also understands that preventing a mother from breastfeeding her baby may compromise both the health of the baby and the mother and will support staff members, parents and visitors who choose to breastfeed their babies whilst on the school premises.

2. Scope

OAT will undertake risk assessments of new or expectant mothers arising from their work activities and to take appropriate preventive or control measures.

3. Definitions

A new or expectant mother is a woman who is pregnant, has given birth within the last six months or is breastfeeding.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Principal

Responsible for:

- Informing employees about their legal rights to breastfeed whilst at work.
- Ensuring the health and safety of breastfeeding employees and their babies whilst on the school site
- Ascertaining 'return to work' arrangements with an employee following maternity leave, making reasonable adjustments where required
- Informing new mothers and employees about their options for breastfeeding whilst on the school premises
- Arranging a schedule and space for employees who are breastfeeding
- Ensuring that breast milk is only handled by staff members who are trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk
- Handling complaints and taking the necessary action
- Liaising with staff members to ensure there is suitable cover in place for when an employee is absent whilst breastfeeding
- Discussing concerns with new mothers and staff members and, where necessary, liaising with the governing body to resolve any issues
- Ensuring that the school's policies and procedures do not discriminate against new mothers
- Organising the procurement and provision of any necessary equipment, such as breast pumps, if applicable and agreed with the employee.

4.2 All staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy
- Being aware of the breastfeeding facilities available at the school
- Providing new mothers with the necessary privacy
- Reporting any concerns or complaints regarding breastfeeding within the school to the Principal
- Notifying their head of department or Principal of their needs to breastfeed, and where possible, arranging a schedule to do so in advance.

4.3 New mothers are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy
- Keeping the breastfeeding area clean
- Informing a member of staff of their needs in a timely manner
- Providing their own re-sealable storage containers for the milk, which are clearly labelled with their name and date
- Reporting any concerns regarding breastfeeding within the school to the Principal.

5. Procedure

5.1 Facilities

Facilities for pregnant women and nursing mothers to rest should be conveniently situated in relation to toilets and, where necessary, include the facility to lie down.

5.2 Breastfeeding

The school will also provide a private space which is exclusively designated for breastfeeding.

Whilst breastfeeding is in operation, this area will not be accessed by those who do not need to breastfeed.

Where the designated space is not available, an empty office or classroom will be used, as long as it is sufficiently private, clean and comfortable.

Areas used for breastfeeding will be of a high standard of cleanliness and will include an electrical outlet, a comfortable chair and access to nearby running water, where possible.

Under no circumstances will the toilet facilities or the nurse's office be used for breastfeeding due to hygiene risks.

All new school buildings will include space for breastfeeding.

A refrigerator will be available for women to store their breast milk in.

Artificial baby milk and solid foods will not be provided by the school unless prior arrangements have been made at the mother's request.

Positive promotion of breastfeeding will be displayed around the school site and information about breastfeeding will be available for new mothers upon request.

5.3 Returning to work after maternity leave

The Principal will inform returning employees of the rights provided under this policy as part of their equal opportunities, as well as where they can seek further advice from local breastfeeding professionals.

Employees returning to work following maternity leave are responsible for informing the Principal in writing of their request to return to work or for flexible working, as well as whether they plan to continue breastfeeding once returning to employment.

Within the written request, the employee should detail any requests or specific adjustments which may be required.

Prior to their return to work, employees will discuss their needs with the Principal, exploring any reasonable adjustments which could be made in order to support the new mother.

Employees will be provided with flexible breaks in order to breastfeed.

The time allowed for breaks will not exceed the normal time allowed for lunch and breaks.

The Principal will advise returning employees of how time beyond the usual breaks will be compensated.

If, after discussion, a request for flexible working or breastfeeding-related breaks has been rejected by the employer, the business reasons for this decision will be explained to the employee. Decisions will be carefully considered and communicated to avoid unlawful sex discrimination claims.

Requests to breastfeed are likely to be temporary and so a permanent change to an employment contract will not be appropriate; however, temporary changes to working arrangements will enable the school and the employee to meet both their needs.

The Principal will undertake a risk assessment for any employees who plan to continue breastfeeding once returning from maternity leave.

5.4 Handling complaints

The school recognises that breastfeeding can be a sensitive and controversial subject.

Complaints or concerns regarding the school's breastfeeding arrangements should be made in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure Policy.

