



**Support Pack for Trusts and Schools**

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## Fertility Support Groups

A fertility workplace group provides a **safe, supportive space** for teachers experiencing fertility challenges, including IVF, miscarriage, and reproductive health concerns. Given the demanding nature of teaching, staff often struggle to balance medical appointments, emotional wellbeing, and workload. A dedicated group helps foster a **compassionate, inclusive school culture** while advocating for improved policies and support.

### What you need to create a Fertility Workplace Group

- **A Core Team** – Identify a few interested colleagues who are passionate about fertility support. This could include staff who have personal experience or allies who want to foster inclusivity.
- **A Clear Purpose** – Define the group's goals: emotional support, awareness-raising, policy advocacy, or a mix of these.
- **Senior Leadership Buy-In** – Engage with school leadership and HR to explain the benefits and secure their support.
- **A Safe Space** – Find a confidential location (physical or virtual) where staff can share experiences without fear of judgement.
- **Resources & Information** – Gather materials on workplace rights, fertility treatment, and wellbeing support (e.g., from fertility charities, unions, or NHS services).
- **A Communication Plan** – Decide how to inform staff about the group while maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity.

### How to get started

1. **Talk to Colleagues** – Gauge interest and gather a small initial group. Start by reaching out to trusted colleagues or using anonymous staff surveys.
2. **Meet with Senior Leaders & HR** – Present the need for a fertility support group, citing staff wellbeing and legal considerations (e.g., flexible leave policies, reasonable adjustments).
3. **Set Up a Meeting Schedule** – Start with informal drop-in sessions or structured meetings (e.g., once a month) and adjust based on participation.
4. **Create Confidentiality Guidelines** – Ensure a safe, non-judgemental space by establishing clear rules about privacy and respect.
5. **Develop Awareness Initiatives** – Share information via staff bulletins, intranet, or posters to normalise conversations around fertility challenges.
6. **Advocate for Policy Change** – Work with leadership to improve or introduce fertility-friendly policies, such as flexible leave for IVF.
7. **Connect with External Support** – Partner with fertility organisations, workplace wellbeing specialists, or unions to access additional training and advice.

## **Sustaining the Group**

- **Regular Check-ins** – Adapt the group’s approach based on feedback.
- **Inclusive Events** – Arrange talks, support sessions, or awareness weeks.
- **Empower Line Managers** – Offer training to help leaders better support staff facing fertility challenges.
- **Monitor Impact** – Collect anonymous feedback to show how the group benefits staff wellbeing and retention.

## Recommended Resources for Schools on Fertility Leave and Policies

To help schools create **fertility-inclusive workplaces**, the following organisations and resources provide guidance on **fertility leave, policies, and workplace support**:

### 1. Fertility Workplace Support Organisations

- [Fertility Matters at Work](#) – Provides training, resources, and policy guidance to help workplaces support employees undergoing fertility treatment.
- [Fertility Network UK](#) – A national charity offering support, resources, and advocacy for those facing fertility challenges, including workplace advice.
- [Pregnant Then Screwed](#) – Advocates for parental and fertility rights at work, offering legal advice and support for those facing discrimination.
- [Tommy's](#) – Offers guidance on miscarriage, stillbirth, and reproductive health, including advice for employers on supporting staff.

### 2. Workplace Fertility Policy and Legal Guidance

- [ACAS \(Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service\)](#) – Provides legal guidance on employee rights, reasonable adjustments, and how workplaces can support fertility treatment.
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\)](#) – Offers information on workplace discrimination laws, including rights related to fertility treatment.
- [Department for Education \(DfE\)](#) – Schools can reference official guidance on workplace policies and reasonable adjustments for staff wellbeing.
- [Education Support](#) – A dedicated mental health and wellbeing charity for education staff, with advice on handling fertility struggles at work.

### 3. Support Networks and Additional Resources

- [The Miscarriage Association](#) – Offers support for employees who have experienced pregnancy loss and guidance for employers on compassionate leave policies.
- [British Infertility Counselling Association \(BICA\)](#) – Provides access to specialist fertility counsellors and workplace support strategies.
- [Wellbeing of Women](#) – Focuses on improving workplace policies for reproductive health, including menopause and fertility treatment.
- [Mind UK](#) – Offers mental health support resources, including coping strategies for fertility-related stress at work.
- [Fertility Network UK](#) – A national charity offering support, resources, and advocacy for those facing fertility challenges, including workplace advice.

