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| **Advice note 23rd March 2021**  **Update for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and Pregnant employees** |
| Dear Colleague,  The health, safety and well-being of our staff and pupils continues to be our highest priority. Things you need to know today:  1. The Government guidance for employees who are “shielding” is changing from 1 April 2021. 2. Where possible staff who can, should continue to work from home. 3. Those in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) group who have been shielding and who cannot work from home, can return to workplace from 1 April 2021 provided certain conditions have been met. 4. All employees who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable must have an individual risk assessment in place before returning to the workplace.   **Updated advice for staff who are shielding**  The Government guidance for employees who are “shielding” is changing from 1 April 2021. Where possible staff who can, should continue to work from home. Those in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable group, who cannot work from home, can return to workplace from 1 April 2021 provided certain conditions have been met.  **Government Advice**  From 1 April, the government will pause shielding unless the transmission of COVID-19 in the community starts to rise significantly. The Government advice for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable includes the following:   * stay at home as much as you can and continue to take precautions when you do go out. You can do this by washing your hands regularly, avoiding touching your face and keeping 2 metres away from people outside of your household or bubble wherever possible. * Everyone is currently advised to work from home where possible. * If you cannot work from home, you **should** go to work **if the workplace is COVID-secure** (in line with relevant service area guidance).   **Returning to Work Information**  See the [government website](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19) for the list of health conditions affecting this group of staff.   * Employees will need to provide a copy of your NHS letters (where applicable) to your manager to support the new approach. * Where possible employees should continue to work from home. * Employees can only return to work after an individual risk assessment is in place. * If you are unable to work from home, then your manager will: -   + ensure that the building you are working in is COVID secure   + consider if you can meet the government guidance i.e. maintain a 2 metre distance whilst undertaking your role. This is not always possible, for example when providing care in a residential home, or working as an operational fire fighter * If workplaces **are able** to meet the government guidance i.e. maintain 2 metre distance, employees may be able to return to work following an [individual risk assessment](http://www.intouch.ccc/elibrary/Content/Intranet/535/6004/4401116157.docx). Manager must discuss the risk assessment with employees and may seek further advice from an Occupational Health provider and or HR advisor, to determine what measures may need to put in place to mitigate any risk. If an individual risk assessment has been in place, managers will speak with the individual employees to consider if circumstances have changed since the last risk assessment. *Please note if you have already received Occupational health advice and your condition or circumstances have not altered, the original advice can be followed.* * If Covid secure measures (e.g. 2m distancing) **cannot** be maintained in the workplace, e.g. working in early years settings, then employees will not be able to return to the workplace to undertake their normal role until further guidance is issued. They should remain at home. The situation will be reviewed, and alternative options will be discussed, and advice sought from the Occupational health and / or HR provider, so they can undertake alternative work/duties.   **Pregnant Employees**  **A risk assessment must be undertaken for all pregnant employees in line with the maternity policy**.  Pregnant women fall into the CV category and would only be classed as CEV if they have underlying health issues. Managers must remove or manage any risk to the employee. At 28 weeks of pregnancy a more precautionary approach should be followed, including updating the risk assessment to identify if the employee can continue to attend work. If the risk is deemed too high, then the manager will explore other options as outlined within the Council’s Maternity policy.    All pregnant employees should follow the active national guidance on social distancing (see above).  [Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for pregnant employees - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees)  If you live in Scotland or Wales you should follow the advice from the respective Governments:-  Coronavirus (COVID-19): shielding advice and support - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)  <https://gov.wales/shielding-extremely-vulnerable-people>  If you have any questions about this email or ongoing COVID arrangements process please speak to your HR provider in the first instance and then contact Kerry Anderson, HR Business Partner – Education & Skills if you have any further queries [Kerry.anderson@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.anderson@cumbria.gov.uk) |