

PREGNANCY LOSS GUIDANCE

SCOPE STATEMENT

This guidance will apply to all members of staff in the school.

Issued: January 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Miscarriage can be a frightening, lonely and traumatic experience for both women and men. It is often both physically and emotionally painful, with effects that can last for a very long time.
- 1.2 Everyone's needs will be different. Everyone will experience their loss differently, and it's important not to make any assumptions about how they feel or how they want to be treated.
- 1.3 Partners, as well as grandparents and other close relatives, might be affected by the miscarriage and you will need to consider how best to support them if they work in your team.
- 1.4 You may find it helpful to read the Miscarriage Association's information on [supporting employees before, during and after a loss](#).

2. How to help

2.1 If the loss occurs at work

- 2.1.1 A pregnancy loss may happen at work. You may not be aware that an employee is pregnant: she is not obliged to tell her manager of her pregnancy until 15 weeks before her estimated due date, or as soon as is reasonably practicable after then (approximately 6 months pregnant).
- 2.1.2 If an employee suspects that she has started to lose her baby she may have bleeding, severe abdominal pain, and may be faint or collapse. She may be very distressed and panicked, embarrassed and frightened.
- 2.1.3 You can help by ensuring that she has very quick access to a toilet, and you may need to help her by calling her preferred contact or colleague to assist her in getting home or to hospital or a first aid room. In severe cases you may need to call an ambulance.

2.2 Communicating the absence

- 2.2.1 You will need to consider carefully how to explain the sudden absence of your employee in order to respect their privacy, especially as they might not want others to know the details.

3. Recording leave and absence

- 3.1 Time off during and after a miscarriage is protected as 'pregnancy-related' sickness leave.

- 3.2 If an employee has suffered an early or late miscarriage, any sick leave will be recorded as 'pregnancy-related' in the sickness absence category. Any 'pregnancy-related sickness absence will not count towards sickness absence trigger points.
- 3.3 For periods of absence longer than seven days, the employee will need to obtain a Fitness for Work statement from her doctor or health professional at hospital.
- 3.4 If the employee is not the woman who has experienced the physical loss (for example this might be a partner or a grandparent) but needs to take time off work follow the [leave policy](#).

4. Future leave

- 4.1 Women who have had a miscarriage, and perhaps their partners, may need time off in the future to attend appointments related to their loss.
- 4.2 In any future pregnancy, additional scans and monitoring may be required. In accordance with the [maternity, adoption and paternity policy](#).

5. Talking about miscarriage

- 5.1 It's important to acknowledge the loss rather than to ignore it, unless the woman requests otherwise. You should not make light of it. The Miscarriage Association has more information on [talking about miscarriage in the workplace](#).
- 5.2 She may be very confused and upset. You should bear in mind that the shock of miscarrying may make it difficult for them to contact you to tell you what has happened, and/or to discuss what happens next with work.
- 5.3 At an appropriate point, someone should speak to them about what they would like colleagues to know about their loss. This could be their manager or another trusted colleague. If they do not wish to share this information, their wishes should be respected. They should not feel pressured either way.
- 5.4 This type of contact can help your colleagues to understand what has happened, what the effects might be on the team member, and how to be supportive. It will also make it easier for the team member to speak to colleagues when they return to work.

6. Facilitating return to work

- 6.1 When an employee is ready to return to work their manager should offer them a meeting where any specific needs can be discussed.
- 6.2 This might include a temporary workplace adjustment, which is aimed at enabling a person to remain at work rather than taking sick leave.

7. Support Policies

[Reasonable adjustments](#)

[Leave Policy](#)

[Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Leave policy](#)

[Wellness Action Plans, charter and guidance](#)

[Flexible working](#)

8. Vivup

Confidential support for all staff

08000239387 Available 24/7

<https://vivup.yourcareeap.co.uk?CODE=109866>.

9. External support

Miscarriage Association

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

01924200799

info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Information and support to help you through a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, or molar pregnancy.

Citizens Advice Bureau

citizensadvice.org.uk

(search for your local office on this link)

Free and confidential advice on benefits, work, and family

Ectopic Pregnancy Trust

ectopic.org.uk

020 7733 2653

Information and support for ectopic pregnancy

Maternity Action

maternityaction.org.uk

(find information and appropriate telephone numbers on this link)

Information on rights and benefits around pregnancy, pregnancy loss and maternity

Mind

mind.org.uk

Information on mental health support including Wellness Action Plans
And
reducing stress at work

Sands

sands.org.uk

0808 164 3332

helpline@sands.org.uk

Information and support for stillbirth and neonatal death

Working families

workingfamilies.org.uk

0300 012 0312

advice@workingfamilies.org.uk

Advice for working families via website and helpline