## How Schools Can Use These Resources

- **Develop inclusive policies** – Use these resources to introduce "**One Full Round for Schools**" fertility leave policies, ensuring fair and flexible support.  
**Train senior leaders & line managers** – Provide training on handling fertility-related leave and workplace conversations with **empathy and discretion**.  
**Create a fertility-friendly culture** – Signpost support networks, offer peer support groups, and normalise discussions around fertility in staff wellbeing initiatives.

By utilising these resources, schools can **build a supportive and legally compliant workplace**, ensuring that teachers undergoing fertility treatment are treated with the care and flexibility they deserve.

# Risk Assessment Template: Teachers After Embryo Transfer (Post-IVF Transfer) – Lifting & Physical Activity

Employee Name:

Line Manager:

Date:

Review Date:

Hazard	Who Might Be Harmed?	Risks Identified	Control Measures in Place	Additional Actions Required	By Whom?	By When?
Lifting heavy objects (e.g., boxes, books)	Employee	Risk of implantation failure, physical strain	Remove requirement to lift/move anything heavy, ensure classroom support where needed	Provide trolley or support staff help	Line Manager	Immediate
Standing for long periods	Employee	Physical exhaustion, dizziness	Encourage sitting while teaching, provide high stools/chairs	Schedule short breaks if possible	Timetabler / Line Manager	Immediate
Managing classroom behaviour physically	Employee	Risk from physical incidents	Risk assess high-risk students, ensure access to support in challenging classes	Potential temporary reassignment or additional TA	SENCO / SLT	As required
Carrying bags/resources between classrooms	Employee	Strain or imbalance	Allocate fixed base/classroom where possible	Provide storage or support	Timetabler	Immediate

# Risk Assessment Template: General Fertility Treatment – Physical and Emotional Health

Employee Name:

Line Manager:

Date:

Review Date:

Hazard	Who Might Be Harmed?	Risks Identified	Control Measures in Place	Additional Actions Required	By Whom?	By When?
Side effects of medication (e.g., bloating, pain, mood swings)	Employee	Physical discomfort, inability to teach effectively	Access to rest spaces, flexible timetable, regular check-ins	Agree phased timetable or reduced duties if needed	Line Manager / HR	As required
Need for sudden absence due to procedures	Employee / Students	Disruption to classes	Pre-arranged cover options, provide advance notice where possible	Maintain confidential communication channel with cover coordinator	Line Manager / Cover Manager	Weekly
Risk of OHSS (Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome)	Employee	Nausea, severe discomfort, hospitalisation	Reduce physical tasks, provide immediate access to leave if symptoms occur	Make first aid and SLT aware of warning signs confidentially	Employee / SLT	Immediate
Emotional impact of cycle outcome	Employee	Absenteeism, stress, burnout	Allow compassionate leave, offer return-to-work wellbeing meeting	Refer to external EAP services or counselling	HR	Upon request

# Risk Assessment Template: Teachers Undergoing Fertility Treatment – Mental Health Focus

Employee Name:

Line Manager:

Date:

Review Date:

Hazard	Who Might Be Harmed?	Risks Identified	Control Measures in Place	Additional Actions Required	By Whom?	By When?
Emotional distress due to treatment failure or uncertainty	Employee	Anxiety, depression, reduced ability to focus	Access to school counsellor or external therapy, awareness of HR support, confidential support from line manager	Signpost to mental health services (e.g., Education Support Partnership), consider flexible working	Line Manager / HR	Ongoing
Fatigue caused by hormonal treatment	Employee	Burnout, reduced concentration or patience in the classroom	Adjustment of duties where possible, flexible start times, reduce non-essential tasks	Consider temporary reallocation of duties during intense stages of treatment	SLT / Line Manager	As needed
Stigma or misunderstanding from colleagues	Employee	Isolation, workplace stress	Confidentiality maintained, open conversation with line manager if desired	Provide optional staff CPD around inclusivity and fertility awareness	SLT / HR	Termly
Balancing medical appointments with workload	Employee	Increased stress, missing deadlines	Flexible scheduling, leave for appointments, adjusted expectations for marking/admin	Ensure supply cover or team teaching support	Timetabler / Line Manager	Weekly review