Employees, parents and visitors will be made aware that the school supports breastfeeding mothers on the premises, and will be informed of the process to follow when reporting a concern.

The school will continuously work to address and resolve concerns, ensuring that a private and suitable area can still be accessed by mothers requiring to breastfeed.

6. Related Documents

- OAT Health and Safety Policy
- Risk assessments
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996

The following records should be kept in relation to new and expectant mothers:

- Relevant risk assessments and control measures, including for hazardous substances
- Notification by new and expectant mothers
- Medical certificates
- Health records, e.g., for ionising radiations
- Details relating to any exposures to hazardous substances
- Any restrictions or prohibitions placed on the employment of women in certain work.

7. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing body; any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

Appendix I

Pregnant Staff Risk Assessment

Assessment conducted by:	Job title:	Covered by this assessment: All staff and pupils
Date of assessment:	Review interval: Annually	Date of next review:

Related documents

Health and Safety Policy, School Emergency Incident Procedure.

	Risk Rating	Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Likely impact	Major Causes major injury, disability or ill-health.	High (H)	High	Medium (M)
	Severe Causes injury requiring medical treatment.	High	Medium	Low (L)
	Minor Causes injury requiring first aid treatment.	Medium	Low	Low

Risk/Issue	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	Recommended further actions to be taken to reduce risks	By whom	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Policy and procedures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pregnant staff members are in place. They are agreed by the governing body and reviewed annually. • Existing risk assessments are in place based on knowledge, experience and training. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Health and Safety Policy in light of any updated guidance. 			
Physical effects of pregnancy: Morning sickness, nausea, backache, varicose veins, frequent visits to the toilet, tiredness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established quiet area available with suitable furnishings. • Hygiene facilities are sufficient and pregnant staff members are within reasonable distance from facilities when working. 					
Staff member's personal medical requirements / history: High blood pressure, medical complications		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate arrangements in place for specific nutritional needs and sufficient opportunity given for breaks when required. 					

<p>Challenging pupils and behaviour: Emotional stress, fatigue, verbal / physical assault</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with known or potentially violent / challenging pupils prevented, where possible, for duration of pregnancy. 					
<p>Exposure to communicable diseases: Chickenpox, influenza etc.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of infection control in schools. • Good hygiene practice followed. • Pregnant staff members seek advice from their GP / midwife after direct contact with someone with an infectious disease. • Leave available for pregnant staff members who become infected. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female staff under the age of 25 to have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine. 			
<p>Environmental hazards: Exposure to hazardous substances</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises / classrooms regularly checked. • Defects are promptly repaired / replaced. • Spillages are immediately cleaned. • Good housekeeping is maintained. • Alternative rooms made available as needed. 					

<p>Hazards arising from duties: Long working hours, lack of rest time, prolonged periods of standing, prolonged working postures, manual handling</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No manual handling of heavy loads is undertaken for the duration of the pregnancy. • Staff members request assistance when needed. • Communication measures in place for monitoring and providing immediate support. 					
<p>Out of hours working</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowances made for tiredness and nausea at all stages. • Modification of working hours as necessary. • Avoidance of night work. • Avoidance of lone working where possible. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of lone working training. 			
<p>Working at height</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duties are modified to eliminate all requirements to work at height. 					

<p>Access / egress</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members' tasks and locations are modified to avoid walking significant distances and the use of stairs. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process established for assistance during evacuations. 			
<p>Temperature / humidity</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temperature of the working environment is suitably controlled. • Access to fresh air ensured during the working day. • Access to drinking water also made available. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment provided to suitably heat / cool environment as needed. 			
<p>Risk of infection or kidney disease</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access to toilet facilities. 					
<p>Add your own</p>							
<p>Add your own</p>							

Appendix 2

CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NEW / EXPECTANT MOTHERS – A GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS AND SENIOR STAFF

Steps to take when conducting a risk assessment for new /expectant mothers

Step 1	Read through the employee’s job description.
Step 2	Arrange a suitable time to meet with the employee. In the case of an expectant mother, this should be as soon as possible after you receive written notification of the employee’s pregnancy.
Step 3	Using the guidance on workplace hazards and the risks they pose to new and expectant mothers, assess all aspects of the role with the employee and the risks associated with each of the items listed.
Step 4	Document the findings on the Risk Assessment Form for Maternity-related Risks. The list is not exhaustive and if you identify other risks you should use the blank rows on the form to record them. Make sure a copy of the completed form is kept as a record on the employee’s personal file. Give the employee a copy of the completed form if it is requested.

