

Brine Leas School

Part of The Cornovii Trust



STUDENT PREGNANCY POLICY

1. Guidance

In relation to pregnancy, the school notes the guidance within Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk), notably: Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Further guidance is available for the school in The Equality Act 2010 and schools advice. We pay particular attention to the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149 of the Equality Act). Under the provisions of the Equality Act, we will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

2. Schools Responsibility

The school must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects (paragraphs 27-28). In addition, Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy (paragraph 78) and: Pupils should know [...] the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage; that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) In the event that a student becomes pregnant.

2.1 It is the school's aim to keep the student on the school roll, even if she is not able to attend for a period of time and to offer support by

3. Safeguarding

As per Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) school-age pregnancy can, in some circumstances, be an indicator of Child Sexual Exploitation or vulnerability. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should therefore be informed of a pupil pregnancy to identify whether there are any issues regarding the safety and wellbeing of the pupil(s) and unborn baby. If there are, these should be addressed in line with the child protection policy.

3.1 A pupil may wish to keep her pregnancy confidential for as long as possible. Key staff (including First Aiders) should be briefed appropriately and know where to locate emergency contact details (including the young person's GP and/or midwife) should the need arise.

3.2 Brine Leas school will ensure that the pupil has a team of key designated adults with whom she feels comfortable to speak to with any concerns.

4. Safety during lessons, break and lunchtimes

We will complete a risk assessment with the pupil around safety in lessons and unstructured time. This should be completed in collaboration with the pupil, parent/carer and midwife. If applicable, a pupil's social worker, EHCP Coordinator and/or Virtual School for Children in Care and Previously in Care keyworker, or another relevant professional may also be consulted/involved.

4.1 The school may wish to use an Individual Healthcare Plan for this purpose. The usual safety routines which apply to all pupils in lessons such as PE, science and design technology for example, should apply to pupils who are pregnant, with adaptations as necessary.

4.2 In PE, for example, participation in contact sports will be inadvisable. Some sporting activity may of course be appropriate and beneficial to the young person; this should be discussed and agreed with her and her parent/carer and with guidance from the relevant health professional (e.g., midwife or health visitor). It may be appropriate in lessons such as Food Technology, to ensure that a pupil who is pregnant does not eat certain food items which are not recommended during pregnancy; see Foods to avoid in pregnancy - NHS (www.nhs.uk) for additional guidance. A pupil who is pregnant attending a school trip may require a specific risk assessment if she is to come into contact with animals, or if the activities are physical.

4.3 Likewise, an additional risk assessment should be completed if the pupil attends an off-site alternative provision placement. It may be necessary for the pupil who is pregnant to have a suitable place to rest and eat during break and lunchtimes.

5. Attendance

Many pupils who are pregnant will be able to continue to attend school up to a few weeks before the birth. Some reasonable adjustments may need to be made. Pupils who are pregnant will need to attend a number of midwife and hospital appointments and may require the school's support in attending these. Potentially, this is an extremely vulnerable group, more likely to have an increased number of appointments, and more at risk of non-attendance. This therefore carries a greater risk to the health of both mother and child.

We may should refer to the guidance Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) when coding pupil absence.

5.1 All pupils are entitled to a full-time timetable. However, on occasion, a pupil who is pregnant, or a young mother reintegrating into education following the birth, may benefit from a temporary adjusted timetable.

5.2 Any adjusted timetable should be agreed in writing and include a planned review

date. Schools should be mindful of the data regarding pupil outcomes (see Introduction) however, and make every effort to ensure that the pupil is fully supported to achieve her maximum potential; this is both for her future adult life, and the child(ren)'s.

5.3 If a Y11/13 pupil who is pregnant missed one or more components of an external examination due to illness (i.e. not the pregnancy per se, but excessive morning sickness, for example), then the school may apply for special consideration.

6. Maternity leave

As per 'Working together to improve school attendance' - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) paragraph 214, leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. The school will act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case. Ultimately it is at the headteacher's discretion how much leave to grant. The dates for the pupil's maternity leave should be agreed with the pupil, her parent/carer and midwife

7. Paternity leave

A young father may be granted paternity leave and be coded C for authorised absence. In line with guidance for working fathers, it is recommended that a period of 1-2 weeks be sufficient.

8. Reintegration into education

An adjusted timetable may be required as the young mother returns to school. Please see the guidance above for further information (see Attendance).

8.1 The school may need to consider a reduced exam offer if the pupil needs that to fit in with new responsibilities; she may also benefit from access to a quiet space in which to study and catch up if that is proving difficult at home.

9. Breastfeeding/expressing breastmilk

A young mother who returns to school may require reasonable adjustments in order to be able to either breastfeed her baby, or express milk. Schools should make provision for the pupil to access a private space in which to express and a fridge to store milk.

9.1 The pupil may need to return home at lunchtime, for example, to feed her baby. Schools should make allowances for these temporary absences.