Step 5	Take appropriate action where significant risks are identified. Consult your HR Advisor if you need to consider finding alternative work. If you need further advice on identifying or making adaptations for risks identified, contact your HR Advisor or occupational health as appropriate.
Step 6	Review the assessment at appropriate intervals, particularly if there is a change in either the employee's circumstances or the work environment and also when the employee returns to work after maternity leave.

Avoiding Exposure of New / Expectant Mothers to Risks in the Workplace

When a hazard has been identified by the risk assessment that could pose a risk to the health and safety of a new or expectant mother and her baby, you will need to consider what action should be taken to ensure the risk is either avoided or, where this is not possible, reduced to the lowest acceptable level.

The options may include:

- Removing the hazard;
- Removing the employee from the hazard to prevent any exposure to it;
- Reducing or removing the effect of the associated risk.

Examples of Adjustments to avoid or reduce risks

- Temporarily adjusting working hours / working conditions so as to avoid exposure to a risk or reduce the effects of a risk;
- Temporarily assigning some duties to other employees (e.g. manual handling duties) or providing aids to help with some duties;
- If it is necessary to make adjustments, you should discuss these with the employee and ask whether she feels the changes are suitable.

Any changes to an existing employment contract – for example, changes in hours, should be agreed with the employee and then confirmed in writing. Please contact your HR Support Services Team for further advice.

Where adjustments to the role cannot be made

Where it is not possible to make changes that would avoid the risk, or the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, suitable alternative work options should be considered.

Page | 7 Where there is no suitable alternative work available, consideration should be given to suspending the employee from work for as long as necessary to protect her health and safety and the health and safety of her baby.

IDENTIFYING WORKPLACE HAZARDS

The following gives a list of some possible workplace hazards and their associated risks, along with suggested suitable avoidance measures. The list is not exhaustive and there may be other hazards to consider. Please contact your HR or Occupational Health Advisor for more information. **Use this form to help you complete the actual risk assessment form.**

Hazard	Risk	Avoidance Measure
Shocks, vibration or movement	Regular exposure may increase risk of miscarriage. May be increased risk of premature birth or low birth weight. Breastfeeding mothers are at no greater risk than other workers.	Avoid work likely to involve uncomfortable whole body vibration or where abdomen is exposed to shocks or jolts.
Lifting, moving and handling of loads	Pregnant workers are especially at risk as hormonal changes can affect ligaments and postural problems may increase as pregnancy progresses. There are possible risks for those who have recently given birth, especially after a Caesarean section because there are limitations to lifting and carrying activities. Breastfeeding mothers are at no greater risk than other workers	Varies according to circumstances. Alter tasks to reduce risks, or address specific needs of the individual or provide aids to reduce risks. Consider assigning some duties to other employees.
Noise	No specific risk but prolonged exposure to high noise levels may lead to increased blood pressure and tiredness. There is no evidence of noise affecting those who have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding.	Pregnant women should avoid working in noisy environments for prolonged periods.
Ionising Radiation (X Rays etc.)	If nursing mothers work with radioactive liquids or dust, these can cause exposure of the child, particularly through contamination of the mother's skin. Significant exposure to ionising radiation can be harmful to the foetus. Also, there may be a risk to the foetus from significant amounts of radioactive contamination breathed in or ingested by the mother and transferred across the placenta.	Pregnant women should avoid exposure to ionising radiation where possible.
Non-ionising Electromagnetic Radiation (PC Screens)	Pregnant women are at no greater risk than other workers. Radio frequency radiation (within current recommendations) is not known to cause harm to the foetus or the mother.	Avoidance measures are unlikely to be required.

Hazard	Risk	Avoidance Measure
Extremes of Heat or Cold	When pregnant, women tolerate heat less well and may more readily faint or be liable to heat stress. Breastfeeding may be impaired by dehydration. No specific problems arise from working in extreme cold.	Avoid exposure to periods of prolonged heat. If a pregnant woman does have to work in a hot environment, rest facilities and access to refreshments should be provided.
Fatigue and Stress	Fatigue is associated with miscarriage, premature birth and low birth weight. Excessive physical or mental pressure may cause anxiety, stress and raised blood pressure. Standing for long periods can cause dizziness, faintness and fatigue. It can also increase chances of premature birth or miscarriage. Sitting for long periods increases the chance of thrombosis.	Ensure that hours, volume and pacing of work are not excessive and that, where possible, workers have some control over how their work is organised. Provide seating where appropriate and ensure that the woman is not expected to stand or sit in one position for long periods of time. Provide regular rest breaks.
Hazardous Substances / infection risks and chemicals	<p>Listeria In pregnant women it may terminate the pregnancy or damage the foetus.</p> <p>Biological Agents e.g. Hepatitis B, HIV, herpes, tuberculosis, chicken pox, typhoid If infected during pregnancy, the unborn child can be affected. For most workers, the risk of infection is not higher whilst at school than in the community although the exposure may be higher in a school environment.</p> <p>Chemical Agents e.g. Pesticides, benzene, mercury, lead Organic mercury compounds could have adverse effects on the foetus, slow the growth of the unborn baby, disrupt the nervous system and cause the mother to be poisoned.</p> <p>Carbon Monoxide Carbon monoxide readily crosses the placenta and can result in the foetus being starved of oxygen; both the level and duration of exposure are important factors in assessing the risk.</p>	<p>Ensure that food and personal hygiene guidance and precautions are provided. Consider hygiene measures or vaccinations. If there is a high risk of exposure to a highly infectious agent, the worker should avoid exposure completely.</p> <p>Please contact Health and Safety if there is likely to be exposure to chemical agents whilst at the academy.</p> <p>Please contact Health and Safety if there is likely to be exposure to carbon monoxide.</p>

Hazard	Risk	Avoidance Measure
Ergonomics	Workplace design, layout of workstation and design of work equipment may affect the safety of pregnant workers. Hormonal changes during and shortly after pregnancy can affect ligaments and increase the risk of injury.	Consider effects of pregnancy on the body e.g. increase in size/problems with reach/ability to bend or stretch. Regular workstation assessments should be conducted and consideration of any aids required as appropriate.
Violence	Potential miscarriage or premature birth.	Risk assessments should be made. Teachers are normally considered to be high risk. Consider restriction to some duties/team working/personal alarms etc. as appropriate.
Working at Heights	Because of the risk of fainting and high blood pressure, it is hazardous for pregnant women to work at heights.	Avoid climbing up and down ladders and stepladders where possible.
Evacuation of Premises	Pregnant women may find it more difficult to evacuate premises due to mobility issues.	Re-assess building evacuation procedures for the employee's circumstances. Consider assigning another individual responsibility for assisting a pregnant employee in building evacuation.

RISK ASSESSMENT - PREGNANCY/UP TO 6 MONTHS FROM RETURN TO WORK/NURSING MOTHER

Employee name:

Assessor:

Employee is pregnant/during 6 months from RTW/a nursing mother*

Date assessment carried out:

HAZARD/TOPIC	RISK IDENTIFIED	SIGNIFICANT		FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED/NOTES
		YES	NO	
Shocks, vibration or movement				
Lifting, moving and handling of loads				
Noise				
Ionising Radiation (X Rays etc.)				
Non-ionising Electromagnetic Radiation (Display Screen Equipment)				
Extremes of Heat or Cold				
Fatigue and Stress				

Hazardous Substances / infection risks and chemicals				
Ergonomics				
Violence				
Working at Heights				
Evacuation of Premises				
Add your own				
Add your own				

Signed:..... (<<Headteacher/ Principal>> or representative)

Signed: (Employee)

* Delete as applicable

ASSESSOR GUIDANCE NOTES

The risk assessment form should be used as soon as an employee tells you that she is pregnant and/or on return to work from maternity leave, particularly where she is breastfeeding. The risk assessment process should be used for employees from the date they tell you they are pregnant up until 6 months from the date they return to work or until they stop breastfeeding, whichever is later.

The risk assessment should be reviewed periodically to ensure that any changes will be noted and actions taken to reduce the risks as appropriate.

To complete the risk assessment – read through each hazard and risk with the employee and consider which if any are relevant in relation to her job role. Where any possible hazard and risks are identified, you should consider what adaptations can be made to mitigate as much as possible any risk. For example, Movement/Posture – Long periods of standing – statutory obligation to provide rest facilities – discuss when and how they can be accessed.

Using the guidance sheet will help you in determining whether there is a risk. A copy of this completed form should be retained on the employee's personal file and a copy given to the employee if requested.

